

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION



Queens West, East River



Pittsford, Erie Canal

With patience and persistence... You can make the most of your waterfront.

New York State's waterfronts are exciting and diverse - from Niagara Falls to Montauk Point; from New York Harbor to the lakes of the Catskills and the Adirondacks; from the Delaware River to the Finger Lakes; and from the Hudson River and the Canal System to the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. With ninety percent of the State's population and a wide variety of economic activities concentrated in the communities along its waterfronts - from the largest cities to the smallest hamlets - the waterfront plays a vital role in the lives of New Yorkers.

Our waterfronts are rich in natural resources - with abundant fish and wildlife as well as bluffs, beaches and, wetlands, forests, and farmlands.

More and more people are recognizing that their waterfronts can bring new life and energy to their communities. They are doing this by creating new economic activity, redeveloping historic and abandoned structures, improving waterfront recreation, and restoring and protecting natural resources. They have found that the keys to making the most of their waterfront assets include a clear vision and plan, broad public involvement, creative partnerships, patience, persistence and a step-by-step strategy.

One of the ways communities - whether they're a rural town or a New York City neighborhood - can take full advantage of their waterfront is by using **New York State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program**. Through this Program, communities are building consensus and implementing visions for the future of their waterfronts.

These communities are part of a successful waterfront renaissance that is occurring throughout New York State. Helping you to achieve that success is the goal of this guidebook.

Who should read this guidebook

This guidebook is designed to inspire and assist all New Yorkers - whether they are municipal officials, community or nonprofit organizations, businesses, or anyone with an interest in the waterfront - who want to make the most of what their waterfronts have to offer. Working together, these groups can revitalize a community's natural resources, as well as its built environment. This guidebook will help define the roles and responsibilities of each group as they come together in a partnership.

About this guidebook

This guidebook is the print component of a multi-media package designed to provide readily accessible information on how to protect, restore and revitalize New York's coasts and waterways. The other components include a video and a website (www.nywaterfronts.com). This package will provide guidance on how to make the most of your waterfront - sharing lessons learned, specific techniques that have worked, sources of information and assistance, and the experiences of communities that have succeeded. The guidebook provides information on the benefits and requirements for participation in New York State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and shows how a community can use a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to help it achieve its vision. This multi-media package will be supplemented by similar packages of guidance that focus in more detail on specific community issues.

This guidebook is intended as an introduction to waterfront revitalization. Readers are encouraged to use this information to seek further advice by following the links to the relevant agencies.

How is the guidebook organized

The sections of this guidebook follow a step-by-step process to help you make the most of your waterfront. These steps include:

- Developing a waterfront vision - highlighting the importance of generating a sense of community ownership of the waterfront and defining its future
- Establishing partnerships - showing how to strengthen the community's involvement in the revitalization of your waterfront and ensuring the key players are on board
- Taking a look around - helping you to understand your waterfront, its assets, and key issues and opportunities
- Developing a strategy - showing you how to pull it all together to fulfill your vision
- Taking it one step at a time - providing detailed guidelines for implementing your vision

These steps are appropriate whether the community is large or small; whether the concern is with one issue in one area or with a wide range of issues for a community's entire

waterfront; or whether the primary goal is waterfront redevelopment or natural resource protection.

The sequence in this step-by-step guide to enhancing your waterfront and revitalizing your community may not fit every community. You may want to create partnerships first, and then work together to understand your waterfront's issues, or you may want to wait until after you understand more about the condition of your waterfront to develop your vision. Taking a different approach is fine. The critical message is that all of these steps are important.

New York State Department of State - Division of Coastal Resources

The Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources works with communities throughout New York State to help them make the most of what their waterfronts have to offer. The Division works in partnership with community groups, nonprofit organizations, and all levels of government to strengthen local economies, protect the environment and improve the quality of life. Whether you live in a rural town or a New York City neighborhood, you can take full advantage of your waterfront by working with the Division of Coastal Resources.

Since 1982, the Division has worked with local governments and communities to prepare Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs that define a local vision for the waterfront. The Division has

provided technical and financial assistance to communities for plans and projects that have expanded public access, reinvigorated urban waterfronts, restored habitats, and strengthened local economies. The Division is involved in a wealth of activities, including:

- Implementing the federal Coastal Zone Management Act in New York State
- Implementing the State's Waterfront Revitalization of Coastal Areas and Inland Waterways Act
- Developing Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs and Harbor Management Plans with over 200 municipalities
- Planning and technical assistance for redevelopment of buildings and deteriorated urban waterfronts
- Revitalizing community centers
- Regional planning for the Long Island Sound shore and the South Shore Estuary Reserve
- Protecting water quality through intermunicipal watershed planning
- Developing and applying remote sensing and Geographic Information Systems technology
- Interpreting coastal resources and promoting tourism

- Planning for the prevention and mitigation of coastal flooding and erosion
- Protecting and restoring coastal habitats
- Planning for the preservation of historic resources, maritime heritage, and scenic resources
- Implementing New York's coastal policies through consistency review
- Investing in improvements to waterfront areas through State and federal grant programs

You are eligible to participate as a partner in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program if you are a coastal community - in other words, if your community is on Long Island Sound, the Atlantic Ocean, New York Harbor and the waters around New York City, the Hudson River, the Great Lakes, Niagara River or the St. Lawrence River; or if your community is located on an inland waterbody, such as a major lake, river or the State Canal, that has been designated by the State Legislature under Article 42 of the Executive Law.

