

**SECTION 2**

**INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS**

## 2.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

### 2.1.1 Geography

Newfane is situated in the Iroquois Plain below the Niagara Escarpment. Located in the north part of Niagara County, this plain is the final formation before Lake Ontario. It is primarily composed of sandy, fine-textured soils overlaid with glacial till. The area is underlaid with Queenston Shale bedrock (about 1200 feet thick) which consists of brick-red shale of various composition (including occasional clay and sandy particles).

The plain is relatively flat in Newfane varying only 60 feet from the south boundary of the LWRA-Drake Settlement Road to Lake Ontario (330 feet to 270 feet at the lake). This represents a general 0.5% slope in the area that leads to steep bluffs lining the lake and Eighteen Mile Creek. The lake level is about 245 feet resulting in 25 foot bluffs along most of the shoreline. Only a small portion of the waterfront at Olcott near Hopkins and Keg Creek are naturally accessible to the water due to the extensive bluffs. The steep bluffs are unstable and subject to erosion, especially along the lake where wave and weather have historically diminished the shoreline.

Predominate soils in the coastal area are part of the Howard-Arkport-Phelps Association. These are deep, well drained soils occasionally stratified with underlying sand and gravel and often possess a fine to very fine sandy loam surface. They are exceptionally good for farming and contain some of the best, highest yield fruit farms in the county. Subordinate soils include Claverack and Dunkirk which are similar and possess a sandy or silt loam surface layer. Primary problems of these soils are erosion from surface blowing, slope deterioration and high permeability creating potential pollution problems from septic systems. This requires proper farm cultivation practices, vegetative cover and sewer service to control development and extensive soil usage.

The area along Eighteen Mile Creek is similar to the coast in soil types but also includes soils common to the Niagara Collomer Association. These are somewhat poorly drained soils composed of a silt loam surface and silty clay loam subsurface. These soils are also good for farming, but represent significant restrictions to development due to drainage needs, sanitary sewer requirements and instability.

Table 1 indicates the relative amounts of soil coverage in each section of the LWRA. While all of the soils are good to excellently suited for farming, Arkport, Howard and Dunkirk soils are most acceptable of the group for development, Hudson soils are most poorly suited due to runoff/permeability/stability problems and the rest are marginally adaptable to development. Only Arkport and toward soils possess characteristics suitable for septic systems. Generally, these soils are fair to well suited

for wildlife habitats that need woodland and grain crop/pasture characteristics (eg: pheasant, rabbit, fox, woodchuck, grouse, squirrel, deer, raccoon) and poorly suited for wetland wildlife habitats (eg: characteristics suitable for ducks, herons, muskrat, beaver, etc.).

**TABLE 1**  
**PREDOMINANT SOILS**  
**NEWFANE LWRP**

	<b>Olcott</b>	<b>Coastal Area West</b>	<b>Coastal Area East</b>	<b>18 Mile Ck. West</b>	<b>18 Mile Ck. East</b>
Arkport	41.3%	27.1%	50.6%	1.2%	0.8%
Claverack	--	13.0%	--	--	--
Collamer	1.4%	--	22.6%	1.6%	--
Dunkirk	--	--	10.3%	--	--
Hilton	--	--	--	22.0%	43.2%
Howard	55.9%	46.8%	2.8%	55.7%	9.1%
Hudson	--	--	--	--	23.5%
Phelps	--	<u>11.3%</u>	--	<u>8.5%</u>	<u>1.5%</u>
Sub-total:	98.5%	98.2%	86.3%	89.2%	78.1%
Other <sup>1</sup>	<u>1.4%</u>	<u>1.8%</u>	<u>13.7%</u>	<u>10.8%</u>	<u>21.9%</u>
Total:	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

Source: Soil Survey of Niagara Co., U.S. Dept. of Agriculture  
Soil Conservation Service (1972):

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<sup>1</sup> "Other" represents various soils in minor amounts (less than 2X each) - Appleton, Canandaigua, Cosad, Cazenovia, Galen, Lockport, Niagara, Reinbeck and Alluvial.

## **2.1.2 Fish and Wildlife Habitats**

### **Fish**

Three principal habitats exist in the Newfane LWRA - Lake Ontario Shoreline, Eighteen Mile Creek and Keg Creek. The entire Lake Ontario shoreline is considered a significant spawning area for warmwater fish that attracts thousands of sport fishermen each year. These include game fish such as bass, pike, pickerel and muskellunge; pan fish such as yellow perch, bullhead, sunfish and crappie; and some coarse and forage fish that attract game fish (alewife, drum, etc.). Cold water species (smelt, trout and salmon) are also known to feed along the shoreline and habit area creeks. Eighteen Mile Creek is renowned as the location of exceptional spring and fall salmon and brown trout migrations. Limited to the lower section by the Burt Dam (two miles south of Olcott), the salmon runs attract snag fishermen in the fall. Brown trout and northern pike utilize the lower creek for spawning and refuge. Upstream of the dam is a warmwater habitat for pan and forage fish. Keg Creek is also known for spring migrations of rainbow trout, coho salmon and, occasionally, spawning runs of white sucker. Both creeks present favorable habitats for warmwater fish feeding and attract bass and others in minor numbers.

As a result of these habitats, the NYSDEC has established the area as a location for receipt of its Lake Ontario fish stocking program. In 1990, 167,600 lake trout, 35,000 brown trout, 9,780 rainbow trout, 97,420 coho salmon and 180,000 chinook salmon were released at Olcott and 11,100 steelhead trout were released at Keg Creek (NYSDEC, 1990). This represented 53% of the Lake Ontario stocking in Niagara County (949,610 in 1990). Increases are expected in subsequent years.

### **Fowl**

The Lake Ontario shoreline is a minor natural habitat for wintering waterfowl offering open water, woods and marsh/wetland areas suitable for nesting (primary areas are along the Niagara River). Typical species observed during the 1977 NYSDEC survey included mallard, scaup, common goldeneye and merganser. They represented about 5% of the regional population surveyed and the smaller of the areas identified.

The LWRA has also been identified as a prime pheasant habitat. Areas of crop farming and brush land offer both cover and appropriate feedstock for the birds. While these areas have been reduced by development and changing farm practices (elimination of hedgerows and brush), a few areas along the coast still exist to the east of Olcott. Remaining woodlands along Eighteen Mile Creek, Keg Creek and Hopkins Creek offer cover and conditions for nesting of small birds such as sparrows, and songbirds.

## **Wildlife**

There are no significant regional wildlife habitats within the LWRA. Focal areas offering characteristics sympathetic to wildlife cover include wooded areas, brushland and wetlands. Most of these are sparse and disrupted by either development or active farming and do not provide continuous forage/nesting opportunities. The prime area of potential is the wooded and adjacent wetland areas along Eighteen Mile Creek. This may offer enough space and continuity to support beaver, raccoon, muskrat, waterfowl and other small mammals. No deer wintering areas are evident.

Woodlands are likely to contain red maple, beach, hemlock, white oak, chestnut and hickory indigenous of the Oak Hickory biome prevalent in the county. Wetlands, primarily in Eighteen Mile Creek and Hopkins Creek are known to contain big burred, cattails, pondweed, wild celery and purple loosestrife (NYSDEC, 1976). Lilies are also evident along Eighteen Mile Creek near Burt Dam. Other potential plant species include bluebottles, gentian and a variety of ferns.

The majority of mammals found in the area include those tolerant of human activity. These are fox, squirrel, skunk, opossum, moles and mice which easily find cover in brush, fields and ground.

### **2.1.3 Flood, Erosion and Wetlands**

Flood areas along the Newfane shoreline are limited by the steep bluffs that line most waterfront areas. Principal low lands subject to flooding exist in Olcott (along the shore west of Eighteen Mile Creek) and along Hopkins and Keg Creeks. Minor flooding also is possible along the east shore of Eighteen Mile Creek in Olcott. Although these areas are subject to periodic 100 year flooding (FEMA Flood Maps, 1981), only the Olcott area poses any threat to development (Map 2).

Shoreline erosion in the waterfront represents major problems as area soils and shale bedrock are quite susceptible to deterioration in steep areas. Major Lake Ontario shoreline damage occurred in 1973 as a result of heavy storms. Significant bluff erosion was noted and Federal grants were made available to coastal residents for erosion protection facilities. Each landowner was offered up to \$5000 each. However, the diversity of implementation and lack of continuity in the program compromised its effectiveness. Some owners have established successful bank protection through terracing, planting and shorewalls, while an adjacent property that did not participate has eroded undermining the protection structures. Still others used much less effective means that have had little success. The use of large stone rip-rap (boulders), interlocking concrete planks and, to a lesser extent, filled drums have

been successful in slope stabilization along with the use of vegetative cover. Unprotected areas have lost 10-15 feet of shoreline relative to the protected areas. Map 2 indicates the sections of Lake Ontario and Eighteen Mile Creek that are continuing to possess high erosion potential.

