

City of **Utica** Waterfront Access **Plan**

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CITY OF UTICA LOCAL WATERFRONT ACCESS PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Utica, with the assistance of Saratoga Associates, Shumaker Consulting Engineering and Land Surveying; Cornell University, and the State University at New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry's Center for Brownfield Studies, and other partners worked collaboratively to develop this Waterfront Access Plan. This Plan has also been developed with funding and assistance from the New York State Department of State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.



This Waterfront Access Plan is an effort to establish a coordinated framework for public access and circulation along the Mohawk River and Erie Canal and will be used by the City of Utica to develop waterfront access improvements that will complement land use investments made within its boundary. Further, the City will use this plan to work collaboratively with developers, regional and local interests to incorporate enhanced waterfront access and connectivity into all future development projects.

The Plan outlines a clear set of actions necessary for improved connectivity and enhanced access along the 21 miles of waterfront in the City of Utica. This Waterfront Access Plan is an implementation element of the City's 2011 Master Plan, which recognized the need for enhanced connectivity along the waterfront and to the surrounding neighborhoods. This Plan also incorporates findings and initiatives presented in the *2010 Utica Marsh Development Strategy*, *2009 North Genesee Street Corridor Management Study*, *the Gateway Historic Canal District Revitalization Strategy*, *the 2001 Harbor Point Redevelopment Framework Plan*, and additional reports and studies discussed below.

The Waterfront Access Plan provides a variety of access and circulation improvements for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles, and includes recommended projects and actions along with potential partnering and funding opportunities. This Plan establishes a good starting point for a more detailed Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, which the City intends to develop with future LWRP grant funding from the NYS Department of State.

This plan identifies enhanced public access opportunities along the Mohawk River and Erie Canal in Utica. The report begins with a description of the study area followed by a vision and goals to achieve enhanced public access to the waterfront. Next, the Report outlines existing conditions and highlights public access points currently in existence as well as proposed and ongoing projects. Projects that are currently in process and those that have been identified, discussed or may exist in previously prepared plans, but have not been formally initiated for permit review and evaluation are also summarized.

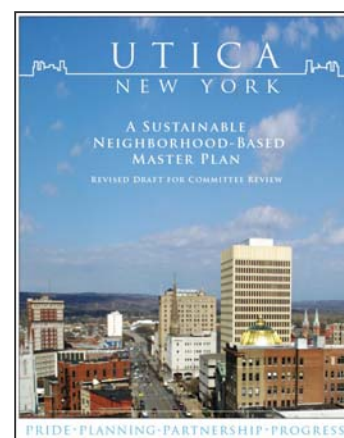
The report goes on to outline a series of recommendations for enhanced connectivity between the various waterfront areas along with enhanced waterfront accessibility. The final section takes these recommendations and outlines an implementation strategy that includes recommended lead agencies/organizations, involved stakeholders and potential funding opportunities.

Related Planning Documents

Public access and connectivity to the Mohawk River and Erie Canal is referenced in several existing documents. These plans include the *City Master Plan*, the *North Genesee Street Corridor Management Plan*, the *Gateway Historic Canal District Revitalization Plan*, the *Harbor Point Redevelopment Framework Plan*, the *Utica Marsh Development Strategy* developed by the *SUNY Center for Brownfield Studies*, the *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan*, the *Canal Plan for the Mohawk Valley*, and the *2008 Greenway Plan for the Mohawk River Corridor*. Some of these plans were recently developed, such as the *Master Plan* and the *Utica Marsh Development Strategy*. Others plans, while more dated, are still quite relevant, such as the *Harbor Point Redevelopment Framework* and the *Gateway Historic Canal District Revitalization Plan*. This report helps to bring the waterfront access and connectivity of these previous plans into one clearly defined strategy for implementation.

Utica Master Plan

Public access to the Mohawk River and Erie Canal is a key initiative described in various sections of the Utica Master Plan. The Infrastructure & Waterfront Development chapter of the Master Plan specifically recognizes the need to create better access to the Erie Canal, Harbor Point and the Inner Harbor. The chapter further recognizes the importance of developing “the waterfront and Inner Harbor as a mixed use destination attraction for Utica that enhances the existing water’s edge with public and private investment.” The Parks and Recreation chapter also recognizes the waterfront as a key opportunity to stimulate economic development with festivals and a waterfront promenade. The chapter calls for improved safety with police bike patrols and clearly marked signage to bring more people to the waterfront. Finally, the Businesses & Technology Development chapter contains several recommendations for the creation of sites for business development opportunities, many of which are located within the area evaluated by this report. The following are relevant Goals from the Utica Master Plan:



Infrastructure & Waterfront Development

GOAL 7. Create inviting friendly streetscapes, enhanced gateways, and develop corridor plans.

Implementation Strategies:

- > Re-assess and adopt consistent strategies presented in the State Street Corridor Plan and North Genesee Street Corridor Management Plan. Assess Oriskany and Broad Street Corridors as part of Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) studies.
- > Recognize the value of key gateways into Utica. Image is fundamentally important to economic success. People form their first impression of Utica at its gateways. The degree to which a community

takes care of this ‘first impression’ can say a lot to visitors and potential investors about the values of residents, businesses and government leadership. Examples of some gateways include:

- Intersections where the Thruway enters the City at North Genesee Street
- North Genesee Street.
- Route 5S coming in from the Town of Schuyler
- Intersections of Broad Street and Route 5S
- Burrstone Road to Utica College and along Culver to Rutger Street.
- Genesee Street to Yorkville and Whitestown
- Oriskany Street from the Town of Whitestown – From Oriskany Boulevard to Whitestown.

GOAL 9: Increase public awareness, public access and connectivity to the Historic Districts and Erie Canal/Mohawk River.

Implementation Strategies:

- > Create better access to the following districts and sub-districts:
 - > East and West Baggs Square (Lower Genesee Street Historic District)
 - > Gateway District – Whitesboro between Seneca and Potter
 - > West Utica – Sunset Avenue and York Street Corridors
 - > Harbor Point and Inner Harbor
 - > Erie Canal – East of North Genesee Street
 - > Varick Street/Brewery District

Also, establish better connections between:

- > Varick Street and the Utica Memorial Auditorium
- > Downtown and North Utica
- > Baggs East and West to North Genesee to Inner Harbor
- > East Utica to Leland and Wurz Avenue
- > Develop “Way Finding Signage” and visual links to direct residents and visitors to key areas around the City.
- > Work with the Town of Frankfort to develop a plan to extend the Canalway Trail from Harbor Lock Road into Frankfort. (Currently the trail leaves the water’s edge at North Genesee Street, heads south to Bleeker Street heading west into Frankfort. In Frankfort the trail reconnects with the water’s edge along south Side Road via Dyke Street.)
- > Develop a Local Waterfront Access Plan (LWAP) in accordance with NYS Department of State programs.

GOAL 10: Develop appropriate portions of the Waterfront and Inner Harbor as a mixed-use destination attraction for Utica that enhances the existing waters edge with public and private investment.

Implementation Strategies:

- > Implement consistent portions of National Grid’s Harbor Point Plan.



- > Create public (or mixed public and commercial) uses at Harbor Point and Inner Harbor. One concept developed for Harbor Point is the relocation of Murnane Field facilities. This will allow the City to create a cluster of ball fields and host softball and baseball tournaments and open Murnane Fields for new future economic development opportunities. The concept at Harbor Point calls for the relocation of Donovan Stadium and creates an opportunity to attract an “A” baseball organization, develop a waterfront promenade, and include concession space, commercial/ retail space and the potential for a new hotel. The concept also improves the connection between the waterfront and Gateway District with a possible connection between Washington Street to Seneca Street.
- > Upon completion of the LWAP, complete the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) with the assistance and financial support of the NYS Department of State.
- > Preserve environmentally sensitive areas of the waterfront as protected open space.



Parks, Recreation, Arts/Culture & Historic Preservation Goals from the Utica Master Plan

GOAL 3: Develop use of the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River around Historic, Recreational, and Regional objectives to stimulate Economic Development.

Implementation Strategies:

- > Change the perception of safety and accessibility by making entrance points more inviting, clearly marked and signed, increasing use for family activity.
- > Include Utica police bike patrol (or volunteer patrols) on trails and launching areas on the river.
- > Celebrate the Utica-Rome connection via the canal. The first shovel was dug in Rome and the first trip on the canal began in Utica. Mark these historic happenings at the sites.
- > Create an annual festival that celebrates the Sister Cities' connection with fun re-enactments, interactive children's plays, and races on the canal with four man "mule teams" pulling bateaus and similar events.
- > Work with National Grid to develop the establishment of a multi-use, multi-seasonal recreational facility at the southwest portion of the Harbor Point area.
- > Enhance the northeast area of the Harbor Point for passive recreational uses.
- > Explore the relocation of Murnane Field facilities as part of the multi-use, multi-seasonal facility located in the Harbor Point area.

GOAL 5. Increase public awareness of Heritage Tourism

Implementation Strategies:

- > Institute kiosk and signage programs that celebrate Transportation on the Erie Canal, Abolitionist History, Revolutionary War Trail, Architectural Tourism, etc.
- > Coordinate local non-profit organizations and events programming, marketing and promotion initiatives to establish a synchronized, year-round program to effectively pool resources.
- > Commemorate the Saturday Globe, Telegraph and American Express origins in Utica, NY. Perhaps a public art competition that celebrates these origins would be a fun, educational way to express the City's heritage.
- > Support and coordinate with the Oneida County Visitors Bureau in their efforts to promote Utica as a regional entertainment destination.
- > Develop a tourism marketing plan and a tourism-readiness training program for staff in tourism industries and the community at large.
- > Encourage local and regional employers to understand all that Utica and the region have to offer as a marketing tool to attract new, talented employees.

