

SECTION IV - Proposed Land and Water Uses & Projects

The proposed land and water uses and proposed projects for the Village of Middleport waterfront area are described in this section of the LWRP. Map 8 illustrates the proposed land and water uses for the Village as well as the location of proposed projects.

A. Proposed Land and Water Uses

1. Proposed Land Uses

Land uses in the Village of Middleport are proposed in a manner that will continue the existing style of development throughout the Village and maintain the existing character of the community. Land use changes are designed to protect waterfront resources, promote tourism, improve the compatibility of community land use, properly accommodate future development, and provide for a more balanced tax base.

Land uses along the Canal should serve the recreational needs of the community and enhance tourist opportunities; thus industrial use is no longer suitable for this area. The waterfront should be redeveloped with recreational and commercial uses that complement the central business district and the recreational character of the waterfront area.

An important site on the waterfront that requires focus is the former Basket Factory restaurant property. This site has a longstanding history with the Village and should be revitalized to provide economic and tourism benefits to the community. In addition, revitalization efforts should be concentrated on the north shore of the Canal, immediately east of North Main Street. Here land use should be primarily reserved for commercial and recreation activities that tie in with the Canal and the nearby Margaret Droman Park. In particular, the site of the former Lone Star Hotel, the adjoining property to the east (which is part of the State right-of-way) and the adjacent vacant land to the east (which adjoins Margaret Droman Park) should be improved for public access and recreation.

Efforts should be undertaken to improve and enhance economic activity in the central business district. This area contains a number of important historic resources that should be preserved to maintain the quality and character of this area of the Village. Aesthetic improvements, such as signage and landscaping, are recommended for this area. The overall objective is to improve the connection between the waterfront and the business district and enhance tourism in the area.

A mix of light industrial uses should be encouraged to locate in the vicinity of the railroad corridor, to the east and west of Main Street, with commercial uses situated along Main Street. Land use south of the railroad corridor should remain medium density residential use. The property currently occupied by the FMC Corporation should continue to be used for industrial activity, whether occupied by one large industry or a combination of uses.

Medium density residential should remain the prominent use in the area and support commercial uses in the central business district and along Telegraph Road. Restaurants, banking, professional offices, overnight accommodations, entertainment, retail, arts and crafts, and other personal service businesses should be

encouraged to locate within this area to serve both residents and tourists, alike. Main Street and State Street should continue as the center for civic activity and commerce for residents, and provide a gateway and activity center for tourists who enter the Village along the Canal. The re-use of existing buildings in the central business district, certain of which are historic, is encouraged to preserve community character and promote an inviting atmosphere for tourism and economic activity.

Telegraph Road (State Route 31) should function as a secondary commercial service area for residents and as a gateway for visitors traveling to or through the Village along this roadway. Telegraph Road, is also a minor arterial which also provides regional access for commercial trucking. Land uses along Telegraph Road should continue to consist of a mix of commercial and retail uses and medium density residential. Businesses that are appropriate for Telegraph Road include neighborhood retail services, professional offices, restaurants and entertainment. In addition, the area can support a limited amount of wholesale and light industrial use, as shown on Map 8.

Existing parks and recreation areas should be preserved and enhanced along the Canal and new park space should be created along the east side of Jeddo Creek, immediately south of the Canal. Parkland uses should be expanded in the area around Margaret Droman Park, on the north side of the Canal as well. The State Canal Corporation currently owns Canal right-of-way in this area that could be utilized and improved for passive recreation to enhance and compliment tourist use of the Canal.

North of Mechanic Street, land uses should remain low to medium density residential. The existing open space should be allowed to develop as a mix of housing types (both single family residences and multi-family uses) to provide for a greater variety of housing needs. The large parcel of Village-owned property, which is situated between North Main Street and North Hartland Street, should be developed as parkland for active recreation.

There are two parcels in the northern section of the Village that are designated as open space. The first is a 2.2-acre landlocked parcel on the west side of North Hartland Road, which is bisected by Jeddo Creek. Most of this site is located within the 100-year flood plain, which severely limits its development potential. The other parcel is a 1.2-acre Village-owned property, also on the west side of North Hartland Road. This property could be improved for passive recreational use by the Village; due to environmental constraints on the western portion of the site, it has limited value for active recreational use. There are also two large parcels of agricultural land that, although designated for residential use, are considered as potential sites for future public or private recreation should the opportunity or need arise. These sites include a 9-acre farm property located on the east side of Stone Road in the Town of Hartland, and a 21.2-acre farm property located proximate to the Hartland-Royalton Town boundary, in the Town of Royalton. This site is favored for future recreational use because it could be linked to the use of the Canal and adjoining right-of-way.