The majority of the Lake Ontario shoreline contains "natural protective features" that reduce shoreline erosion and protect property. They are comprised of the steep bluffs and occasional beaches. The area (Map 2) is identified on NYSDEC Coastal Erosion Hazard Area maps and covers most of the lakefront outside of Olcott Hamlet (from the west town line to West Olcott Beach/end of the bluff and from Lockport Street/Route 78 to the east town line). A "structural hazard area" along Lake Ontario from Phillip Road west approximately 2500 feet west. Erosion is identified at a rate of 1.0 feet per year (NYSDEC Coastal Maps) and would require a 65 foot development setback from the top bluffs (Article 34; 6NYCRR Part 505). Town of Newfane ordinances require a 100 foot setback along lakes and streams.

Map 2 also documents wetlands within the LWRA. Numerous wet areas exist in the area and are characteristic of soil deposits and glacial formation of the Iroquois Plain. Most are too small for state designation and offer little benefit to plant/wildlife species. Major wetlands include Eighteen Mile Creek and Hopkins Creek. The Hopkins Creek wetland (approximately 30 acres) is closed to the lake most of the year. It is well established and offers plant and wildlife habitat opportunities, with little benefit for fisheries, unless the mouth of the stream is open during a period when lake fish would attempt to spawn. The Keg Creek wetland runs along the creek from Lake Ontario to Route 18 and occupies the low adjacent lands. Situated among farm land, it is better suited to fish habitats and is known for spring spawning and spring and fall fish runs that attract numerous anglers (low summer flows limit the season). Heavy pedestrian traffic during runs often trample and litter the area threatening the characteristics that attract the fish. Vehicular traffic and parking congest the road and cause hazards to travelers.

The Eighteen Mile Creek wetland (60± acres) stretches from the Route 18 bridge to Burt Dam. Open to Lake Ontario, the wetland is continually flushed from lake inundation and upstream flow. It is 8-12 feet deep along its narrow channel and lined with alluvial flats (2 to 3 feet deep) that support characteristic plants and afford both wildlife and fish habitat. While some warm water fish spawning occurs, annual fish runs of stocked salmon attract substantial anglers. The Burt Dam thwarts salmon spawning attempts, but is the focus of thousands of fish snaggers annually to take advantage of the run. The result, however, is extensive littering of fish carcass abandoned along the creek. The upper reaches not only present major habitat opportunities, but also offer dramatic aesthetic/scenic values of land forms and flora. The primary threats to this wetland are from development (marina) pressures north of Route 18 and extensive upstream pollution that has contaminated sediment with

metals. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' evaluation of stream sediment and water quality (1981) documented the extensive pollution problem as far north as the mouth of the creek.

#### **2.1.4 Water Resources**

Principal water resources in the coastal area include those already identified – Lake Ontario, Eighteen Mile Creek, Hopkins Creek and Keg Creek. There are four other streams along the waterfront that are intermittent drainage ways flowing sporadically during the year.

Lake Ontario is an open, deep body of water with a diversity of uses (recreation, power generation, ship transport, industrial use, water supply, etc.). In the Newfane area, it is primarily a recreational resource. Area and regional residents utilize the lake for swimming, fishing, boating and tourism for a large part of the year. These uses form the economic basis of the area and have historically been the attraction for Town Coastal Development. Much of the shoreline development has located along the waterfront to take advantage of either water access or scenic opportunities afforded by the lake.

The lake water quality is classified as an "A" segment (swimmable, fishable, water source). As the last downstream lake in the Great Lakes system, it contains the culmination of upstream pollutants and fluctuates in water level (4 feet) as part of the joint U.S./Canadian control of the system. The lake is subject to rural farm runoff (fertilizer, pesticides), industrial discharge and toxic seepage, municipal treatment plant surcharges and septic leachate. In the 1970's, Lake Ontario experienced a number of recorded fish kills and sporadic beach closings due to toxic absorption and high coliform bacterial levels, respectively. Although not recurrent since 1976, this problem is of paramount importance to the community and its dependence on recreation use of the lake.

Eighteen Mile Creek is a major lake tributary draining 93 square miles of land from Lockport to Lake Ontario. The last 2.5 miles (Drake Settlement Road to the lake) is in the LWRA outflowing into Lake Ontario at Olcott. The creek is divided into three major segments:

1. Olcott Harbor (Route 18 to Lake Ontario) – The harbor is used actively for boat recreation, launching and lake access and is classified as a "B" segment. The entrance is protected by two Federal piers and maintained by USCOE dredging annually (12 feet depth). This confluence of lake and creek has been a historical focus of Town water activity and the initiative for settlement at Olcott.

2. Eighteen Mile Creek Wetland (Burt Dam to Route 18) – Previously described (2.1.3), this segment is used for fish and wildlife habitat, bank fishing and boat/sport fishing. The Burt Dam (an old hydro-electric dam) restricts upstream fish spawning, but is the focus of annual fish runs that attract fishermen to the culmination of salmon migration. It carries a Class C designation.
3. Upper Creek (Drake Settlement Road to Burt Dam) – The area above the dam support selected pan and forage fish and is used for bank fishing. Limited access restricts usage. The area has been subject to industrial discharge from firms in Burt.

The water quality of Eighteen Mile Creek has long been a problem as it is the culmination of extensive upstream industrial and municipal discharges. In addition, permeable soils along the creek enable rural septic leachate and farm-runoff to infiltrate the water and bottom sediment. This has resulted in extensive bottom pollution and occasional water pollution that effect water uses. Wetland plants/vegetation provide some beneficial effect in precipitating and entrapping heavier pollutants and restricting their flow to Lake Ontario. This also keeps creek sediments concentrated though and compromises its fish and wildlife attributes. The creek also offers dramatic scenic opportunities from the surrounding banks and from water level (by boat) of vegetation, slopes and water.

Keg Creek is a small stream in the eastern LWRP. It provides excellent fishing opportunities during annual fish migrations. Low water flows in the summer months do not allow for extended use. The creek drains farm land to the south and is subject to runoff problems. Also an undesignated wetland (Route 18 to Lake Ontario), it offers marginal habitat benefits due to the lack of surrounding supportive land characteristics. It is a "D" classified stream of poor quality.

Hopkins Creek in the western portion of the LWRA includes the segment from Coomer Road and across Route 18 to Lake Ontario. Closed much of the year by siltation at the mouth, it offers limited use opportunity. Its closure has created a well-established wetland at the mouth that has wildlife and scenic benefits, but little fishing opportunity. It also provides drainage and flood relief for surrounding lands. Due to the major fish activity in other area streams, there is little doubt that the opening of this creek would further encourage fish spawning/feeding. However, it would also compromise the continuity of the wetland. The creek segment also carries a "D" classification.

The value of the water resources to the Newfane and county economy is of major importance. Recent studies by Niagara County attest to the impact on the community. They indicated that county fishing and boat recreation along Lake Ontario resulted



in the highest yields and greatest angler days in the State for salmon, trout, black bass and panfish (December 1976-1977).

Between 1980 and 1987 resident fishing licenses increased from 1,012 to 2,374 while non-resident licenses increased 79 to 11,184 (predominantly Ohio, Pennsylvania and Ontario). Average daily expenditures in the area were indicated to be \$20-25 per day resulting in \$10-12 Million in annual revenues generated for area businesses. These are expected to grow during the 1990's.

Boat launchings and moorings also Increased with 54.6% of 1981 county launches occurring in Olcott. By 1989, the number of launches at Olcott increased to 10,048, nearly a 59% increase from 1981.

The Niagara County Study projected a need for facilities to accommodate 1420 new daily launchings and 1200 new boat slips within the next five years. This is nearly 3.2 times the 1980 daily launches in the county of 440 per day. A substantial amount of this estimated demand will be focused on Olcott due to its current dominance in county boating/fishing activity. This has created significant pressures for development of access and mooring facilities. If only one-half of the existing county demands were focused on Olcott (25% of the county rather than 54.6%), then 1500 additional fishermen could be anticipated, generating 350 daily launches; requirements for eight new launch ramps; 300-400 new mooring spaces; and \$3 Million in new expenditures in the area. This development would require substantial improvements to area water-oriented and support facilities.

Olcott Harbor is the most developed of all waterfront resources. The entrance is protected by two Federal Piers (protection and fishing) maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which dredges and disposes of material in an open lake site 1.5 miles north of the harbor. The harbor contains 30 public slips (with parking for 60 trailered vehicles) and 88-90 private slips. The Town Marina possesses the only public launch ramps in the area. There are no public slips or parking on the east side of the harbor. Expansion opportunities in the harbor include the Town Marina (20-30 slips and parking), the basin on the west side south of the Yacht Club and additional slips along the east side of the harbor. There are major impediments to each of these opportunities that would need removing before expansion could take place. These include:

- Shallow bedrock in the west harbor basin would require blasting. The basin is lined with developed property.
- The east harbor shore is privately owned and steeply sloped necessitating acquisition and major slope renovation for any access.