Business & Technology Development

GOAL 3. Create more sites for business development opportunities.

Implementation Strategies:

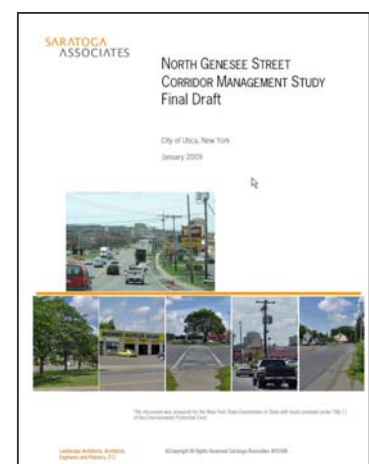
- > Develop site/zone/corridor specific plans and marketing strategies to maximize the use and/or redevelopment of the following: CNY Psych Center, West Utica Industrial Area, TRW, Broad Street, Oriskany Boulevard, Greenman Estates, Gateway Historic District, Leland Ave/Wurz Ave, Inner Harbor, Bagg's Square, Dominic Assaro Industrial Park, Murnane Field.

North Genesee Street Corridor Management Plan

The goals of the North Genesee Street Corridor Management Plan include the need to “support safe bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular movement throughout the North Genesee Street corridor,” which includes accessibility to the waterfront. The vision for North Genesee Street calls for.

The North Genesee Street corridor is envisioned as:

- > A fully integrated multimodal network that safely and efficiently transports people, goods and services.
- > An attractive and accessible place to conduct business.
- > A welcoming gateway into the City of Utica.
- > A vital connector between the New York State Thruway, Mohawk River, and downtown Utica.



Goals from the North Genesee Street Corridor Management Plan

1. Safety
Goal: Support safe bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular movement throughout the North Genesee Street corridor.
2. Visual Character
Goal: Enhance the visual character and identity of the North Genesee Street corridor.
3. Gateway
Goal: Create a sense of arrival into the City of Utica.
4. Pedestrian Amenities
Goal: To make walking and bicycling along the North Genesee Street corridor comfortable and convenient.
5. Way finding and Information Signage
Goal: To establish an informational and way finding system of signage that contributes to the overall appearance and consistency of the corridor.



Gateway Historic Canal District Revitalization Plan

Gateway Historic Canal District revitalization represents an opportunity for the City of Utica to establish totally unique and marketable land use opportunities. The initiative is intended to target strategic public investments that will “reuse and recycle” the land in this significant location adjacent to the Utica Central Business District. The development of this project also provides a significant connection between downtown and the waterfront. A number of the plan’s goals and objectives are relevant to this Waterfront Access Plan:

Goal: Improve the marketability of urban land.

- > Establish a system of recreation space, including parks and walking trails that will add to the redevelopment potential of surrounding lands and buildings.

Goal: Establish a circulation plan that facilitates economic growth.

- > Realign traffic patterns to establish a stronger physical connection with the Central Business District, Harbor Point, the Utica Marsh, the North Genesee Street corridor, and the rest of the city.
- > Consider the future needs of pedestrians and cyclists as part of an overall multi-modal circulation plan.
- > Establish a connection between the Gateway District and future waterfront development.

Goal: Promote local and regional tourism by building on the existing strengths of the Gateway District.

- > Explore design, development and funding opportunities for Erie Canal-related projects.
- > Encourage linkages between the Erie Canal, Harbor Point and the Utica Marsh.
- > Complete the off-road segment of the Erie Canalway Trail between Utica and Little Falls.

Harbor Point Redevelopment Framework Plan

The Harbor Point Redevelopment Plan includes the integration of waterfront, recreational, cultural and commercial uses. There are significant opportunities at Harbor Point for improved recreational and leisure-time activities and expanded tourism opportunities for the residents of the City of Utica and the overall region, which will translate into an expansion of the local economy and increased municipal revenue. The area is recognized as an underutilized portion along the Mohawk River that can contribute to the revitalization of the urban core. Due to the area's location along the river, proximity to downtown and the regional transportation network, the area presents a unique opportunity to introduce activities and distinctive land uses. This would provide a unique recreational and commercial development experience within the Mohawk River and Erie Canal System boundaries. Opportunities for enrichment and co-promotion include the Utica Marsh, the Adirondack Scenic Railroad, the Genesee Street corridor, the Mohawk River, the Erie Canal, the City's Historic Erie Canal Marian Park and the Canalway Trail. The plan further recognizes that the connection of this land to Genesee Street is an opportunity to create a welcoming and cohesive entrance to the city.

Utica Marsh Management Plan of July 1980

The Utica Marsh Management Plan encompasses over 200 acres of wetlands associated with the floodplain of the Mohawk River in the City of Utica and the Town of Marcy. The Utica Marsh Management Plan was developed by the NYSDEC with guidance and support of many organizations who were organized under the Utica Marsh Advisory Committee. The background materials in the Plan discuss the geography and natural environment of the Utica Marsh and provide information on the marsh ecosystem and its environmental quality. The Management Plan discussed goals and objectives; implementation through security, beautification and access; wildlife habitat management and public use along with additional studies required and implementation responsibilities. The plan provided descriptions of the development techniques and maintenance that would be utilized by the NYSDEC.

At the time the Management Plan was prepared, access to the Marsh was via the Utica Harbor Lock Road (crossing the Harbor Lock gate on foot or with bicycle) from the Erie Canalway Trail, the Barge Canal, the Mohawk River and potentially by foot via the St. Lawrence Division track road from downtown Utica. These all constitute non-vehicle modes of access. At the time, the canal-side Rotary Club bikeway could also be used, although it was in disrepair. A permanent foot trail had been developed from the parking lot at the end of Barnes Avenue to the Bird Observation Tower.

The Utica Marsh Management Plan has a number of goals and objectives that are compatible with this exercise to improve waterfront accessibility. Below are those most compatible with this project:

- > To improve access to the Marsh in a manner consistent with conservation of the resource including links via the Barge Canal Bikeway and the proposed connecting link from the City of Utica.
- > To provide access via the railroad maintenance road and communications with Conrail (now CSX).



- > To provide a bikeway link from the East-West canal Bikeway.
- > To provide connection points to the Natural Trail System (extensive in the western part of the marsh) to the lands east of the Route 12 Arterial or connections into the Harbor Point project area. The only connection would be via the Barge Canal Bikeway and the Harbor Lock gate.
- > To maintain the ecosystem in the Marsh.

Niagara Mohawk Power Company (NMPC) Investigations of 1983 to 1993

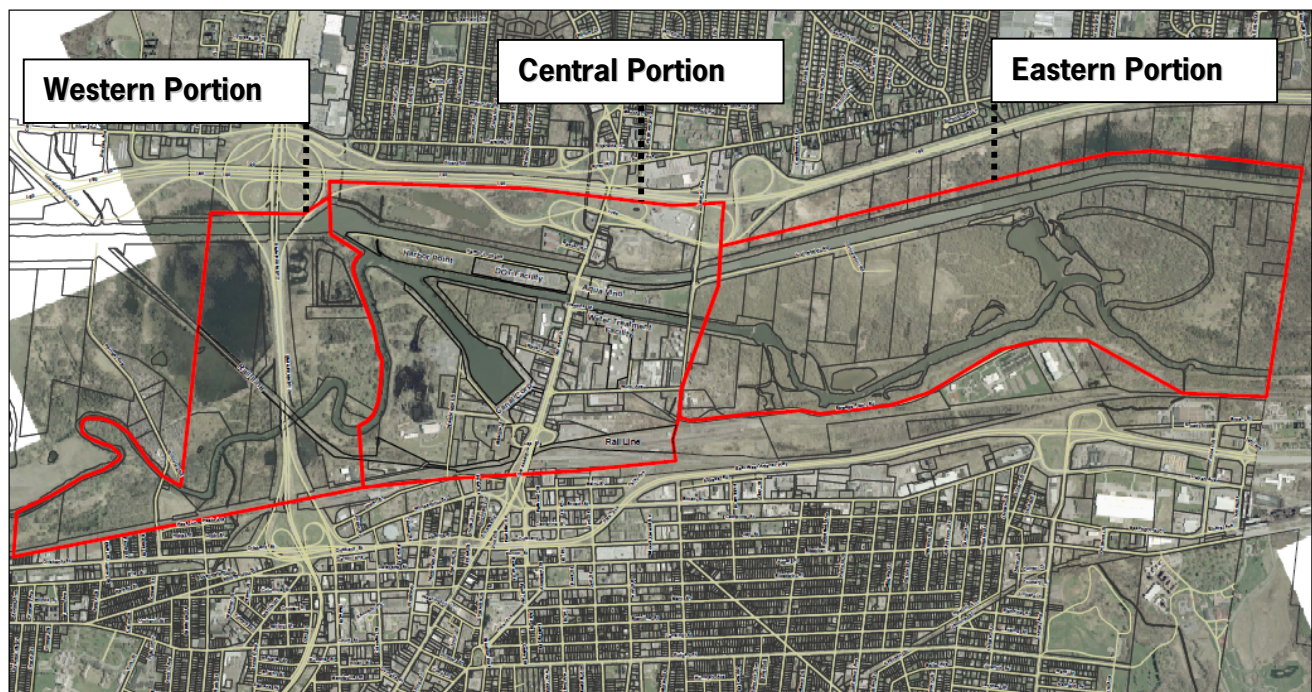
In 1981, the City of Utica requested that the State Legislature designate Utica Harbor as an inland port. However, in 1981, the NYSDOT (now Canal Corp) found coal tar in harbor dredge materials. NMPC initiated an investigation of specific waterbodies and properties within the Harbor Point area as part of a phased investigation. These investigations have been incorporated into the NMPC remediation plan currently underway.