2. Proposed Water Uses

Recreational boating is, and should continue to be, the primary water use along the Canal. The growth in the number of visitors to the Village of Middleport who arrive by boat, as observed by local officials, will likely continue. As described in the inventory and analysis, a key component of the Village's waterfront revitalization strategy is to take advantage of the recreational tourism potential of the Erie Canal. To this

end, projects proposed for the area should be oriented around improving and increasing recreational amenities along the Canal and revitalizing the central business district.

B. Proposed Projects

The shoreline east and west of the Main Street lift bridge should be used for transient docking and improved with new water and power connections and play equipment to make the Canal a more inviting area for recreation and tourism. The Erie Canalway trail, along the northern shoreline towpath, should also be improved to enhance public use. In addition, other capital improvements should be made in the Village to improve economic activity and the overall quality of life (see Map 9).

1. Margaret Droman Park Improvements

Margaret Droman Park is a state-owned two-acre waterfront parcel that presently consists of a large grassy area with little or no amenities. This park would be improved with playground equipment, a picnic shelter and picnic tables, grills, and landscaping. Water and electric hook ups and a rowing dock could also be installed parallel to the shoreline to serve motorized and non-motorized boats, canoes, and crew boats for rowing competition. A small formal parking lot would be established along Mechanic Street for four or five cars. The development of this park would be tied to improvements to adjoining properties (as outlined below) to enhance tourist activities and it would serve local residents who currently lack opportunities for passive recreation along the north side of the Canal.

Preliminary estimates indicate that the improvements to this park would cost in the range of \$90,000, which includes site preparation and landscaping costs, as well as the cost of equipment.

2. Northam Boathouse (former Lone Star hotel building)

This project is the acquisition and expansion of a 708 square-foot building adjacent to Margaret Droman Park, using a 1.4-acre vacant property owned by the Canal Corporation to support the expansion of the building. This building, c.1820, was the first store to open in the Village and is a significant Erie Canal and Village landmark. The building and accompanying improvements are intended to serve as a multi-purpose recreation and visitor service facility. The facility is envisioned to provide public restrooms and showers to tourists, bicycle or canoe rentals to all visitors, storage for rowing equipment and as an information center for promoting regional attractions. The docks proposed in Margaret Droman Park will compliment canoe rentals and rowing activities envisioned which are much needed in the area.

Preliminary estimates for the renovation of the Lone Star building are in the range of \$200,000, depending on the extent of interior and exterior work required to renovate this structure for public use.

3. Paonessa Property Acquisition

There is a vacant parcel of land on the north side of the Canal, between Margaret Droman Park and the Northam Boathouse that should be acquired by the Village for recreational use. This property would allow for the continuation of parkland uses that would compliment the use of the boathouse property.

It is estimated that the purchase of this property would cost approximately \$6,000.

4. Public Works Rest Station Renovation

The public shower facilities currently maintained by the Village in their Public Works garage on the south side of the canal require renovation. The facility has been overburdened with boating visitors in recent years. The project would require a facelift and expansion of the interior including the installation of ceramic tile to replace the concrete floor, additional shower stalls, toilets and sinks, a new entrance door, an upgrade of the interior lighting, and the installation of a ventilation system. A long-term goal for this site is to relocate the public works operation to a more suitable location, away from the waterfront, and redevelop this site for recreational use.

Preliminary estimates for this renovation work are in the range of \$40,000, which would include a 560 square-foot expansion of the existing restroom area.

5. Francis Street Storm Sewer improvements

The installation of 1300 feet of new oversized drainage culverts along Francis Street and Kelly Avenue is needed to replace undersized culverts that are unable to handle stormwater runoff during heavy rainfalls. At present the street floods during rainfalls of two-inch or more or during a fast snowmelt, which occurs very often year after year.

Preliminary cost estimates for the remediation of the flooding problems that occur in the Francis Street and Kelly Avenue area are in the range of about \$750,000.

6. Gould Property Park Development

The Gould property is a 4.5-acre parcel on Mechanic Street that is owned by the Village. Currently this property consists of open, undeveloped meadow. It is proposed for development as a community park with two ball diamonds, a soccer field, play equipment and a walking/fitness and skating trail, as well as restrooms, and a picnic area and pavilion. Improvements would also include all site preparation and drainage, security lighting and landscaping. The actual site arrangement and variety of amenities for this site would be determined through the preparation of a concept plan for the facility. This project would provide recreational facilities to Village residents, particularly those living north of the Canal, which are presently only available at the high school or outside the Village.