- The harbor channel still contains an old bridge abutment, left from removal of the Main Street bridge, and a shallow flat that is a hazard to navigation and limits expansion in the narrow part of the harbor toward Route 18.
- The harbor area adjacent to the Federal Piers is subject to wind and wave actions that damage moored craft. An outer breakwall at the harbor entrance is needed to effectively use this area (west harbor basin and east shore to Main Street).

## 2.2 COASTAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

### 2.2.1 Land Use

Olcott has historically been a focal point of maritime, tourism and recreation activity since the early 1900's. Originally a commercial harbor for freight transfer and trade, the Erie Canal significantly reduced its importance in marine commerce. Commerce facilities eventually gave way to dockage, fishing and marine repair uses. This rose to its height during the 1930's and 1940's when regional transit/trolley service brought thousands of tourists to Olcott for swimming and recreation at the hotel and its beach and pier (now Krull Park). The commercial center (East Main Street) was alive with amusements, restaurants and tourist service/commerce. This has declined until there is only the fishing and marine activity left to support the community. The hotel is seldom used, commercial-recreation facilities on East Main Street are deteriorated and under utilized, facilities on each side of Eighteen Mile Creek are isolated from one another and marine structures are in disrepair. In addition, the fully developed and deteriorated state of much of the adjacent waterfront area discourages revitalization efforts and private investment. Deteriorated residential and commercial areas east and west of the harbor must be redeveloped to accommodate parking and support services necessary to enhance marine uses.

The LWRA is predominantly composed of rural uses. Development is concentrated in the communities of Olcott and Burt and in low-densities along the Lake Ontario Shoreline and the east side of Eighteen Mile Creek. The only other concentrations of development in the Town of Newfane are the hamlets of Newfane and Wrights Corners south of the LWRA. The identified coastal area contains 1968.9 acres and represents 6.0% (32,920 acres on 53 square mile, total town area) of the Town and 36.1% of areas in hamlets (5459 acres of hamlets in Town).

Map 3 depicts categorical land uses within the LWRA as collected from field surveys (October 1984). Detailed acreage as identified were calculated from Town assessment maps and summarized in Table 2. The Hamlet of Olcott is 212.6 acres and represents 10.8% of the LWRA area. However, it contains 33.2% of developed land (residential, commercial, industrial), 14.6% of the public/semi-public land

(recreational) and 53.0% of the dwelling units. The hamlet is predominantly residential (36.2%), while the rest of the LWRA is agricultural (42.7%) and woodland (20.0%). All commercial uses in the LWRA are in Olcott.

**TABLE 2**

**LAND USE  
(Acreage)**

	<b>Olcott</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Remainin g Area</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total LWRA</b>	<b>%</b>
Residential	77.0 Ac.	(36.2%)	226.8 Ac.	(12.9%)	303.8 Ac.	(15.4%)
Dwelling Units	342		261		603	
Seasonal	--		38		38	
Multiple Family	--		4		4	
Commercial	39.1	(18.4%)	--	( -- )	39.1	( 2.0%)
Industrial	--	( -- )	6.8	( 0.4%)	6.8	( 0.3%)
Agricultural	--	( -- )	841.1	(47.9%)	841.1	(42.7%)
Woodlands	--	( -- )	169.8	( 9.7%)	169.8	( 8.6%)
Public/ Semi-Public	57.3	(27.0%)	335.6	(19.11%)	392.9	(20.0%)
Roads/ Utilities	30.7	(14.4%)	95.2	( 5.4%)	125.9	( 6.4%)
Public	30.5	--	85.1	--	115.6	--
Private	0.2	--	10.1	--	10.3	--
Vacant	<u>8.5</u>	<u>( 4.0%)</u>	<u>81.0</u>	<u>( 4.6%)</u>	<u>89.5</u>	<u>( 4.6%)</u>
Total:	212.6 Ac	(100.0%)	1756.3 Ac	(100.0%)	1968.9 Ac	(100.0%)

## **Residential**

Residential uses comprise 15.4% of the coastal area. These are primarily single-family units concentrated in Olcott at a density of 4.4 dwellings per acre. The remainder of the LWRA is lower density singles at 1.3 units per acre. Thirty-eight (38) seasonal units exist adjacent to Hopkins and Keg Creeks and one recent apartment (four units) has been built near Phillips Road (east of Olcott). Most of the dwellings are in fair to good condition except for a concentration of crowded, deteriorating units in east Olcott (north of Route 18). Areas of deficiency are shown on Figure 1. Conditions were improved with assistance of an approved HUD Small Cities Block Grant for renovation of the Target Area (\$750,000). Low-density residences also line the east side of Eighteen Mile Creek south to Burt and the southern-most part of the west side. These are on large lots in good condition.

## **Commercial/Industrial**

All of the area commercial development is in Olcott. These include marine service around the harbor, seasonal tourist facilities along East Main Street (bar, amusements, old hotels, etc.), a bait/tackle shop on Route 18, gas station on Lockport Street and a new restaurant/motel on Route 18. The East Main Street commercial area was quite deteriorated and was scheduled for district renovation as part of the above mentioned HUD Grant (Figure 2). While area attractiveness and economic viability will be improved with this program, parking and diversity of services still remain major problems. Commercial uses represent only 2.0% of the LWRA.

Industrial uses are located in Burt and represent 0.3% of total coastal land (6.8 acres). Among these is the Burt Dam, a hydroelectric facility which has been renovated by a local consortium and currently generates power.

## **Recreation**

Existing recreation opportunities in the coastal area are heavily oriented toward water activities. The primary facilities are publically owned and reside in Krull Park, the Town Marina and Fisherman's Park. These uses total 329 acres and comprise 83.7% of all public/semi-public uses and 16.7% of total LWRA lands. They are developed as follows:

- Krull Park (318 acres, County owned) – The park possesses 45 acres of development which includes 1680 feet of shoreline in Olcott. It was the site of the old Olcott Hotel and pier that attracted tourists each summer. It currently contains a beach, parking, playground, ball fields and a gently terraced slope to the water.

- Newfane Marina (6.78 acres, Town owned) – The park is a public launch site on the west side of Eighteen Mile Creek at the Route 18 bridge. It contains six ramps, parking (50-60 spaces), restrooms and 30 seasonal and 25 transient docks in excellent condition.
- Fisherman's Park (3.8 acres, Town owned) – This steep site on Eighteen Mile Creek at Burt is a fishing access with 30 parking spaces off Route 78.

Other private recreation opportunities include the numerous marina facilities in Olcott Harbor. Many of these are under-utilized and in need of improvement. The lake and coastal creeks also represent significant recreational resources for fishing and boating activity. These facilities are heavily used in spring, summer and fall. Each year, six annual fishing derbies are held at Olcott which attracts thousands of anglers and burdens area services.

### **Agriculture**

Farming represents the largest single use in the Newfane waterfront (42.7% of total lands). The area contains some of the finest orchards in Niagara county yielding apples, cherries, peaches and pears. Orchards line the lake shore east and west of Olcott and are afforded some protection from existing Agricultural Districts. The area west of Olcott is part of the Newfane-Wilson Agriculture District (4,190 acres of which 7.8% or 325 acres is in Newfane) and the area east of Phillips Road is part of the Newfane Somerset/Hartland Agriculture District (12,735 acres of which 4.1% or 516 acres is in the LWRA). This does not eliminate development pressures and care should be taken to preserve this valuable resource.

The best farming and prime soils are located north of NYS Route 18. The entire area is viable farmland except where development around Olcott exists. The 841+ acres actively farmed in the LWRA represents 0.6% of the 152,713 acres of cropland in Niagara County and 5.0% of the 16,925 acres in local agricultural districts. Local proposals for residential use have requested up to 50 acres for subdivision coincident with sewer/water west of Olcott. This represents less than 6.0% of LWRA agricultural lands (0.3% of farmland in local districts) and poses no significant threat to this key waterfront resource. If development occurs, it will displace a small amount of farmland in order to protect the waterfront for public access (e.g., shoreline).

Limited crop farming is also conducted along the west side of Eighteen Mile Creek. Some of this land has been removed from active production and is being reclaimed by brush.

Other uses in the LWRA include woodlands (20.0%), roads/utilities (6.4%) and vacant land (4.6%). The lake shore also contains some private roads (10.3 acres - 8.2% of all roads) which provide lakefront access. Originally used for seasonal cottages, the roads now serve year-round residences that will likely generate increased municipal service demands in the future.