Waterfront Access Boundary

Introduction

For the purpose of this Local Waterfront Access Plan (LWAP), Utica's waterfront has been divided into three separate areas based on existing land use patterns and natural characteristics: the Western, Central and Eastern Portions. The proposed uses and initiatives outlined here have the potential to stimulate reinvestment in the waterfront areas for a variety of uses. The Western Portion provides significant opportunities for passive recreational uses and/or environmental and heritage interpretation, while at the same time safeguarding and enriching the right of public waterfront access. The Eastern Portion shares many of the same characteristics of the Western Portion. Based on existing uses and infrastructure, the Central Portion is anticipated to experience redevelopment and higher intensity uses over the coming decade. Going forward with investments in the waterfront areas, it is critical that City leadership remain committed to the vision outlined in the Master Plan and hold true to creating high-quality development that respects the natural environment and city heritage for future generations.



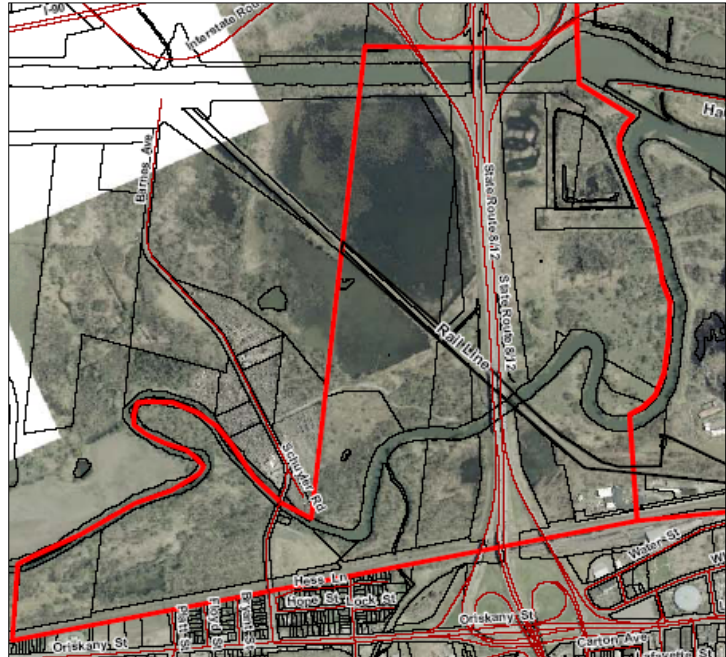
Utica Waterfront Access Plan: Waterfront Access Boundary

Source: Bing maps and Saratoga Associates

The Western Portion Boundary

Starting at the western most City boundary (west of Barnes Avenue), the Waterfront Access Boundary traces the Mohawk River on the north side until it passes under the Barnes Avenue Bridge and then runs north through the Utica Marsh to the Erie Canal. This northerly deviation from the Mohawk River is the municipal boundary between the City of Utica and the Town of Marcy. Following this line incorporates

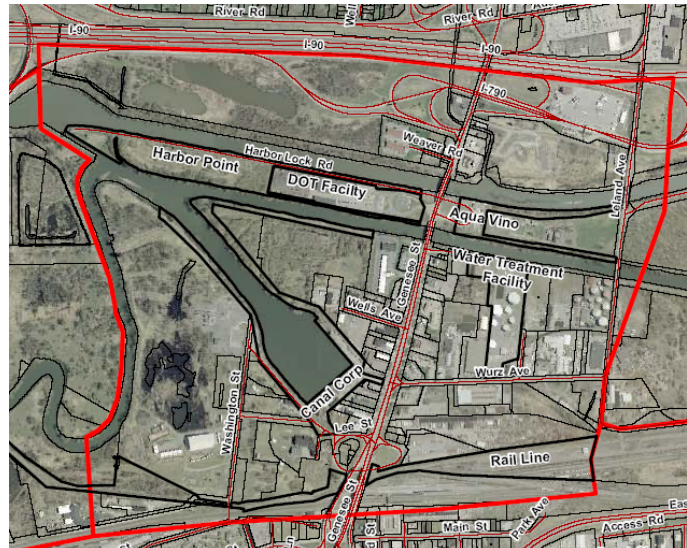
the Utica Marsh, a Wetland Management Area on record with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Crossing the Erie Canal, the boundary stops at NYS Thruway R-O-W and then continues easterly to the Harbor Lock on the Erie Canal. From the Harbor Lock the boundary line matches the Mohawk River to a point at which it follows a southerly trajectory to the CSX Railroad tracks. The Waterfront Access Boundary then follows the Railroad tracks westerly to the municipal boundary line beyond Barnes Avenue. This boundary is illustrated to the right as the “Western Portion.”



Utica Waterfront Access Plan: Western Portion Boundary
Source: Schumaker Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C.

The Central Portion Boundary

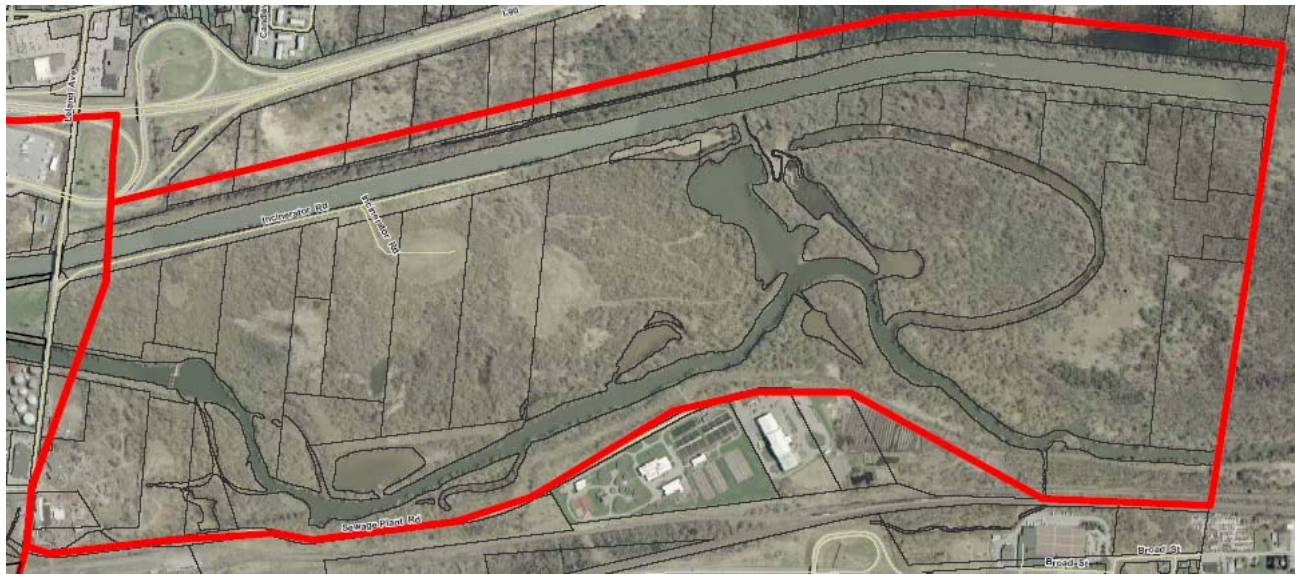
Starting at the eastern side of the Western Portion, the Central Portion boundary follows the Mohawk River through the Harbor Lock area, crossing the Erie Canal and extending north to the NYS Thruway. From here the Waterfront Access Boundary tracks easterly, following the NYS Thruway to Leland Avenue. At Leland Avenue, the boundary line continues southerly along the roadway until the CSX Railroad tracks are reached. At the railroad tracks the Boundary line turns and runs westerly connecting back to the Western Portion Boundary paralleling the Mohawk River. This boundary is illustrated to the right as the “Central Portion.”



Utica Waterfront Access Plan: Central Portion Boundary
Source: Schumaker Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C.

The Eastern Portion Boundary

Starting at the western side of the Eastern Section, the Waterfront Access Boundary follows Leland Avenue from the CSX Railroad tracks on the south to the NYS Thruway R-O-W to the north. The boundary then generally tracks east along the north side of the Erie Canal until it reaches the Town of Schuyler and City of Utica municipal lines. From here the boundary turns south and follows the municipal boundary line to the CSX Railroad tracks. Following the railroad tracks for a short period the boundary jogs north to follow Sewage Plant Road. From this point the Waterfront Access Boundary follows Sewage Plant Road until it parallels the railroad tracks and makes a perpendicular connection with Leland Avenue. This boundary is illustrated below as the “Eastern Portion.”



Utica Waterfront Access Plan: Eastern Portion Boundary

Source: Schumaker Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C.

Vision & Goals for Waterfront Access

A Vision for Enhancing Accessibility to the Utica Waterfront

Utica's waterfront is and should continue to be a citywide resource to be enjoyed by all of Utica's residents and visitors, providing a variety of themes, activities and experiences. The waterfront should be a destination that attracts all residents as well as visitors and should be an integral ingredient to the high quality of life offered in Utica. With this as a foundation, Utica recognizes its waterfront as a vital economic development and recreational opportunity; and access to the waterfront should be increased and improved. Utica is committed to investing resources that promotes accessibility to and creates continuous connectivity along the waterfront, offering the Mohawk Valley a unique recreational, cultural and commercial development experience alongside the Erie Canal, one of Americas most treasured and historic waterways, and the Mohawk River.