The preliminary cost estimate for the improvements at the Gould property is \$325,000.

7. North Hartland Road Property

The Village owns a 1.2-acre property, which is located on the western side of North Hartland Road, near Chase Road. This site consists of undeveloped open space. The western half of the site contains federally designated wetlands. Due to the environmental constraints, this site would be utilized for passive recreational purposes. It would be improved with a small picnic area and utilized for bird watching or other limited passive activities.

The estimated cost of improving this site is \$7,500.

8. Car Top Boat Launch Site

To enhance boating activity on the Canal in the Village, a launch site for non-motorized vessels should be developed. Currently, the best location for this facility would be the Basket Factory restaurant site. This property has a small marina and it could easily accommodate a launch. Limited parking is available, however parking is not sufficient for trailers. The launch would likely consist of a floating dock that could be attached to the fixed docking structure at the marina. This would require retrofitting of the existing dock, and also ensure that the site is handicapped accessible.

The estimated cost of the car top boat launch site is \$130,000.

9. Canalway Trail Improvements

The Canalway Trail is interrupted at the Main Street lift bridge. A crosswalk should be painted across this roadway. In addition, to alert motorists of the potential for passing bicyclists and pedestrians, a crosswalk sign should be affixed to the bridge.

The estimated cost of this project is \$2,500.

10. Canal Wall Repair

This project would call for the repair of the entire extent of the seawall along both sides of the Canal to fix spalling and weathering. The repairs made should be coordinated with the Village's proposed improvements to Margaret Droman Park to accommodate the proposed parallel boat dock, electrical hook ups and water hook ups. The Canal is owned and operated by the New York State Canal Corporation, therefore, these repairs are the responsibility of that agency and no costs have been estimated.

11. Overlay District for the Central Business District

The Village of Middleport has a significant area of waterfront, which is in close proximity to the central business district. This area contains important cultural and scenic resources that require proper planning. To enable the Village to benefit from the location of the central business district in close proximity to the Canal, district improvements, such as streetscape design, signage and landscaping, as well as regulatory standards, would be designed as a part of the overlay. The overlay district would allow for the preservation of historic structures, proper landscaping and aesthetic controls and shoreline improvements to enhance the character of the area.

The estimated cost of preparing an overlay district for the Village is in the range of \$20,000.

12. Historic District Designation

The Village of Middleport should take appropriate steps to designate the central business district, between Church Street and State Street (including the post office property), to be of local historic significance and pursue having this area designated as an historic district on the New York State Register of Historic Places. Such a designation would help to protect character and historic integrity of the area from the adverse impacts

of proposed development projects. In addition, this designation would allow property owners to utilize special State tax credits and incentives for funding rehabilitation projects and restoration programs. The Village also has the option of providing their own incentives or programs to property owners in the district.

13. Repair and Replacement of Sidewalks

Numerous locations throughout the Village are in need of sidewalk repairs. There are also locations where sidewalks should be installed to enhance pedestrian opportunities in the area and provide easier access to the central business district. Focus would initially be placed on areas in the vicinity of the waterfront where the installation of sidewalk or sidewalk repairs would improve public access. No cost estimates have been determined for this project; the cost of sidewalk repair and replacement or direct installation is typically estimated on a square footage basis. Currently, replacement costs about \$1.25 per square foot and installation about \$4.25 per square foot.

14. Sanitary Sewer and Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements

The project would encompass the study, and physical replacement of problematic sewer lines to reduce infiltration and inflow that has placed an excess burden upon the wastewater treatment plant. These replacements would reduce flows to the plant that would in turn free up capacity to accommodate any future commercial or industrial use. The Plant is also in need of upgrades to filtrate nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients. These filtration improvements would improve water quality in Jeddo Creek north of the Canal that serves as the plant's outfall.

The preliminary cost estimate for the infiltration and inflow repair work is \$2,600,000. This is based on cost estimates developed as part of an Infiltration and Inflow Analysis report prepared for the Village in 1974 and revised to reflect present day costs.