### 2.2.2 Zoning

Zoning within the LWRA is shown on Map 4. It includes a diversity of residential and commercial uses reflecting the prominence of Olcott development for residential classes (R 6, R-20) and marine business (MB). Generally, Olcott includes the highest density classes within the LWRA. The R-6 residential district allows 6,000 square foot lots (single-family), churches, schools, parks, clubs, utilities and marine business by special permit.

The ordinance provides preference for water-dependent and water-enhanced uses over non-water related activities and establish consistency between local development regulations and LWRP policies and plans. The ordinance includes an LWRP reference in its defined purposes to incorporate the LWRP in development reviews, additions to the special exception section for coastal uses and supplemental regulations for development setbacks along the shoreline consistent with flood/erosion hazard protection.

Acceptable coastal uses are concentrated in the Marine Business District (MB) along Eighteen Mile Creek in Olcott. The marine business district MB district provides for marinas, marine sales/services, boat launches, shoreline structures and other water-related facilities. The special permit section (Article VIII) is used to insure priority of these activities over other, non-related uses (all MB are by special permit consideration).

The area outside of Olcott (Hopkins Creek to Transit Road) and along Eighteen Mile Creek is zoned R-20 to the east and R-12 to the west. This allows low-density residences on 20,000 and 12,000 square foot lots respectively. This is generally compatible with existing agricultural uses in the area and reflects the availability of sewer and water west of Olcott. The area south of Route 18 has recently been re zoned (to a depth of 1,000 feet) to Highway Commercial to provide for expansion of a permitted restaurant and hotel and include camping. This is also the area along the creek identified for upstream marina expansion. This zone does not allow marine business, but does provide for water enhanced and support uses. A small section of Village Business zoning exists at Burt (at the railroad right-of way). It allows recreation and parking facilities, but neither water-dependent or water-enhanced uses are part of the district.

The remainder of the LWRA is designated ARR (Agriculture Recreation Residence). This is primarily a farming district (residences require a 40,000 square foot lot), but provides for a full range of commercial and industrial uses by special permit.

The ordinance provides for the review of all development in the coastal area and triggers LWRP review as part of building permit or site plan consideration and, simultaneously, coastal assessment review (part of Local Law No. 1, 1977 as amended).

### **2.2.3 Public Access**

Opportunities for public access to water resources in the Newfane coastal area are limited by both topographic and ownership restrictions. The Shoreline of Lake Ontario and Eighteen Mile Creek are lined with steep bluffs of 25 to 60 feet in height that significantly impair the ability of residents, fishermen and the public from reaching the water.

As a result, many residents with shoreline property have built stairways to the shore to access private docks. Principal areas of natural access are in Olcott, Burt, Hopkins Creek, Keg Creek and a few isolated areas along Lake Ontario where drainage channels have cut through the steep slopes. Natural access areas are shown on Map 5.

While natural access is limited, problems of shoreline/foreshore ownership (Map 5) present much more formidable restrictions. By linear feet of shoreline (Table 3), only 14.5% resides in public or semi-public ownership. The Lake Ontario shoreline is 9.6% public, but Krull Park accounts for 50.8% of the total. The rest is in semi-public ownership (church, utility, etc.) and two street ends (Lockport-Olcott Road and Transit Road). The rest of the 6.5 mile Lake Ontario shore is in private ownership. This includes areas adjacent to Hopkins and Keg Creeks, the beach west of Olcott Harbor and the bulk of the shoreline. While there is no public access along Hopkins and Keg Creeks (except at Route 18), fishermen are often allowed private access during fish migrations.

Along Eighteen Mile Creek, there are equally few places of access. Public/semi-public ownership represents 20.3% of the 5.4 Mile shoreline including the Town Marina (in the west side of the harbor), Main Street street ends (each side of the harbor), Ontario Street street end (east side of Olcott Harbor), the Town Fishing Park at Burt and semi-public access (utility property) at the Burt Dam. The two Town parks have improved stair/walk access to the water and parking facilities. The rest of the creek shore is under private ownership.

The primary access problem in the LWRA is in Olcott Harbor where there is a conflict of natural access availability and lack of public ownership/access to allow water usage. The harbor shore is mostly privately owned (34.2% public/65.8% private) by marina operators who restrict water access. The bulk of public access is on the western side of the harbor (the Town Marina) and this is often over-burdened during the fishing season. The only access on the eastern shore is by town street ends that offer little access due to their isolation and high slope to the water.

**TABLE 3**

**Shoreline Ownership  
Newfane LWRA**

	<b>Olcott</b>	<b>Remaining Area</b>	<b>Total LWRA</b>	<b>%</b>
Lake Ontario				
public	2150'	1160'	3310'	( 9.6%)
private	<u>2320'</u>	<u>28740'</u>	<u>31060'</u>	(90.4%)
Sub-total:	4470'	29900'	34370'	
(%):	(13.0%)	(87.0%)		(100.0%)
Eighteen Mile Creek	2000'	3855'	5855'	(20.3%)
public	<u>3850'</u>	<u>18945'</u>	<u>22795'</u>	(79.7%)
private				
Sub-total:	5850'	22800'	28650'	
(%):	(20.4%)	(79.6%)		(100.0%)
Total Public:	4150'	5015'	9165'	(14.5%)
Total Private:	<u>6170'</u>	<u>47685'</u>	<u>53855'</u>	(85.5%)
Grand Total:	10320'	52700'	63020'	(100.0%)
% Total:	16.4%	83.6%	100.0%	

The other major access problem is the Federal Fishing Piers that flank Olcott Harbor and maintain its opening. Built as a US Army Corps of Engineers project, they have never had full public access. The west pier is adjacent to the Olcott Yacht Club



(private). The club has graciously provided fishing access and parking opportunities since construction of the piers, but this often overtaxes their facilities.

Public access to the east Federal pier must be improved. The pier is currently usable by the general public but lacks parking opportunities in a fully developed area (Krull Park is the nearest parking). In addition, the pier is also isolated by private property and unclear right-of-way titles. As a result, it has never enjoyed public use.

#### **2.2.4 Visual/Historic Resources**

The extensive bluffs along the Newfane shoreline offer a considerable number of local and area visual opportunities to Lake Ontario. The portion of Krull Park along the lake offers the most dramatic of these due to lake adjacency and the high elevation of the park bank above the lake. The area east along Route 18 to Transit Road also presents vistas of the lake that attract area tourists. The end of Transit Road (north of Route 18) contains a vista similar to Krull Park. However, little opportunity exists for view due to the lack of parking/pull-off facilities. Other local vistas are shown on Map 5.

Areas of view/vista along Eighteen Mile Creek include the view of the gorge from the railroad right-of-way at Burt and the Burt Dam. Both offer elevation changes that present a limited vista. Similar views of the upper creek are afforded from West Creek Road and Drake Settlement Road. The view up Eighteen Mile Creek from the harbor or from a boat in the creek provide an excellent natural/pastoral setting. This is only occasionally broken by boat dock or boardwalk over the shallow areas of the creek. The lush vegetation and treed slopes create a picturesque scene in the creek gorge.

Route 18 travelers are also presented with numerous opportunities for sighting of the lake, orchards in bloom and creeks. The view of Hopkins Creek from the road is particularly pleasant with steep treed sides in contrast to the adjacent fields. In general, Route 18 represents a continuous visual access point for area vistas and natural visual resources (orchards, woods, creeks). These features should be promoted as part of the State Scenic Trail/Seaway Trail which Route 18 is designated.

Numerous local vantage points exist along Lake Ontario that are available only to adjacent, private owners. This was a major attribute in residential location along the lake. The only principal detractor of visual resources in the LWRA exists in the harbor itself. The poor condition and layout of private dockage and waterfront marine facilities tend to reduce the visual opportunities and compromise the aesthetics of the harbor area.

The tributaries to Lake Ontario are also areas of historic cultural development in the region. The coastal area is reported to possess a number of important archaeological sites in or adjacent to the LWRA (NYS Archaeological Site Inventory Map). These include two pre-historic burial mounds along Eighteen Mile Creek, a proto-Iroquoian village site near Hopkins Creek, transient camp sites at Olcott Orchard and Keg Creek and the Olcott Bridge Site. In general, Eighteen Mile Creek, Hopkins Creek and Keg Creek are sensitive archaeological areas.

There are no historic resources of state-wide significance in the LWRA. Local resources, which may be eligible for historic designation, are shown on Map 5 and include:

- Cemetery on Route 18 near Phillips Road
- Olcott Hotel on Main Street in Olcott and the old deteriorated hotel pier in Krull Park
- Grist Mill site in Burt adjacent to the Town Park
- Olcott Amusement Park on Main Street
- Van Horn Mansion on Route 18 in Burt

Any actions involving the above sites must respect their prospective historic value. Evidence of archaeological importance must be properly surveyed and documented by proper authorities prior to continuation of construction. The Niagara County Historian or the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation should be contacted for appropriate procedures and eligibility requirements for historic designation.