Goals for Enhanced Accessibility to the Utica Waterfront:

- > Improved Physical and Visual Access to the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River
- > The Waterfront's Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation and Parking Should be Improved
- > Enhanced Connectivity of Recreational Activities
- > Recommend New Trail Links
- > Strengthen Opportunities for Regional Bicycle Opportunities Along the Canalway Trail
- > Establish a Circulation Plan that Facilitates Economic Growth
- > Identify Gateway & Interpretive Signage and Amenity Opportunities
- > Advance Catalytic Projects by Developing Improved Access & Circulation

Inventory: Opportunities and Limitations



Introduction

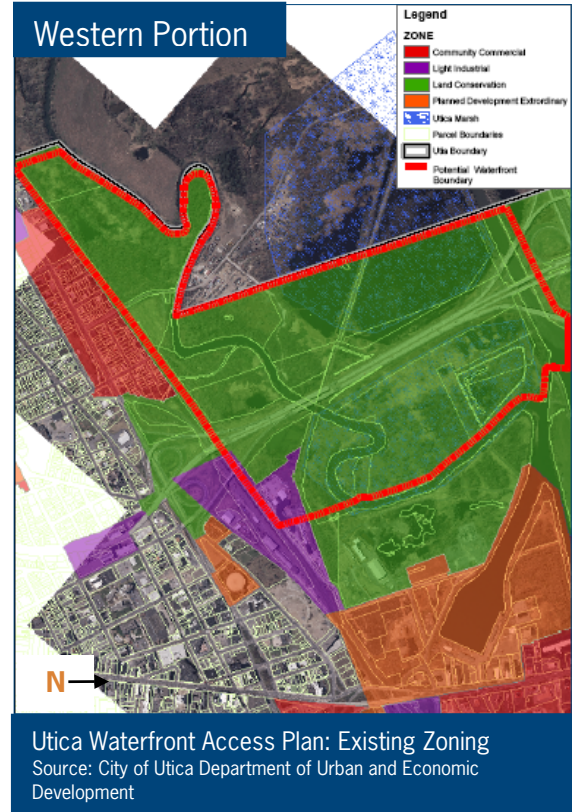
The City of Utica is located in Central New York along the famed Erie Canal and Mohawk River, conveniently located about 40 minutes east of the City of Syracuse and 90 minutes west of Albany. Several major roads traverse the City, one of the most important being the New York State Thruway (I-90), which generally runs north of and parallel to the Erie Canal and Mohawk River through Utica in an east-west direction. Slightly south of the Erie Canal and Mohawk River is New York State Route 5S. New York State Route 5/8/12 follows a north-south orientation through the City and is an important gateway to the Adirondack Region.

The City's strategic location, coupled with its natural resources which offer varied recreational opportunities, urban cultural amenities, quality schools, and the emerging technology industry in the region all set the stage for Utica to re-establish itself as an important regional hub. The City has experienced significant challenges over the past two decades, typical of many American urban industrial centers: higher levels of unemployment, poverty, inadequate housing, low home ownership rates, a perception of poor educational opportunities, and personal safety concerns. As a result, many of the City's parks, recreational amenities, historic architecture, cultural and arts opportunities are often overlooked. These challenges and opportunities, along with the desire to balance environmental and economic sustainability, has led to the recommendation of developing a Waterfront Access Plan (WAP) that uses the Erie Canal and Mohawk River as critical amenities to help stimulate economic investment in the community. The following section outlines the opportunities and limitations for accessing the Utica waterfront. These findings are the foundation for the access recommendations made in the subsequent chapter.



Existing zoning

The Study Area is made up of four zoning districts: Community Commercial; Light Industrial; Planned Development Extraordinary, and Land Conservation. The Western Portion of the study area is principally defined by Land Conservation District with only a small portion at the southwestern corner including some Light Industrial.



Central Portion is a mixture of zoning districts, including Land Conservation, Planned Development Extraordinary Community Commercial and Light Industrial. This Portion is the most intensely used area within the study area and holds the greatest commercial development potential along the waterfront. With that, the City should consider making zoning changes in this area that encourage or require provisions for meaningful open space, bike and pedestrian connections and include expressions of the areas historical significance.



Similar to the Western Portion, the Eastern Portion is principally defined by the Land Conservation District with a small portion of the northwestern including some Light Industrial.

Existing Zoning Summary

C-C Community Commercial: The purpose of the community commercial district is to provide areas for large scale shopping and service centers, and to delineate predominately retail shopping areas outside the central business district, with adequate off-street parking.

I-1 Light Industrial: The purpose of reserving areas within the city for light industrial land use is to diversify and strengthen the local economic base and provide for a physical separation of incompatible land uses. The I-1 industrial district is intended primarily for manufacturing, assembly and fabrication, including small scale or specialized industrial

operations, office and research related activities whose external effects will not be perceived outside the district that the use is located in. Further, the I-1 district is intended to permit the manufacturing, packaging, processing, storage or distribution of finished products from previously prepared materials.

PD-E Planned Development Extraordinary: Planned development districts are reserved for projects where the quality of development is of primary concern for reasons that may relate to unique characteristics and circumstances of geography, topography, surrounding development, the special goals and objectives of the community, and special factors pertaining to public health and safety, permanence of buildings, aesthetics, and intrinsic as well as extrinsic values of property.

The PD-E provides development not otherwise distinguishable under any previous classification, occupying a district consisting of any quantity of land area and containing less than the stated minimum proportions of any single or dominant use or function, and in which the proposed uses of interior and exterior spaces, although diverse or mixed, bear extraordinary design qualities resulting in a completely logical and complementary conjunction of uses and functions not ordinarily encountered in normal development.

Land Conservation District: The land conservation district is identified as the 100-year floodplain and is established for the following purposes:

1. To protect the public health, safety and welfare.
2. To minimize public and private property damage.
3. To minimize public expenditure for costly flood control projects.

4. To minimize the need for rescue and relief efforts at public expense.
5. To protect the ecosystem of the floodplain.
6. To preserve and protect artifacts of archeological significance.
7. To minimize prolonged interruption of business and government services.
8. To put potential homebuyers, property owners and tenants on notice that a particular piece of property is in a flood-prone area.
9. To protect the public and private water supply from contamination.

Existing Land & Water Use

The current land use patterns along the City's 21 miles of waterfront are varied and have largely developed as a function of the area's natural features. The Western Portion is made up of several vacant parcels with the Utica Marsh occupying almost the entire area. A specialty packing operation known as Temple-Inland, Inc. occupies the southwestern corner of the area. The Western Portion is traversed by two transportation corridors: the rail line for the Adirondack Scenic Railroad and Route 5/8/12 (I-790), a gateway into the Adirondacks. The rail line does limit pedestrian access from one section of the marsh to the other, which will present a challenge in truly enhancing trail connections throughout the marsh. I-790 presents an aesthetic challenge and any crossings below will require NYSDOT coordination and approval.

Refer to the following Existing Land Use Maps on the following page for additional information.

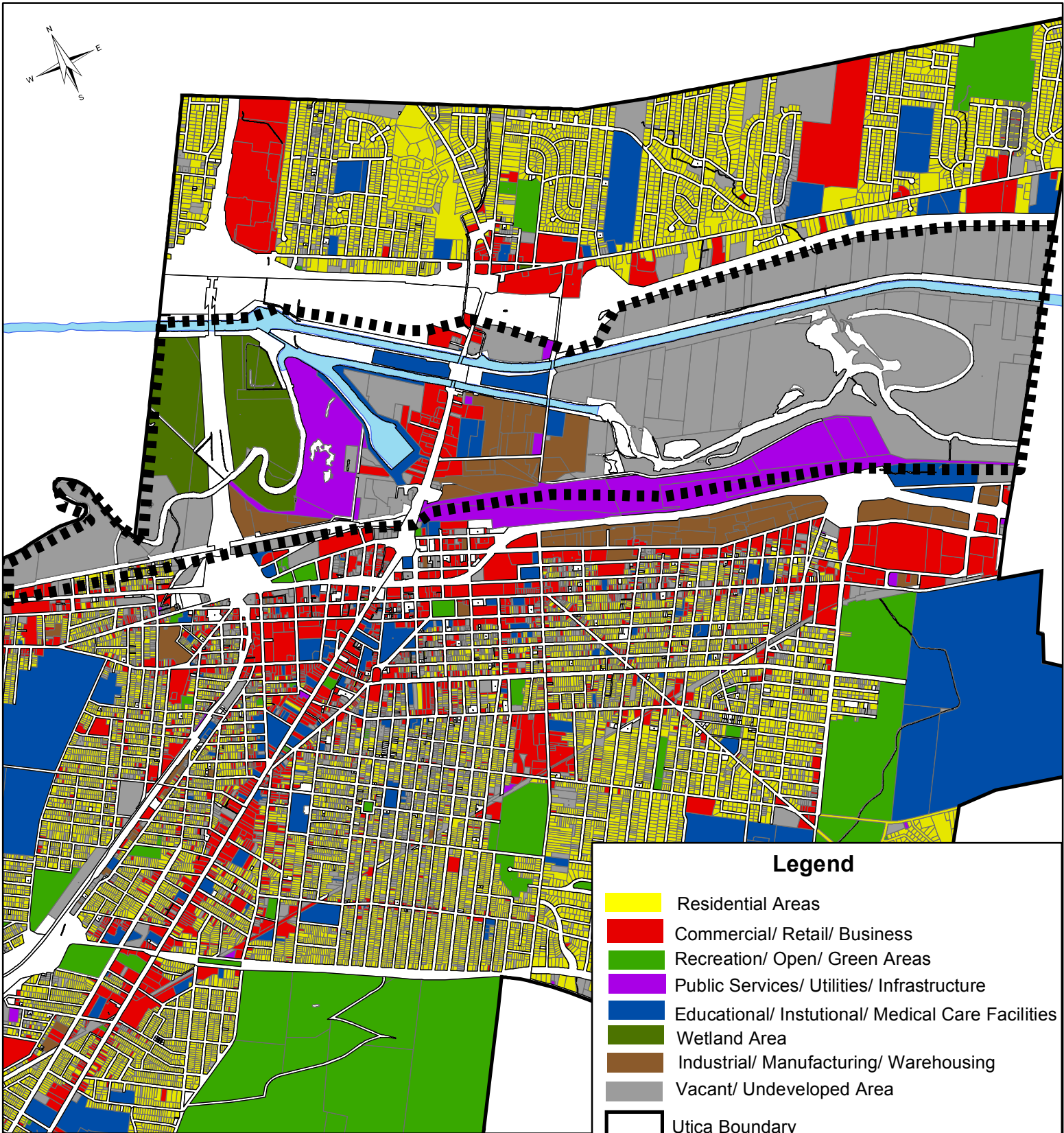
The physical features of the Study Area, both man-made and natural, have created a variety of accessibility boundaries, particularly in the Harbor Point area. These include the Mohawk River, the Erie Canal, the railroad tracks and Genesee Street. Other than the connectivity provided by the North Genesee Street Corridor, the Central Portion of the waterfront is essentially self-contained with poor linkages to the adjacent transportation network.