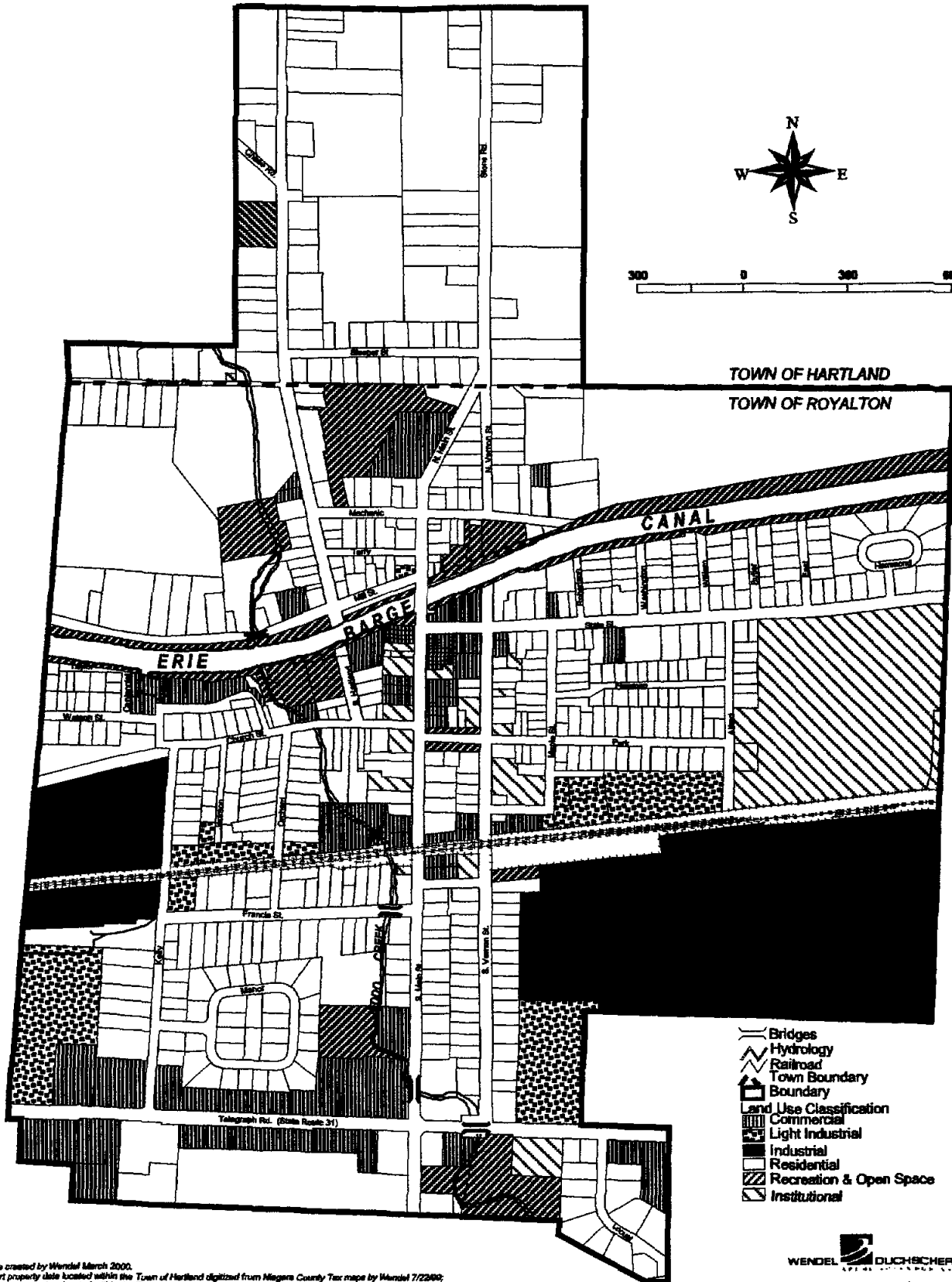
15. Economic Development Plan

In an effort to improve the vitality of the central business district and more effectively promote tourism and attract a greater number of visitors to the area, an economic revitalization strategy must be developed. This economic development plan would capitalize on existing assets and determine what types of businesses are desired and would benefit the area, how the existing zoning relates to the identified needs and what actions should be taken to make the changes necessary to rejuvenate the business district.

It is estimated that the preparation of this plan would cost in the range of \$20,000.

