

## SACKETS HARBOR LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Village of Sackets Harbor, situated on an inlet of eastern Lake Ontario, has a population of 1,200. The inlet, known as Black River Bay, is a popular location for sportfishing and recreational boating. Consequently, the mainstay of the village's economy is tourism, as it relates to boating, fishing, and historic attractions. The village has a rich history, having served as a base for U.S. army and naval operations beginning with the War of 1812. Though the military installations have long been deactivated, the village is left with significant historic properties. Madison Barracks, the abandoned army installation on the northern edge of the village, offers 100 acres of architecturally and historically significant buildings and grounds for redevelopment. On the north side of the village, the Sackets Harbor Battlefield State Historic Site is already a tourist attraction. The village core, situated around the small body of water known as Sackets Harbor, has numerous examples of Federal style architecture, though several of the buildings are vacant or underused. The southwestern portion of the village is primarily vacant, cleared land, with some agricultural use, and a development of lakeside cottages at the western edge of the area. Except for this western area, known as Boulton's Beach, the coastline largely consists of limestone bluffs, which provide excellent scenic views. The only natural habitat of any significance is Horse Island, a small piece of undeveloped land located a few hundred feet offshore from the village. The waters surrounding the island provide an excellent habitat for fish, while waterfowl can be found on the island itself.

The purpose of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) is to govern local, State, and federal actions which affect the waterfront area. These actions may be direct undertakings of a government agency, or simply the granting of approval or permits for private developments. A LWRP approved by the NYS Department of State (DOS) requires these actions to be consistent with State and local policies set forth in that LWRP. A LWRP is not, however, a substitute for any existing permit authority nor an additional permit authority. Rather, it provides a common set of policies upon which permit decisions will be made by all permit authorities at all three levels of government.

In general, the LWRP analyzes problems and opportunities in the local waterfront, establishes a framework of coastal policies to protect and enhance the waterfront's resources, and describes proposals to resolve the problems and capitalize on the opportunities of the waterfront within the context of the established policies. The document goes on to list specific methods of implementation and summarizes the consultation and local commitment activities undertaken during the preparation of the LWRP. With DOS approval of the LWRP, the village is eligible for DOS grants for engineering and design costs for proposed projects and other activities which implement the program.

Section I. This chapter describes the boundary of the waterfront area to which the LWRP applies. A minor revision of the original State

Coastal Area boundary was approved with the approval of the LWRP in order to include all of the Sackets Harbor Village Historic District. This is appropriate due to the major role historic resources have in the economy and revitalization of the village.

Section II. An inventory and analysis of the village's existing waterfront area resources is contained in this section. Included are water resources, scenic resources, fish and wildlife, vegetation, topography, flooding and erosion, historic resources, public and semi-public facilities, commercial and industrial facilities, village infrastructure, land use, and important economic activities. The analysis identifies major problems or opportunities:

- A. The village has little commercial, industrial, or agricultural base and is primarily a bedroom community for commuters. The village's economic strength lies in its historic resources, water-related recreation and, as a result, tourism. Accordingly, both the village core area and Madison Barracks need to be protected as well as promoted and revitalized.
- B. There is no guide for the use and development of the village's harbor and immediate shoreline, which are subject to conflicting uses and development pressure.
- C. The houses along Boulton's Beach are in need of sewer service or a communal septic system and many need rehabilitation.

Other minor and related issues are also discussed. This section contains three important maps which summarize most of the text: Existing Land Use, Areas Important to the LWRP, and Development Considerations (or Constraints).

Section III. The third section lists the 44 State Coastal Policies and explains those that are relevant to Sackets Harbor. In some cases, the State policy is refined by including one or more local policies which help tailor the State policy to the local situation. The policies must be adhered to by all local, State and federal agencies undertaking an action in the waterfront area.

Section IV. Proposed land and water uses are described in the beginning of this chapter. They include: residential infill near Boulton's Beach; commercial, recreational, and some residential developments along the core area harborfront; and a new residential area immediately southwest of the village core. Multiple uses are proposed for the Madison Barracks complex. Increased boating and fishing are expected in Black River Bay, and consequently, Sackets Harbor can anticipate expanded marina facilities and recreational access.