Currently, water-based businesses and industries are limited to the Central Portion of the waterfront. This area has a strong connection to the City's industrial heritage and the surrounding transportation corridors. Much of the area is located within the 100-year floodplain, which requires specialized construction for new or re-use of existing developments. A significant part of the area is also within the floodway, which precludes development of permanent structures.

The Central Portion serves as the primary commercial and industrial section of the Study Area. Generally, business operations in this area are related to the locational advantage of being along the waterfront and connectivity to the North Genesee Corridor, which has a direct connection to the NYS Thruway. Primary activities in the Central Portion include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- > NMPC operations and remediation facilities;
- > The Monarch Chemical site;
- > Auto maintenance business;
- > The New York State Canal Corporation maintenance complex;





Legend

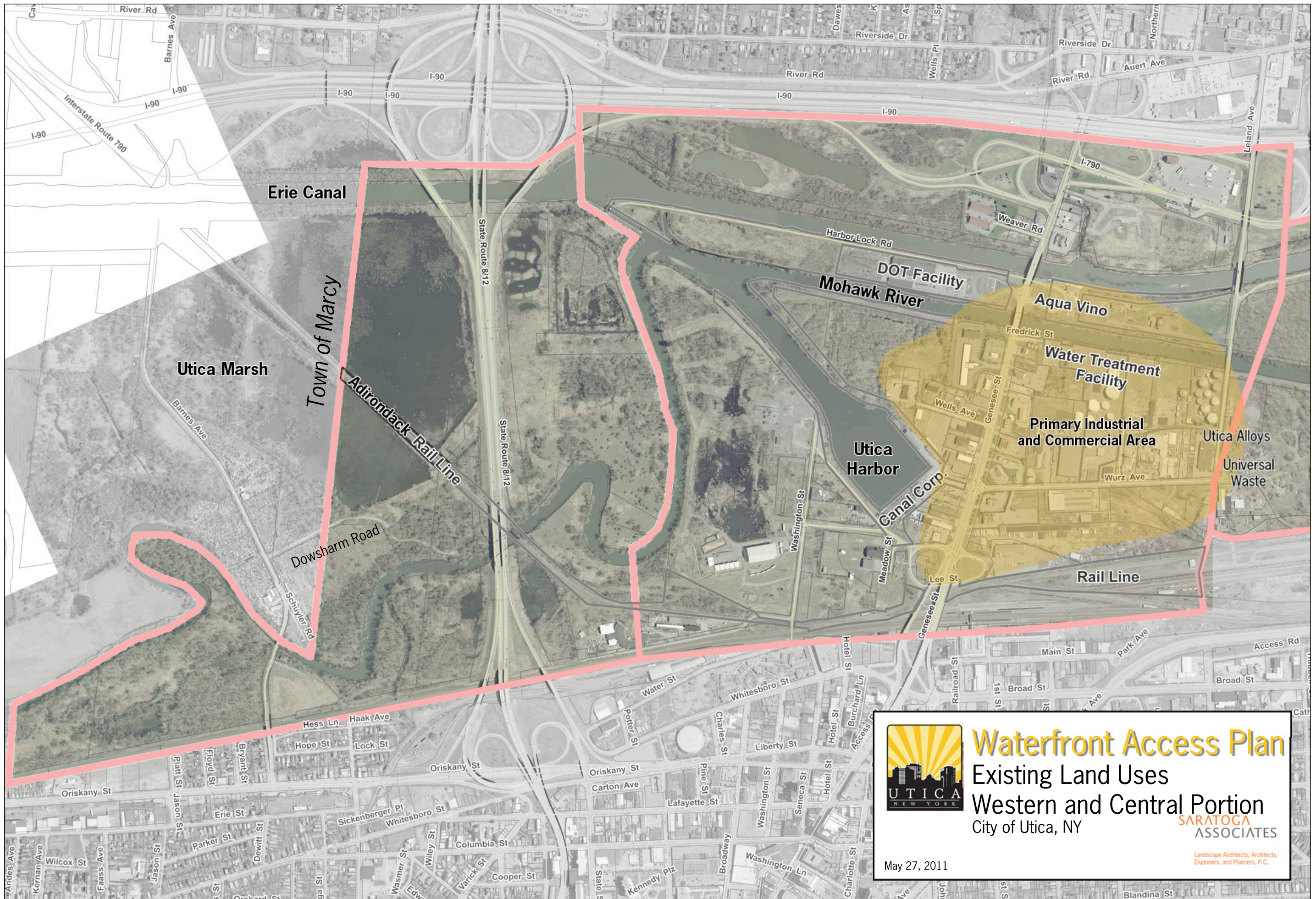
- Residential Areas
- Commercial/ Retail/ Business
- Recreation/ Open/ Green Areas
- Public Services/ Utilities/ Infrastructure
- Educational/ Institutional/ Medical Care Facilities
- Wetland Area
- Industrial/ Manufacturing/ Warehousing
- Vacant/ Undeveloped Area
- Utica Boundary
- Roads
- Erie Canal
- LWAP Boundary



Department of Urban and
Economic Development
Utica, NY 13502
Map Produced January 2011

This information though believed
accurate is not guaranteed.

Land Use Map within the LWAP Boundary City of Utica



Waterfront Access Plan

Existing Land Uses

Western and Central Portion

City of Utica, NY

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Engineers, and Planners, P.C.

May 27, 2011



Waterfront Access Plan

Existing Land Uses

Eastern Portion

City of Utica, NY

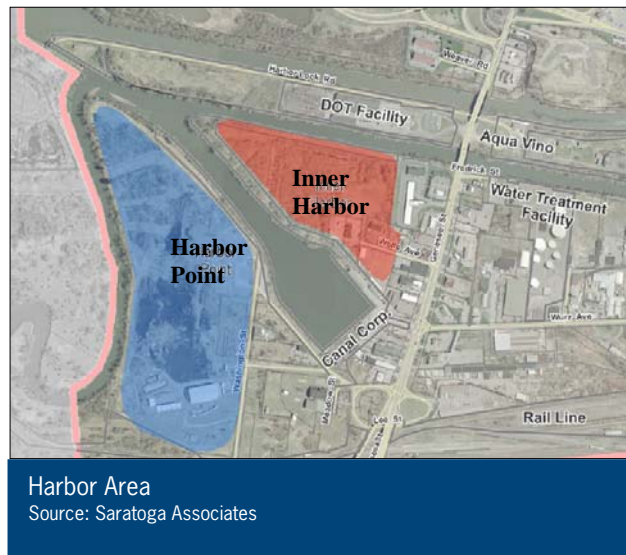
SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

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Engineers, and Planners, P.C.

May 27, 2011

- > The NYSDOT facility;
- > Aqua Vino (a waterfront restaurant with outdoor seating and docking facilities);
- > Soul's Harbor Church;
- > Several auto-oriented businesses associated with the North Genesee Street Corridor, including, but not limited to: Babe's Macaroni Grill & Bar, Dunkin' Donuts, Pizza Hut, Wendy's, McDonalds, Delmonico's Restaurant, Days Inn, Hampton Inn, Best Western, and several gasoline stations;
- > CENTRO Facility;
- > DPW Garages;
- > Nathan Steel; and
- > Clifford Fuel Company.
- > Harbor Point Minerals
- > Recycling centers and metal scraping

The Central Portion provides significant opportunities for water-based activities that could be a catalyst for re-investment in the City of Utica. A key redevelopment area is Harbor Point, a 140 +/- acre section long recognized for development with a number of actions underway to improve future redevelopment opportunities. It is anticipated that this area will continue to be an active waterfront with portions redeveloped into mixed-use commercial/retail uses including residential and professional office uses. The area will also include a waterfront promenade and provide opportunities for recreational motorboats to dock.



Universal Waste is a Class 2a site located along the Mohawk River, half a mile southwest of the closed Utica City Dump. Immediately adjacent to that site is Utica Alloys, another Class 2a inactive hazardous waste disposal site. The Oneida County Water Pollution Control Plant, which discharges into the Mohawk River, and the City of Utica Eastern Transfer Station, located along Leland Avenue just south of the Mohawk River.

Located between the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River, the Eastern Portion area is essentially an island. The area was once home to the Utica City Dump. Closed in the mid-1980s, with a Record of Decision issued by DEC in August of 2003. The property is currently closed to public access. The sewage treatment plant is located near the southeastern part, just outside the study area. However, the sewage treatment plant produces assorted unpleasant odors, which may impact the overall desirability of developing this area for public recreational access.

Access & Circulation

Access to and circulation through Utica's waterfront provides both quality of life amenities as well as economic development opportunities for existing and new businesses. The information provided here identifies the needs of business operations, employees, potential consumers, and the recreational visitors to the waterfront.