PROPOSED LAND AND WATER USES FOR THE VILLAGE OF MIDDLEPORT

MAP 8



Source:
Proposed Land Use created by Wendel March 2000.
Village of Middleport property data located within the Town of Hartland digitized from Niagara County Tax maps by Wendel 7/22/00;
Village of Middleport property data located within the Town of Royalton obtained from digital files current to 7/22/00 provided by Niagara County Real Property Services

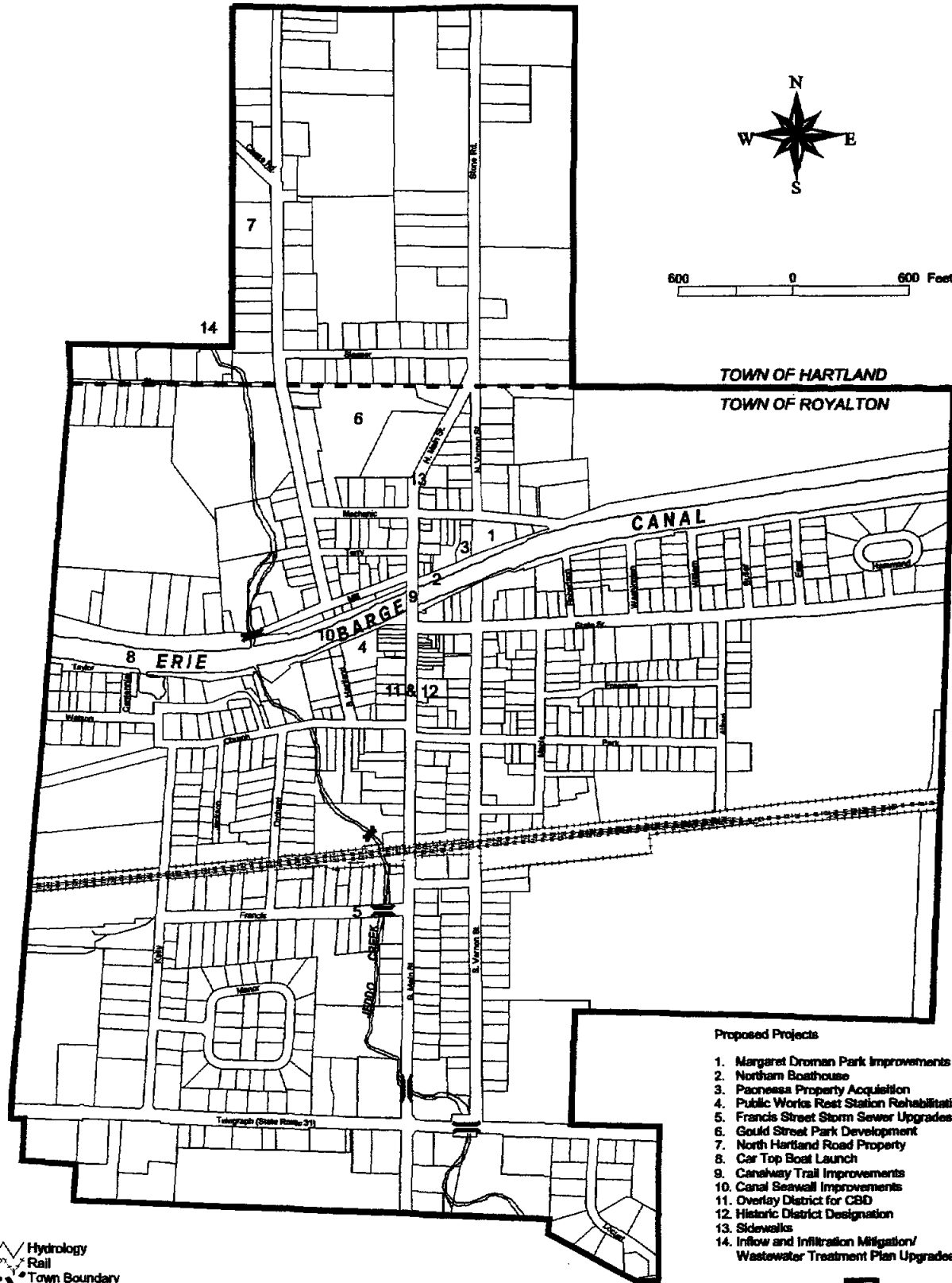
WENDEL DUCHESNEAU
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS

January 2000

Map 8 - Proposed Land and Water Uses

VILLAGE OF MIDDLEPORT PROPOSED PROJECTS

MAP 9



Proposed Projects

1. Margaret Droman Park Improvements
2. Northam Boathouse
3. Paoneesa Property Acquisition
4. Public Works Rest Station Rehabilitation
5. Francis Street Storm Sewer Upgrades
6. Gould Street Park Development
7. North Hartland Road Property
8. Car Top Boat Launch
9. Conahway Trail Improvements
10. Canal Seawall Improvements
11. Overlay District for CBD
12. Historic District Designation
13. Sidewalks
14. Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation/
Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

- Hydrology
- Rail
- Town Boundary
- Village Boundary
- Parcels

WENDEL DUCHICHERER
CORPORATION

January 2000

Map 9 - Proposed Projects