Specific public and private project proposals are described in detail, with financial and grant application data. The seven projects to be implemented are (not necessarily in this order):

1. Boulton's Beach Sewage Collection
2. Boulton's Beach Residential Rehabilitation and Weatherization
3. Core Area Recreational Improvements

4. Harborfront Improvements
5. Commercial/Residential Rehabilitation (Core Area)
6. Street Improvements
7. Madison Barracks Revitalization

Section V. Program implementation is covered in the fifth chapter under four headings: Local Laws and Regulations, Other Public and Private Actions, Village Management Structure, and Financial Resources.

To supplement existing village regulations implementing the LWRP, the village has adopted a local consistency law, which requires the village to review its own waterfront area actions for consistency with the coastal policies. This law extends to the village the consistency requirements which already apply to State and federal agencies.

Other public actions needed to implement the LWRP mainly consist of grant applications to be made by the village. If all 7 projects are to be implemented, approximately 14 grant applications will be required. Private actions could include partial funding of a septic or sewer system by homeowners near Boulton's Beach and financial participation by property owners and private developers in the rehabilitation of homes, businesses and Madison Barracks. The village also plans to undertake an extensive revision and update of its entire zoning law. The goal of such a revision is to create an easy-to-use zoning law which also provides efficient coordination with the LWRP.

Management responsibilities lie mainly with the various village boards. Enforcement of existing zoning and building regulations is primarily the responsibility of the Building Inspector. A local Waterfront Assessment Form, to be filled out by the Building Inspector, is the only new permit form required by the LWRP. This form helps local boards and officials determine whether a proposed development abides by the coastal policies contained in the LWRP. If the development appears to be inconsistent with the LWRP, the case is referred to the Planning Board for review and comment.

As noted above, financial resources to implement the LWRP will be mainly in the form of State and federal grants augmenting limited local revenues. Specifically, applications should be prepared for federal Urban Development Action Grants, Community Development Block Grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants, and Economic Development Administration Grants and NYS Department of State LWRP Implementation Grants, Division of Housing and Community Renewal Rural Preservation Company program funding, Department of Environmental Conservation design and construction grants, and Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Urban Cultural Park funding.

Because of the large number of grant applications to be prepared and the requirements for the implementation and management of the LWRP, as well as the village's Urban Cultural Park program, the LWRP suggests that the village hire a Community Development Coordinator/Planner/Grantsperson to handle this workload. Alternatively, the village should be prepared to hire consultants to complete certain grant applications.

Section VI. This section lists Federal and State agencies whose actions or programs would be subject to consistency with the LWRP's policies and purposes. A second list notes those agencies whose actions and programs are necessary for implementation of the LWRP.

Section VIII. Because of the potential impact of the LWRP on other agencies and organizations, such groups were consulted during the preparation of the LWRP (see list, Pages 129-130). The completed draft LWRP and the accompanying Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were sent to the affected government agencies and other interested parties for their review and comment. DOS was responsible for coordinating these reviews. Also, the draft document was reviewed locally in a public hearing. Based on the comments received, the final LWRP and final EIS were prepared. All commenters on the draft LWRP and draft EIS received a copy of the final EIS.

Section VIII. Section VIII briefly summarizes activities undertaken to develop local support for and commitment to the LWRP during its preparation. This support is evidenced by volunteered time, local meetings to review the program, adoption of a local consistency law, and finally, adoption of the entire LWRP.

Final EIS. The final EIS for the LWRP was prepared separately from the LWRP document and is not included herein. The EIS describes the expected impacts on the environment resulting from adoption and implementation of the LWRP and measures to reduce or avoid any adverse environmental impacts. It also details changes which were made to the LWRP based on comments received during the review process. The final EIS is kept on file for public inspection at the village offices. It includes the full text of the Draft LWRP and Draft EIS.