The City of Utica is fortunate in that it is located along the New York State canal system, which is both a significant tourist draw and an opportunity for recreation. Despite this significant amenity, few realize what the City has to offer because there is no primary gateway for the waterfront coupled with a limited wayfinding signage system. While the roadway network is designed primarily for automobiles, it also accommodates in a limited fashion, pedestrians. Likewise, the NYS Canal System is primarily designed for boaters and, in more recent years has been emerging as a unique trail system with the Canalway Trail.

Once out of their vehicles, pedestrian can have the greatest economic impact in Utica. The primary goal of a wayfinding system is to get visitors out of their initial mode of transportation (i.e. cars, buses, motorcycles, boats) and become pedestrians, immersing themselves into the communities they are passing through. To achieve this, it is important to develop a coordinated communication network that starts with the automobile or boat traveler, and then gradually directs the visitor into and then around the community.

Currently, visitors, even residents find it difficult to access the waterfront. Destinations, such as Aqua Vino, are often overlooked perhaps due to a lack of information regarding its existence and location. Developing a communication network that easily moves people from the main transportation corridors to and throughout the entire waterfront district will be essential to realizing the fullest potential of the Erie Canal and Mohawk River.

Cultural & Environmental Resources

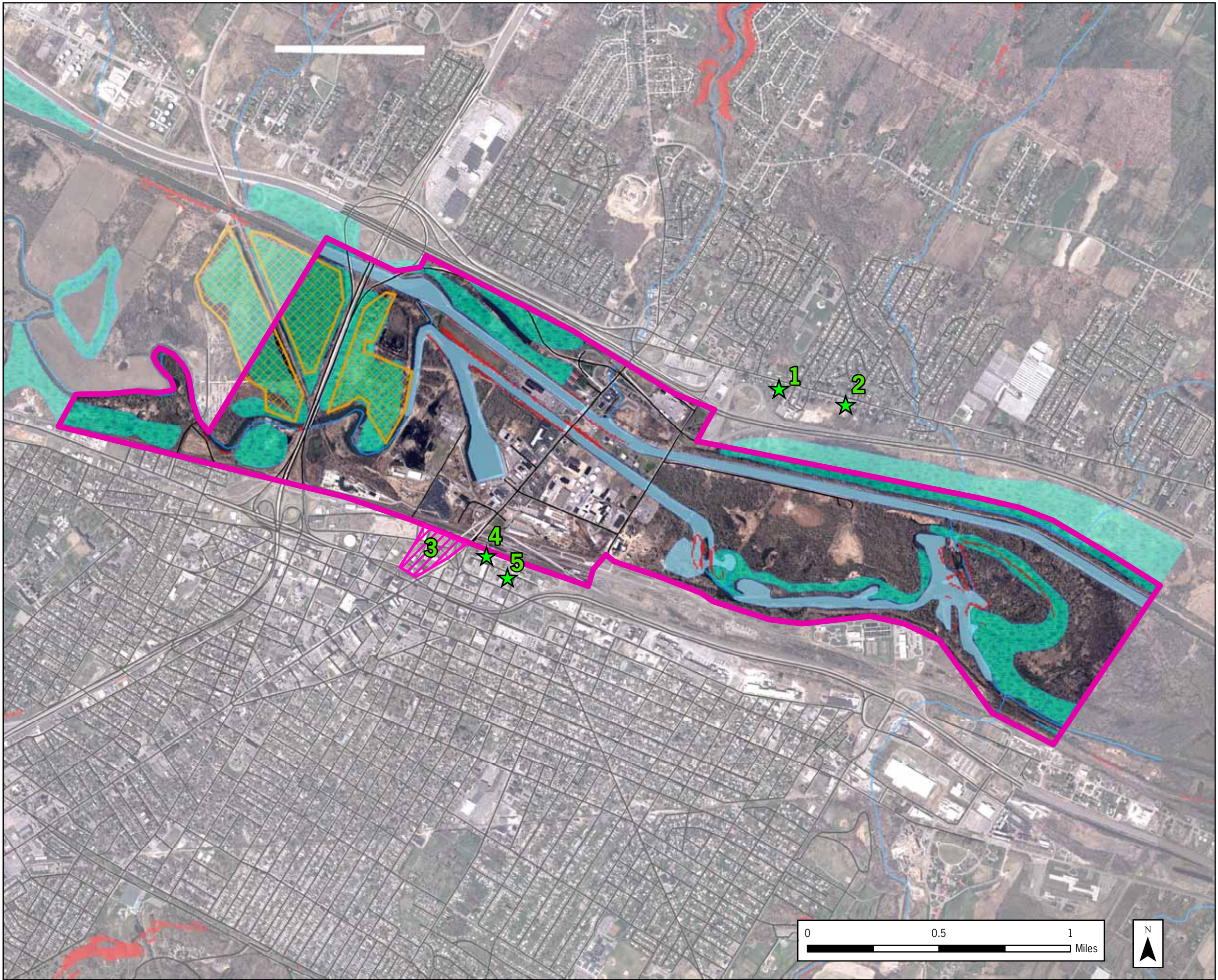
Historic Resources (National Register Sites and Districts, Locally Designated Resources, Archaeological Resources)

Refer to the Cultural and Environmental Resources Map for additional information regarding the following discussion on cultural and environmental resources.

There are no buildings, districts or sites within the study area on the State or National Register of Historic Places, nor are there any locally designated resources within the Study Area. According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) GIS system, there are Archaeologically Sensitive Areas within the Study Area. Details regarding the sensitive archaeological areas are not readily available from SHPO and generally not released outside of the agency.

There are National Register Sites and Districts within the City of Utica and near the study area. As depicted on the Cultural and Environmental Resources Map, the following resources are adjacent to the





City of Utica Waterfront Access Plan

Cultural and Environmental Resources

December 2010

Key

- ★ National Register Structure
- ▨ Historic District
- ▭ WAP Project Boundary
- ▨ Utica Marsh Wildlife Management Area
- ▭ Slopes greater than 25%
- ▭ Open Water
- ~ Watercourse
- ▨ NYS DEC Wetland

- Cultural Resources:
- 1 90NR02063 First Baptist Church of Deerfield
 - 2 90NR03043 General John G. Weaver House
 - 3 90NR02060 Lower Genesee St. Historic District
 - 4 90NR02057 Union Station
 - 5 92NR00417 Byington Mall (Frisbie & Stansfield Knitting Company)

PROJECT # 2010 - 048.10M
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This map is computer generated using data acquired by Saratoga Associates from various sources and is intended only for reference, conceptual planning and presentation purposes. This map is not intended for and should not be used to establish boundaries, property lines, location of objects or to provide any other information typically needed for construction or any other purpose when engineered plans or land surveys are required.

File Location: B:\2010\10048\Maps\CulturalEnvironmentalResources.mxd

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New York City > Saratoga Springs > Syracuse



area: the First Baptist Church of Deerfield, the General John G. Weaver House, the Lower Genesee Street/Baggs Square Historic Districts, Union Station and Byington Mall, previously known as the Frisbie & Stansfield Knitting Company. In addition, the study area is regionally located between the Oriskany Battlefield and the General Herkimer Homestead as the region is steeped in canal and Native American history and the westward movement of settlers and goods in New York State.

Utica Marsh

The Utica Marsh is a unique urban wetland encompassing approximately 213 acres and situated partly on the edge of the City of Utica and partially in the Town of Marcy. The marsh is associated within the floodplain of the Mohawk River, and located in between the river and the NYS Barge Canal. The mixture of cattails wetlands, wet meadows, open water pools and flooded willows create a diverse marsh habitat that harbors a tremendous variety of plants and animals, especially birds.

The Utica Marsh is managed by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) as the Utica Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The marsh has two observation towers, handicapped accessible viewing platform, several trails and boardwalks; water control dikes, parking areas, a pavilion and car top boat launch site on the Mohawk River. A large parking lot and boat ramp are located on the Barge Canal just off the north-west corner of the marsh.

Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitats

According to the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper “<http://www.dec.ny.gov/imsmaps/ERM/viewer.htm>,” the Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus Platensis*), a threatened bird species, has been documented in the Utica Marsh. The Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana uliginosa*), an endangered rare plant has also been documented in the area. No other protected plant, animal or habitat has been documented in the Study Area according to the NYSDEC.



Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Utica Marsh can be considered an environmentally sensitive area along with the other wetlands within the Study Area to the east of the marsh. The entire Study Area is made up of a series of NYSDEC regulated freshwater wetlands, the Mohawk River and canal. The wetlands in the Study Area provide natural flood control for the Mohawk River, stormwater control as well as water filtration. Water soaked up by the wetlands is naturally filtered and eventually released back into the river and canal. Due to the combination of water, nutrients, and sun, wetlands are very rich, productive habitats. As a result, many diverse organisms live in the wetlands. The Study Area provides habitat for a wide array of protected and non-protected plant and animal species. According to the Field Trip Guide to Utica Marsh:

<http://academics.hamilton.edu/biology/ewilliam/marshweb/images/field/fieldtripguide.pdf>, the Utica Marsh is home to the following animal species:

- > 8 species of toads and frogs;
- > 8 species of fish;
- > 10 species of salamanders;
- > 3 species of turtles;
- > 10 species of snakes;
- > 150 species of birds, including at least 37 species that breed here; and
- > 30 species of mammals.

Recreational Resources

The Erie Canal and the Mohawk River run through the northern section of the study area and is a recreation asset for both the city of Utica and New York State. A portion of the Utica Marsh WMA is located within the City of Utica and the study area. The study area offers hiking trails, nature trails, boardwalks, boat access, a viewing tower, bird watching, x-country skiing, snowshoeing, picnic areas, and fishing opportunities.

Environmental Limitations

Refer to the Cultural and Environmental Resources Map for additional information.