As you organize your waterfront revitalization efforts, the Division of Coastal Resources can help in many ways:

- Organizing the planning process
- Establishing a waterfront advisory committee



Hudson River from Olana



Northport, Northport Bay

- Assisting with data collection and analysis
- Referring you to other communities that have successfully revitalized their waterfronts
- Providing guidance on developing appropriate waterfront revitalization policies
- Identifying and assisting with preparation of laws necessary to implement the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Providing grant funds

To find out more about partnering with the Division of Coastal Resources, please call 518-474-6000 or visit www.nyswaterfronts.com.

What is a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is both a land and water use plan prepared by a community, as well as the strategy to implement the plan. The Program may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect a community's entire waterfront or it may address only the most critical issues facing a significant portion of its waterfront.

As a planning document, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is a locally prepared land and water use plan for a community's developed, natural, public, and working waterfronts. It provides a comprehensive framework within

which a community's vision for its waterfront can be formalized. Working in partnership with the Division of Coastal Resources, a community reaches consensus on the future of its waterfront, establishes local policies and outlines the implementation techniques it will use to achieve its vision.

As a strategy, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program provides the organizational structure, local laws, projects, and on-going work that implements the plan. This is the part of the Program that will make the difference to your waterfront - it is the implementation that matters.

Completing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program can significantly increase a community's ability to attract appropriate development that will take advantage of, but also respect, the unique cultural and natural characteristics of its waterfront. Presenting a unified vision for the waterfront also increases a community's chances to obtain public and private funding for waterfront projects. Funding to develop and implement Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs is available from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

Once approved by New York State's Secretary of State, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program forms the basis for coordinating the State and federal actions needed to achieve the community's goals for its waterfront. State permitting, funding, and direct actions must be consistent with an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. Within coastal areas, federal agency activities are also required to be consistent with an approved

Program. This "consistency" provision is a strong tool that helps ensure all government levels work in unison to build a stronger economy and a healthier environment.

More and more people are realizing that their waterfronts are a catalyst that can bring new life and energy to their entire community. By developing and implementing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, these communities are making the most of what their waterfronts have to offer.

- The Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda are working together to become the western gateway to the Erie Canal
- The City of Oswego has created a thriving mix of parks, marinas, and waterfront walkways, bringing new life to the downtown
- The Village of Greenport is reversing the decline of traditional maritime industries and restoring a deteriorated waterfront
- The Town of Essex is protecting its historic hamlet and resolving conflicts among recreational users of Lake Champlain
- The City of Kingston has created a thriving waterfront entertainment district

Through careful planning, these people are enhancing their waterfronts and revitalizing their communities.

LOOKING AHEAD

You can make the most of your waterfront when...

You see your waterfront as the way to bring new life and energy to your community.

You generate a sense of community ownership of the waterfront.

You know where you want to go.

You create a clearly defined vision for the future of your waterfront.

The people who live and work in the community buy into your vision.

You build a foundation of public support and confidence.

You establish partnerships and gain commitments from all stakeholders.

You know what you have to work with.

You take advantage of all your resources, assets, and opportunities.

You develop a detailed plan and strategy for implementing your vision.

You have the patience and persistence to work through the many phases of waterfront revitalization - one step at a time.



Grand Ferry Park



Orient, Narrow River



Lake George



Greenport Harbor



South Troy visioning workshop

Design Principles

- Pedestrian Friendly
 - Link to existing community, nature, physical & social
 - Links and physical connection to surrounding - visual, social, physical, economic
 - Site scale, materials, design details like the surrounding neighborhood
 - Multiple use / shared facilities
 - Buffering and landscaping in existing and new parking areas
 - Employment, recreation, education
 - Link to downtown and South Troy
 - Safety - program + environment
 - The blending of income and age
 - Recreation and adaptive reuse

Implementation Steps

1. Develop a master plan
2. Adopted by City Council
3. Adopt zoning changes
4. Acquire land
5. Initiate pilot applications

Greenfield:
Surface water treatment
Stormwater management
Bike trail
Historic preservation
Housing - new + affordable
School development
Business development