## **2.3 PUBLIC SERVICES/INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **2.3.1 Water**

Public water supplies are universally available in the coastal area (Map 6). It is provided by the Niagara County Treatment Plant from the Niagara River and distributed throughout the LWRA via Town distribution mains. The system has been undergoing rehabilitation over the last five years and possesses good capacity and pressure to most areas. Primary supply is via a 10-inch transmission main on Transit Road and 8-inch trunk mains on Lockport-Olcott Road and Route 18. A 150,000 gallon storage tank in Olcott provides reserve capacity for the hamlet.

The only prospective supply problem in the coastal area is the existence of old, small (4 inch) mains in the hamlet of Olcott – the old housing area west of the harbor and the commercial area along Main Street east of the harbor. These are in need of improvement/enlargement to insure local capacity in the future. These laterals would

also be inadequate for commercial fire flows should the area be targeted for new development. It will be necessary to replace these smaller lines to guarantee adequate marine and commercial protection as part of LWRP plans.

### **2.3.2 Sanitary Sewers**

Sanitary sewers in the LWRA are provided by a mixture of public and private systems. Olcott and the residential areas between Hopkins Creek and the Newfane Treatment Plant (east of Transit Road) are part of Town Sewer District #2 and its facilities (Map 7). These are comprised of gravity and force mains/lift station to serve Olcott and the adjacent area. West Creek Road, Route 18 east of the plant and west of Olcott and the outlying areas are served by private septic systems with varying success.

Areas with public sewers flow to the Town treatment plant which handles all town sewered areas. The plant has a 1.6 million gallon per day capacity and can accommodate all domestic or residential waste generated in the area. It has restrictions on industrial solids and is near its limit at this time. The Town has a local sewer use ordinance and industrial pretreatment standards that reflect state standards. The plant outfalls into Lake Ontario and is currently well within state treatment standards.

As noted in the section on geology (Section 2.1.1), the soils along Eighteen Mile Creek and certain subordinate soils along Lake Ontario are subject to septic pollution and represent a development limitation. There is, therefore, a need to extend sewer facilities within the LWRA to protect water resources and, simultaneously, limit urban development to areas that are sewered. Since new development will be targeted for the Olcott area, new service priorities should be coordinated with LWRP projects and secondary considerations given to the remaining parts of the LWRA to insure the continued quality of area water resources. Any industrial proposals in the area must satisfy pretreatment standards or include provisions for upgrading treatment plant facilities.

### **2.3.3 Transportation**

Primary vehicle access to the coastal area is provided by Route 18 and Lockport-Olcott Road (Route 78). Route 18 is the Seaway Trail/State Designated Touring Route along Lake Ontario and Route 78 is the north-south arterial connecting the area to the City of Lockport and south to the Thruway (I-90). Both of these roads are in good condition and are adequate to handle LWRA traffic. There is also a small airfield on West Creek Road that can handle light planes and charter flights.

Recent arterial improvements in Olcott have both helped and hindered the hamlet. Route 18 was rerouted to bypass the hamlet and remove through traffic from area streets. However, it effectively isolated the east and west sides of the harbor and diverted many tourists from commercial exposure. This has resulted in commercial deterioration and land use shifts that the LWRP must address. These have left Olcott with traffic problems which include:

- Isolation of the Town Marina from Route 18 (due to the bridge profile) creating major congestion problems because the marina is at a "dead-end" on West Main Street without circulation opportunity.
- Land acquired for the bypass cut off access opportunities to shorelands along the east harbor (Route 18 to East Main Street). This restricts the ability to access and expand dockage in this area or obtain land for parking.
- The general lack of access and circulation through the hamlet has significantly reduced economic trade in the Olcott commercial area (East Main Street) and created competitive development opportunities on Route 18 (new restaurant/motel near West Creek Road and pressures of expansion of this area).
- The isolation of both sides of Eighteen Mile Creek have separated parking and marine facilities leaving the Town Marina (west side) without support facilities and leaving commercial and private marine facilities (east side) without parking and boat launch opportunities. The resultant segregation of services has compromised both.

The two major issues are the provision of access/circulation to Route 18 for the Town Marina and the provision of parking on the east side of the harbor. Each side must now be independent of the other for all practical purposes. The Town is currently pursuing the acquisition of property west of the Town Marina to expand parking and gain egress to Route 18. This must be far enough west to reach West Washington Street (to Jackson Street) to satisfy the New York State Department of Transportation's requirement of adequate clear sight distance from vehicles on the Route 18 bridge over Eighteen Mile Creek. On the east side of the harbor, various parking and street improvements were completed as part of the HUD Small Cities Block Grant (Figure 3). These included street resurfacing, drainage and traffic safety improvements and new parking facilities.

Residential development in the LWRA is primarily accessed by private, dirt roads. As seasonal homes in the area have been converted to year-round units, there has been increasing demands for public dedication of these roads. Increased development of areas outside of Olcott will bring increased pressure on the Town for infrastructure improvements.

Finally, traffic on LWRA roads are subjected to considerable congestion during seasonal fish migrations (spring/fall). The area of Route 18 near Hopkins and Keg Creeks become restricted by shoulder parking from fishermen. The same is true along Eighteen Mile Creek at the Route 18 bridge and near the Burt Dam. In addition, Olcott streets become clogged at Fishing Derby time with boat trailers and campers as inadequate parking/storage cause overflow onto residential streets. As year-round fishing increases, camping and parking facilities will be needed to reduce street congestion and allow adequate traffic circulation in the area.

#### **2.3.4 Solid Waste**

The disposal of solid wastes in the coastal area is exclusively by private contract. Sludge from the Newfane Sewer Treatment Plant is handled by the Town's new sludge composting facility.

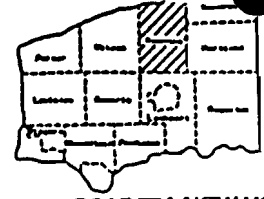
Brush and debris is disposed of at the Town facility on Philips Road. Only used for compostable (decomposable) materials, debris is cut up/chipped and landfilled on site. The facility is more than adequate for townwide needs. Usable bulking agents are utilized in the composting facility.

The Town also provides for fish cleaning facilities at the Town Marina. All wastes are conveyed to the treatment plant for processing. No creek/ harbor dumping is allowed.



MAP 3

# TOWN OF NEWFANE NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK



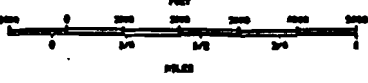
NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK

ONTARIO

## LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM LAND USE

- TOWNSHIP & RANGE LINE
- REAL LOT LINE
- PROPERTY LINE
- STATE HIGHWAY
- TOWNSHIP ROAD
- TOWN HIGHWAY
- CREAK
- WILCOAD

- SINGLE RESIDENCE
- SEASONAL
- APARTMENTS
- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL



- ORCHARDS
- FOREST LAND
- VACANT

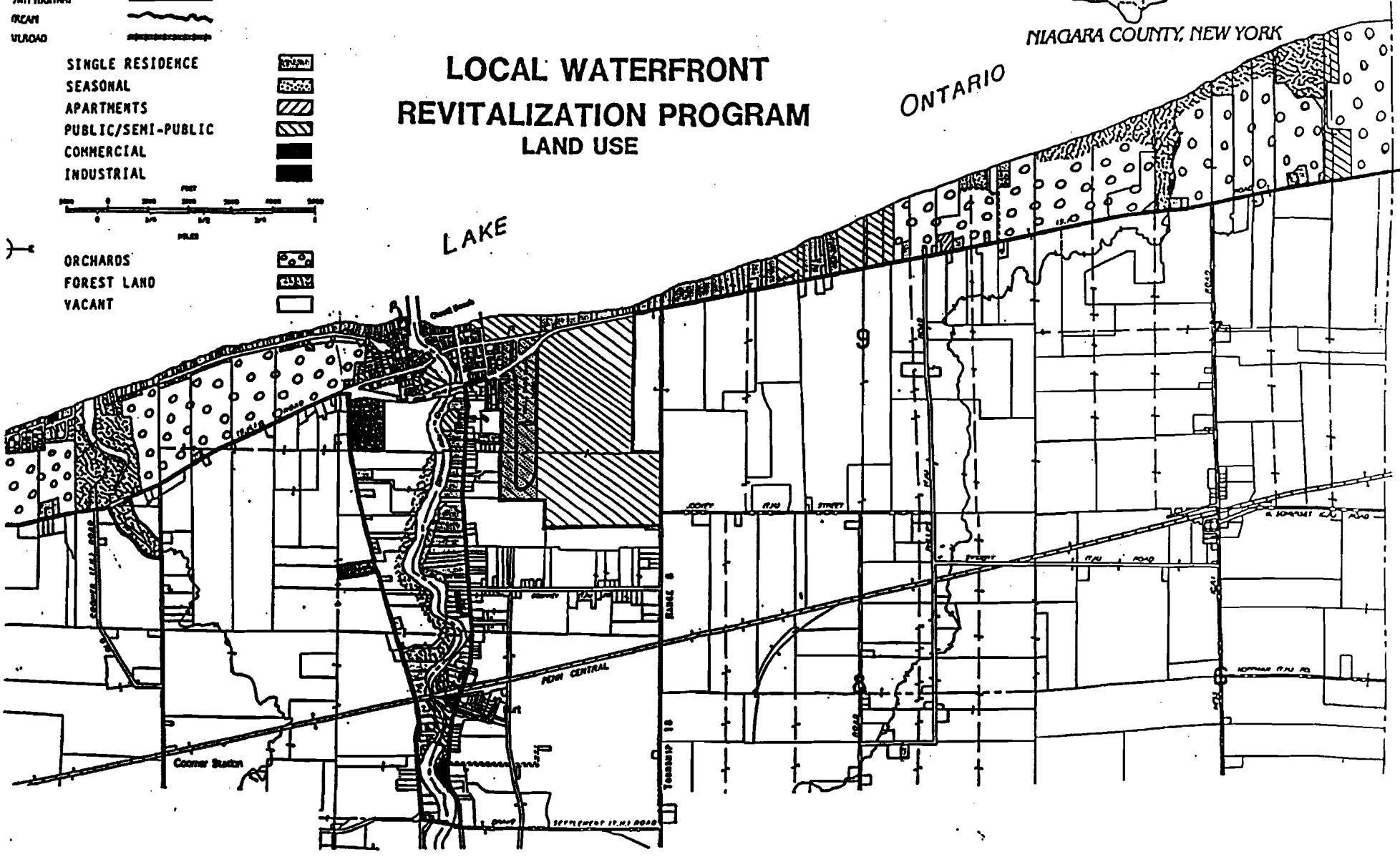


Figure 1  
 Distribution of Households Having Low to Moderate Incomes  
 and Living in Structures Needing Rehabilitation

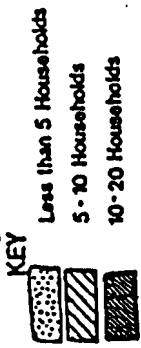
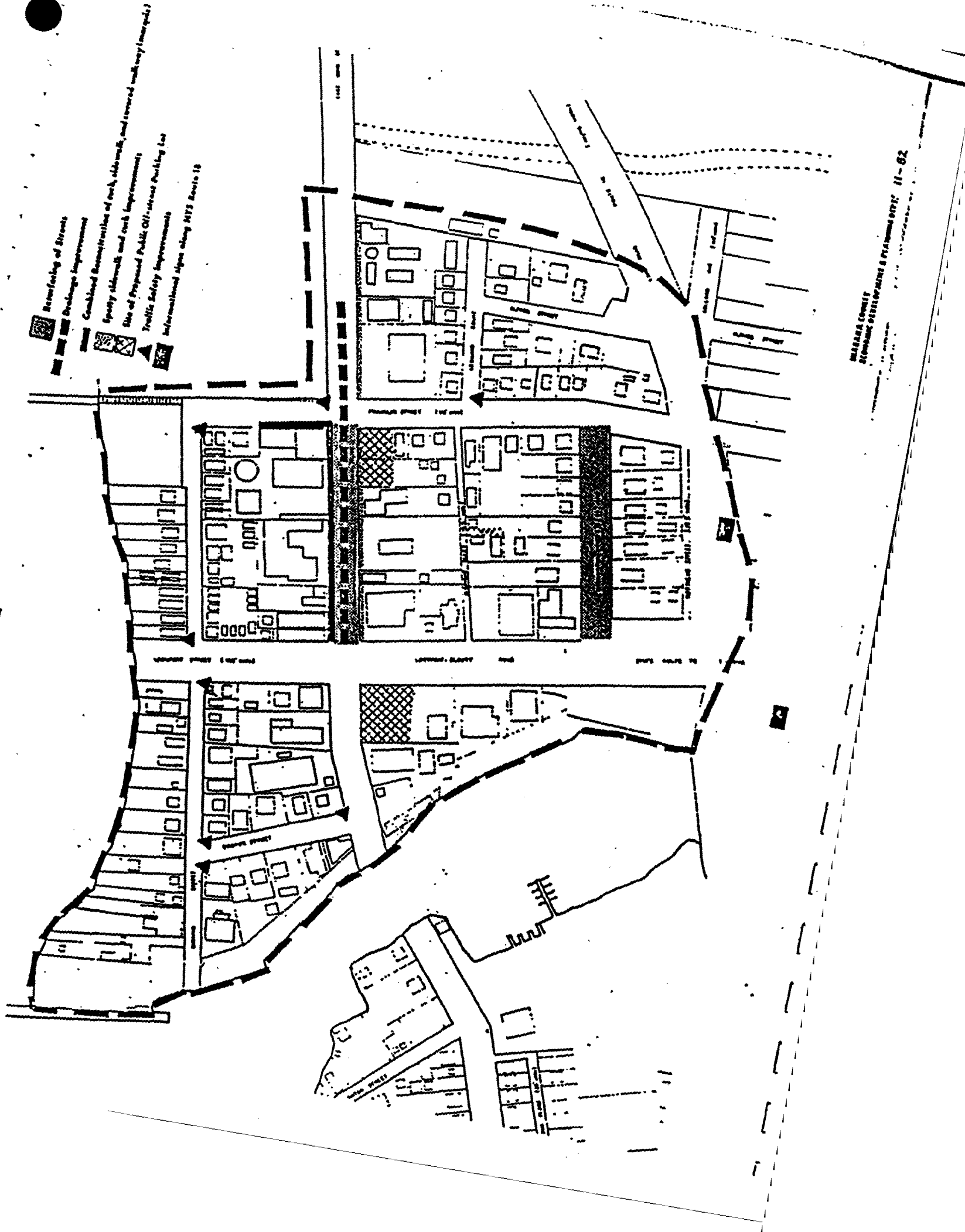