Topography and Geology Survey

The lands within the study area are relatively flat with a slight increase in elevation in the developed portions surrounding Utica Harbor and the industrial lands located east and west of N. Genesee Street. There are some additional upland areas east of Leland Avenue that consist of fill, including the location of the former incinerator. The remainder of the study area not consisting of wetlands and open water contain some upland areas formed as part of the natural dynamics of the Mohawk River and include oxbows and several small islands.

Wetlands

There are approximately nine NYSDEC regulated wetlands located within the Study Area, which includes a portion of the Utica Marsh WMA. These wetlands have likely undergone significant manmade changes over the years starting first with the construction of the Erie Canal, industrial uses, the NYS Thruway and other surrounding roads and bridges. The Utica Marsh and associated wetlands are surrounded by the City of Utica and has been impacted over the years from stormwater runoff and siltation. Despite the past environmental impacts to these wetlands, the City and NYSDEC have taken a pro-active approach to protecting the wetlands as described above.

Steep Slopes

There are limited areas within the Study Area having slopes over 25% and are mainly confined to the shorelines of the Mohawk River and Erie Canal.

Flooding and Erosion

The majority of the Study Area is located within the 100-year floodplain pursuant to FEMA Issued Flood Maps for Oneida County. Limited areas within the Study Area are outside of the 100-year floodplain, although they are susceptible to minor flooding. Erosion along the banks of the Mohawk River is a continuous process and has resulted in the array of upland areas, oxbows and islands that dominate the wetland complexes. No other areas of erosion concern in the WAP have been documented.

Water Quality (Point and non-point sources)

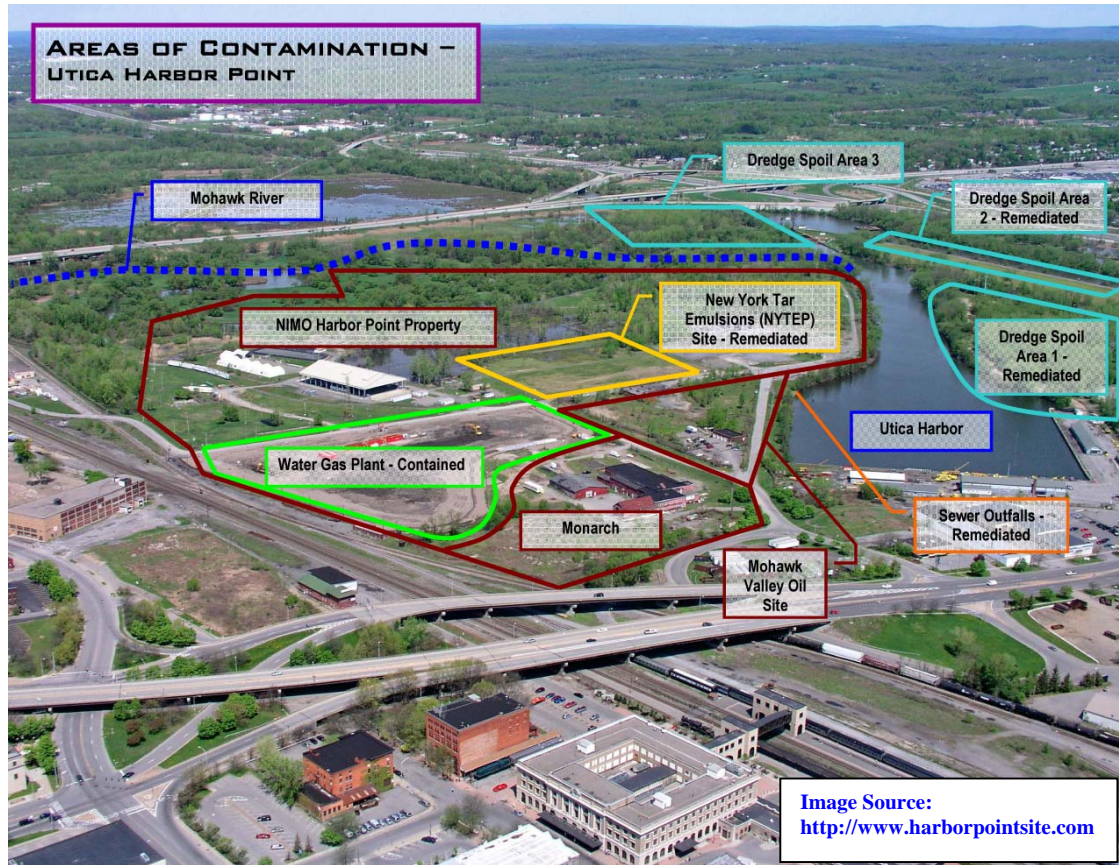
The following information on water quality is based on the 2010 Mohawk River Basin Waterbody Inventory and Priority Waterbodies List "<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/36739.html>." Aquatic life, hydrology and habitats within the Mohawk River, associated wetlands and Utica Harbor within the Study Area are known to be impaired as a result of pollutants from past industrial uses, landfill activity, and urban and storm runoff. Fish consumption is known to be precluded and recreation is known to be impaired. Refer to the 2010 Mohawk River Basin Waterbody Inventory and Priority Waterbodies List for more detailed information on water quality and habitat conditions in the Study Area.

Based upon the history of this area, there are several non-point sources for stormwater runoff into the wetlands, Mohawk River and Erie Canal including roads, parking areas and numerous impervious areas associated with existing and vacant industrial and commercial uses. A known point source includes the Oneida County Water Pollution Control Plant located in the Study Area, which discharges into the Mohawk River.

Environmental Issues (Hazardous Waste Sites, Solid Wastes and other Environmental Contamination Areas)

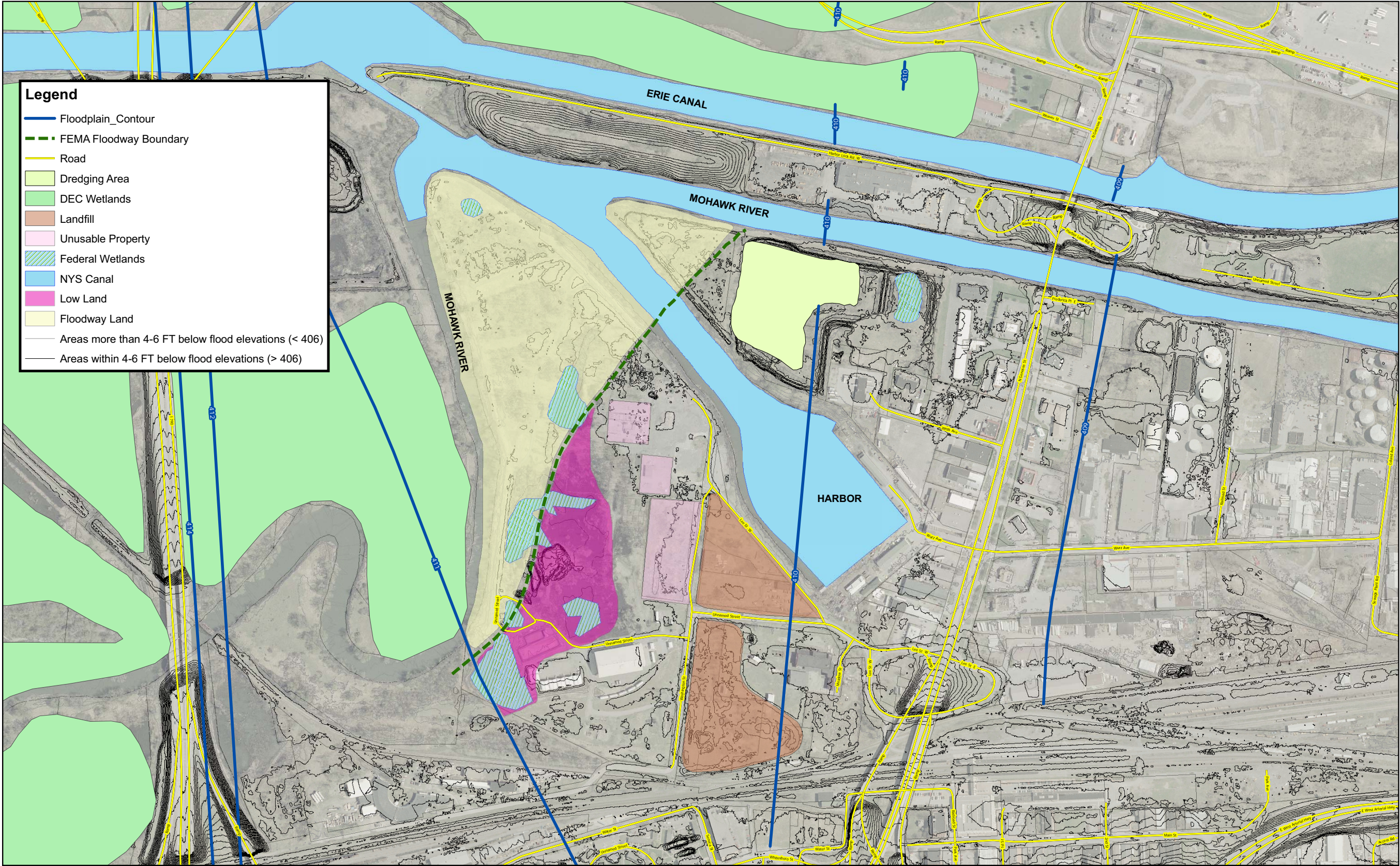
Refer to the Impediments to Harbor Development Map for additional information regarding the following discussion.