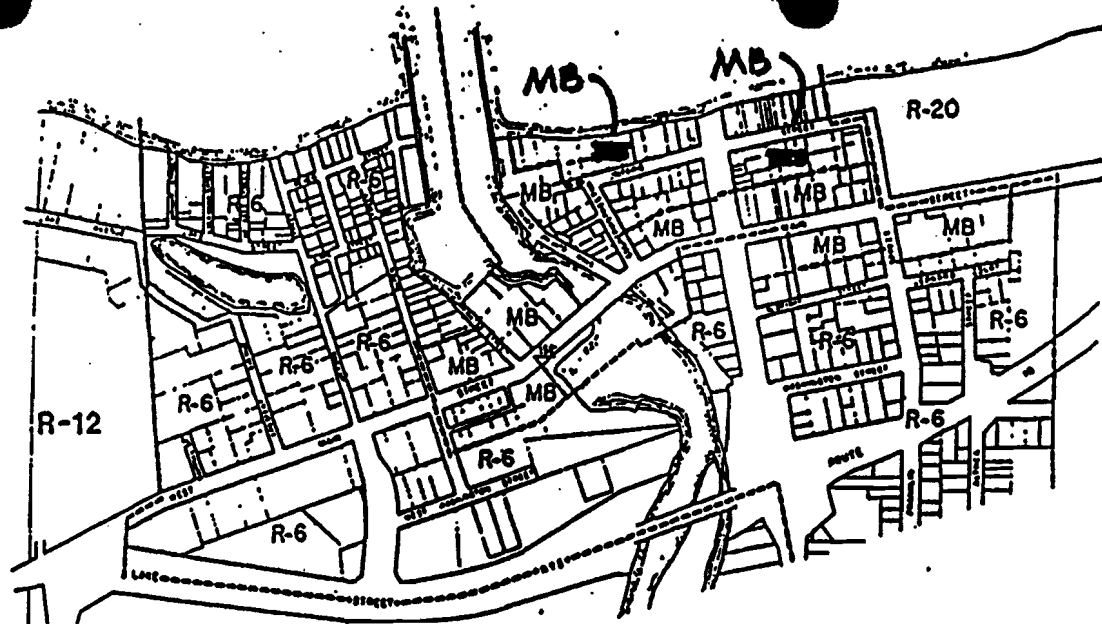
Figure 3

**Proposed Public Facility Improvements**



# LWRA ZONING

MAP 4

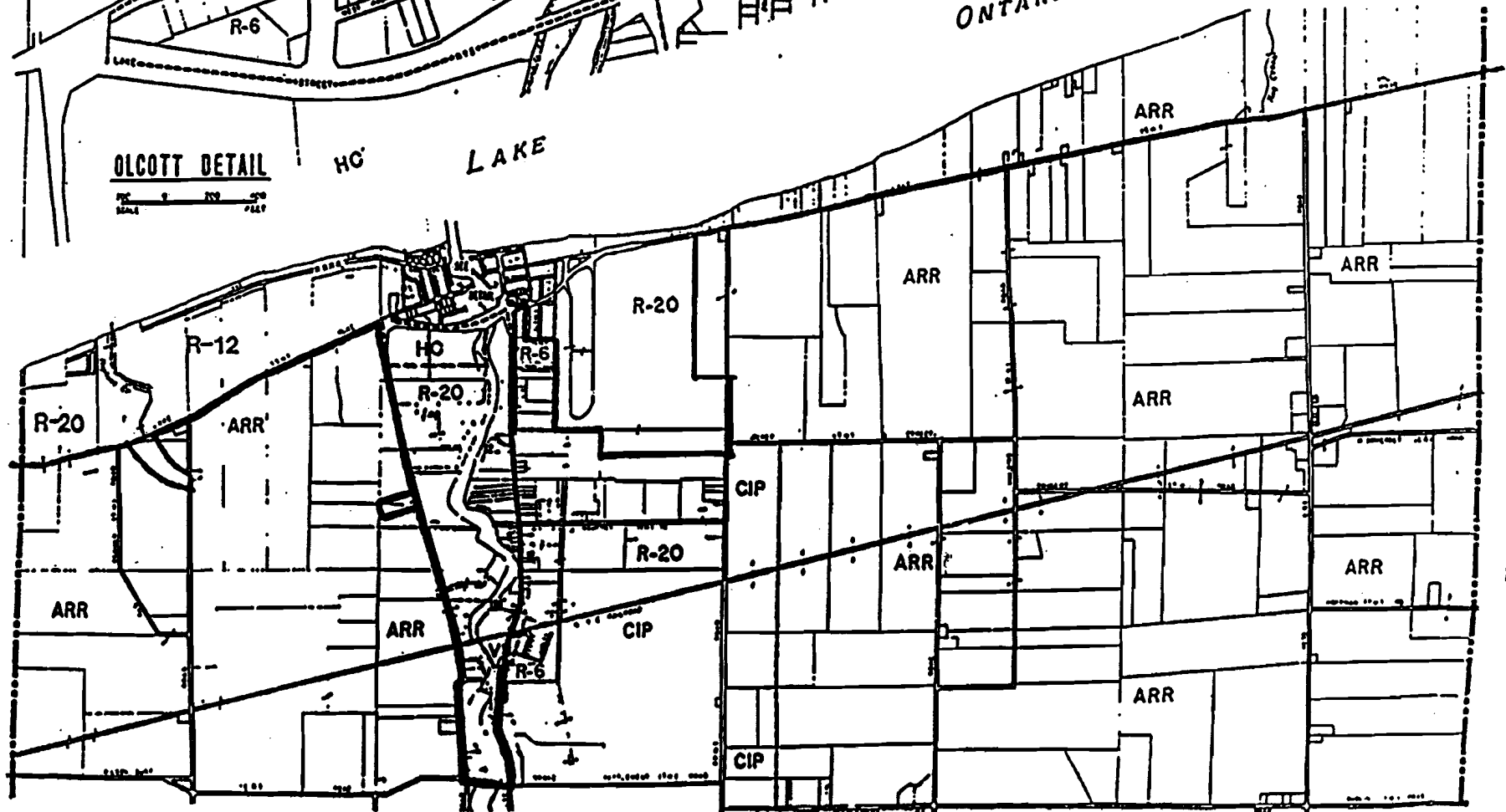


OLCOTT DETAIL



HO LAKE

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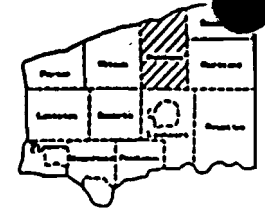
TOWN OF SOMERSET

- TOWNSHIP LINE
- GREAT LOT LINE
- PROPERTY LINE
- STATE HIGHWAY
- COUNTY ROAD
- TOWN HIGHWAY
- STREAM
- RAILROAD

MAP 5

# TOWN OF NEWFANE

## NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK



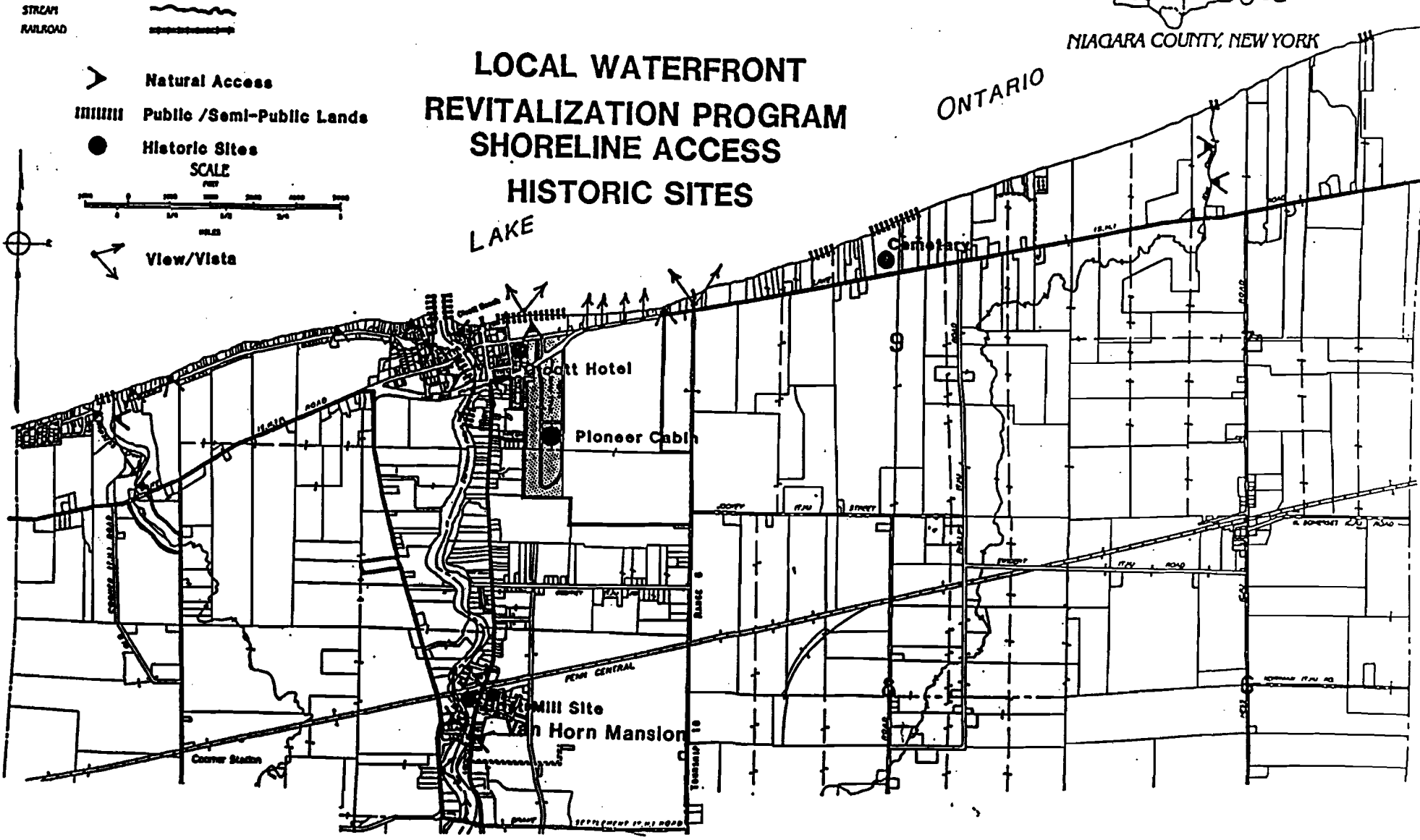
NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK

### LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM SHORELINE ACCESS HISTORIC SITES

ONTARIO

LAKE

- Natural Access
  - Public /Semi-Public Lands
  - Historic Sites
- SCALE
- 
- View/Vista

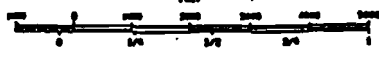


COURTESY

- LEGEND**
- TOWNSHIP & RANGE LINE
  - GREAT LOT LINE
  - PROPERTY LINE
  - STATE HIGHWAY
  - COUNTY ROAD
  - TOWN HIGHWAY
  - STREAM
  - RAILROAD

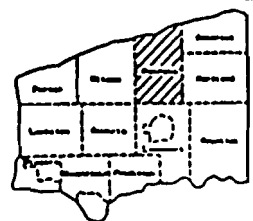
- County Transmission Main (10")
- Trunk Main (8")
- Lateral (6")
- Lateral (4")
- Storage Tank

**SCALE**



Water District #1  
LWRP Boundary

**MAP 6**  
**TOWN OF NEWFANE**  
**NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK**

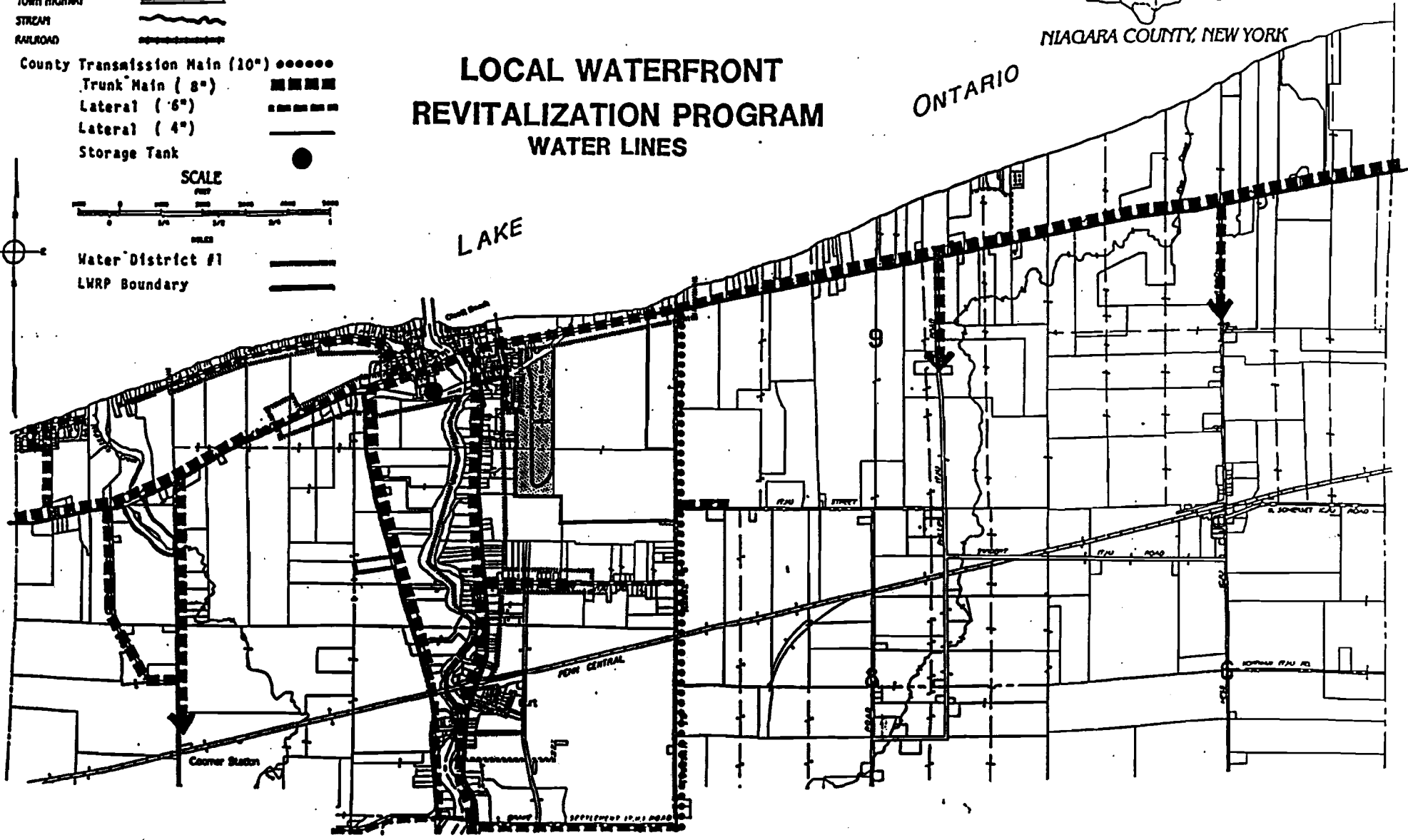


NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK

**LOCAL WATERFRONT  
REVITALIZATION PROGRAM  
WATER LINES**

ONTARIO

LAKE

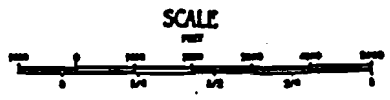


COVER STATION

LEGEND

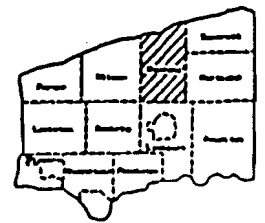
- TOWNSHIP & RANGE LINE
- GREAT LOT LINE
- PROPERTY LINE
- STATE HIGHWAY
- COUNTY ROAD
- TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY
- STREAM
- RAILROAD

- Gravity Mains
- Force Mains
- Lift Station
- Sewer Treatment Plant



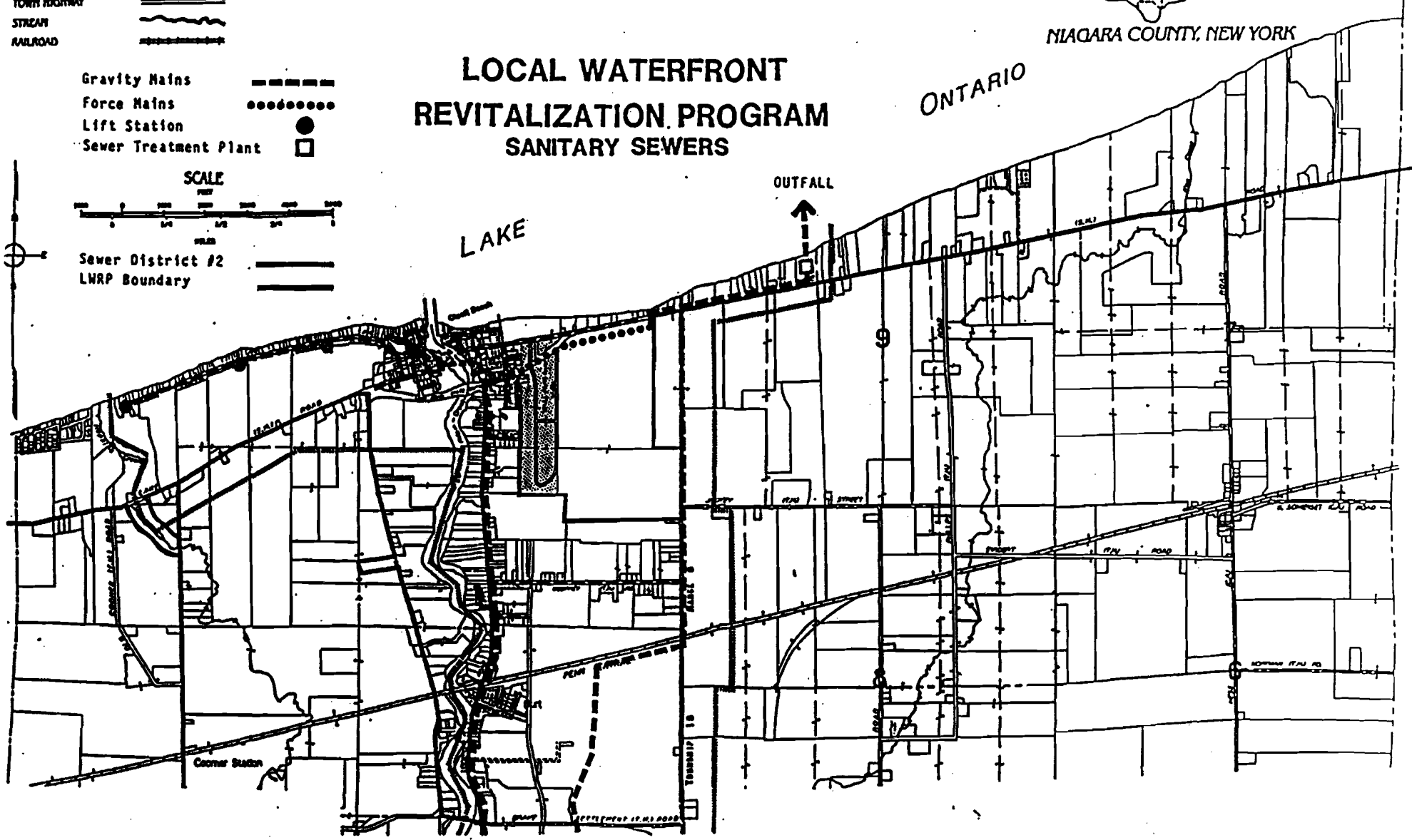
- Sewer District #2
- LNR Boundary

MAP 7  
**TOWN OF NEWFANE**  
 NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK



NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK

LOCAL WATERFRONT  
 REVITALIZATION PROGRAM  
 SANITARY SEWERS



CAMEGET