The lands within the Study Area have a long history of industrial activity, which have unfortunately resulted in environmental contamination and the subsequent need for remediation efforts. According to

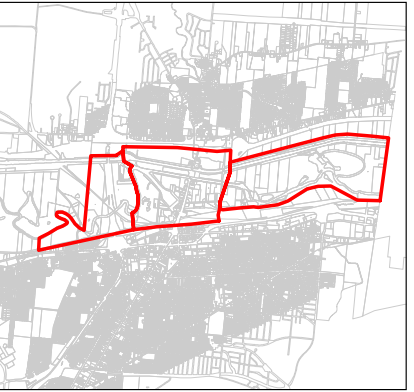


the NYSDEC Environmental Facilities Map “<http://www.dec.ny.gov/imsmaps/facilities/viewer.htm>,” the WAP has several documented environmental contamination and remediation sites, including three Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) Sites, along with seven NYS Superfund Program Sites and one Toxic Release Inventory Site, referred to as the Monarch Chemicals Site. Two of the ERP sites and four of the Superfund Sites are located in an area referred to as Harbor Point where a significant amount of environmental remediation has been occurring.

Harbor Point, which comprises approximately 140 acres of lands between Utica Harbor and the Mohawk River, is located within the Study Area. The area was developed for industrial purposes in the mid-1800s and was the site of two manufactured gas plans (MGPs), a coal-fired steam plant, a petroleum storage and distribution facility (MVO) and a tar products plant (New York Tar Emulsion Products). Currently, a gas



SITE MAP



Legend

- Study Area
- City of Utica Parcels



CLIENT:

CITY OF UTICA



WATERFRONT
ACCESS PLAN:
CENTRAL PORTION

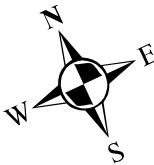
CITY OF UTICA
LOCAL WATERFRONT ACCESS PLAN
ONEIDA COUNTY, NEW YORK

FIG.

DRAWN BY:
APPROVED BY:
DATE:
PROJECT NO.:

PHE
XXX
12/10/2010
R08202.02

NOTES:



310 155 0 310 Meters



430 Court Street, Utica, NY 13502
Phone: 315-724-0100/ Fax: 315-724-3715

regulator station and electric substation occupy Harbor Point, along with active maintenance and office facilities for the NYS Canal Corporation. The remainder of the Harbor Point Site is undeveloped.

Coal tar, a byproduct of manufacturing gas, was released to the environment resulting in the contamination of soil and groundwater at the Harbor Point Site and the contamination of sediment within Utica Harbor. According to the December 2010 NYSDEC Fact Sheet for the Niagara Mohawk – Harbor Point Site and the Mohawk Valley Oil Site Fact Sheet, despite the presence of these contaminants, people are not currently exposed to contamination at the site since access to the site is restricted and groundwater in the area is not used for drinking water. Through a combination of clean-up actions, land use restrictions, and long-term management to prevent the potential for future exposures, the Harbor Point Site and surrounding sites may be redeveloped and used in the future in a protective manner.

Cleanup of environmental impacts on the peninsula and the adjacent Utica Harbor and Mohawk River are being undertaken primarily by National Grid. Refer to the “Areas of Contamination – Utica Harbor Point” Graphic for additional information. The New York Tar Emulsion Products Site has been remediated by Beazer East, Inc and Suit-Kote Corporation. National Grid and the NYS Canal Corporation have an agreement for the remediation of Utica Harbor and certain adjacent dredged sediment disposal areas. The remediation of all of these sites is overseen by the NYSDEC, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health. The Monarch Chemical Site is being cleaned-up separately from the Nation Grid and NYS Canal Corporation project. For additional information on the clean up efforts at Harbor Point, refer to the December 2010 NYSDEC Fact Sheet for the Niagara Mohawk – Harbor Point Site and the Mohawk Valley Oil Site. The Fact Sheet is located in Appendix A for additional reference.

The City of Utica has begun the preparation of a Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study under the NYS Brownfields Opportunity Area (BOA) Program. The BOA Step 1 Study Area includes all of the Western and Central Portions of the LWAP Study and a small section of the Eastern Portion. The remainder of the BOA Step 1 Study Area includes the Orinskany Street, Baggs Square and Broad Street areas. The BOA Program provides communities with financial and technical expertise to revitalize areas affected by brownfields, abandoned or vacant properties and economic distress. The BOA Program will be an integral part of the overall planning process for identifying reuse and redevelopment opportunities in the Harbor District and being able to leverage additional funds towards implementation.

Step 1 includes clearly identifying a manageable study area, forming partnerships, conducting public outreach, confirming a vision for the study area, completing a preliminary analysis and identifying compelling opportunities for revitalization. With the amount of planning already completed for this area including the Master Plan and this LWAP, there is a significant amount of information available to generate the Step 1 Report. In addition, the visioning work already completed provides a great starting point to formulate a specific vision for the Harbor District portion of the Step 1 Study Area Boundary.

Step 2 involves a more comprehensive land use assessment and analysis, an economic and market analysis; identification and description of all brownfield sites with an emphasis on the reuse and redevelopment potential of strategic sites that are catalysts for revitalization, and finally, recommendations for future uses and actions to redevelop strategic sites and revitalize the community and neighborhoods. Step 3 involves identifying more detailed redevelopment strategies to achieve revitalization, prioritization



of investment and redevelopment opportunities; conducting environmental site assessments, achieving shovel ready sites and preparing marketing materials to attract public and private sector interest and investment.

Navigation and Dredging Issues

The Erie Canal through the Study Area is fully navigable by a variety of watercraft. Within the Study Area, the Mohawk River is navigable for smaller watercraft. The Barge Canal from Utica Harbor lock to the terminal wall was dredged to provide adequate navigation depth and to enable the placement of an engineered cap in the harbor. The engineered cap is necessary to contain environmental contaminants remaining in the bed of the harbor as a result of past industrial operations in the area.

For additional information on existing land and water conditions in the Study Area, refer to the Maps labeled “*Environmental Quality*” and “*Existing Resources*” in Appendix B.

Waterfront Access Plan

The WAP aims to ensure Utica's waterfront is fully accessible and provides a framework that incorporates accessibility and connectivity in all waterfront undertakings. This means physical access to and along the Mohawk River and Erie Canal, visual access along view corridors and at gateways; appropriate location and design of future buildings; and connectivity among the various activities along Utica's diverse waterfront. It also means working with neighboring communities to provide the greatest level of enjoyment along the region's waterways.



Rendering Courtesy of Cornell University
Department of Landscape Architecture

Refer to the Proposed Concepts Map for additional information regarding the following discussion on proposed project recommendations.

The City of Utica has developed this WAP in an effort to establish a coordinated framework for public access and circulation along the Mohawk River and Erie Canal. The WAP will be used by the City of Utica to develop waterfront access improvements that will complement land use investments made within its boundary. Further, the City will use this plan to work collaboratively with developers, regional and local interests to incorporate enhanced waterfront access and connectivity into all future development projects.

While Utica has an extensive amount of waterfront, much of it is difficult to access because of both natural and man-made limitations. As earlier noted, the Waterfront Access Boundary has been separated into three main sections based on existing natural conditions and land use patterns: the Western, Central, and Eastern Portions. The proposed access and connections outlined here have the potential to stimulate reinvestment in the waterfront areas for a variety of uses.

The Central Portion is an area of higher intensity uses and is expected to experience more development pressures over the coming decade. The Western Portion and the Eastern Portion both share similar environmental limitation characteristics. The Utica Marsh principally defines the Western Portion, and with that comes an opportunity to enjoy the natural environment while providing educational opportunities. The Eastern Portion offers opportunities for passive recreation and environmental and heritage interpretation, while ensuring public access to the waters edge is maintained and enhanced.

The improvements recommended here will foster access and connectivity throughout the waterfront area while helping to provide a variety of experiences along the water's edge. It will be critical that municipal leadership remain committed to the vision outlined in this WAP and hold true to creating high-quality



development and recreational opportunities that respects both the natural environment and heritage for future generations.

The framework established through this WAP aims to strike a balance between commercial development and traditional waterfront activities – ensuring that Utica’s waterfront areas are an inviting place for people to recreate, do business and enjoy a high quality of life. The Waterfront Area will also provide space and opportunities for innovative cultural, recreational, residential, commercial and professional growth within the City of Utica.

This WAP outlines a vision for the future of the City’s waterfront areas that are both compelling and inspiring, imagining possibilities that at first might seem inconceivable, but will be possible over time with a continued focus on a collaborative future. While this access plan seeks to propel the waterfront in new directions, it is also highly focused on achievable initiatives, which, while based on reality, are flexible enough to respond to opportunities.

The Waterfront should have a unique identity that is grounded in the City’s historic authenticity. There should be a variety of themes, activities and experiences along the Waterfront. Utica’s WAP builds on the community’s rich cultural and economic diversity by embracing development principles that recognize the delicate, and often difficult, interaction among community, environment, and economic progress. To accomplish much of what is outlined in this Plan, the leadership of Utica must work to be certain new growth and development occur in a manner consistent with the vision set forth in both this WAP and the City’s Master Plan, which call for the integration of sustainability in all municipal efforts. Utica’s waterfront areas provide an opportunity to celebrate Utica as “a great little American city whose people come together with pride to guide the City’s future.”

Western Portion Access Improvement Recommendations

Future Land Use recommendations

The Western Portion is principally defined by the Utica Marsh and provides a number of opportunities for recreation-based and educational/interpretation uses. Specifically, this portion provides opportunities for canoeing, kayaking and fishing along with the potential for environmental interpretation including unique and special scenic viewing areas. The Marsh straddles the City of Utica/Town of Marcy municipal boundary and is a recognized NYSDEC Wildlife Management Area. As a result, there are opportunities for inter-municipal and inter-agency cooperation, a core tenet of the Master Plan. The Eastern and Western Portions also provide significant opportunities for hiking and biking along the Canalway Trail, which also allows for connections to other destinations along the canal system.

The current character of the district will be maintained with its open, quiet, and bucolic feeling. New development will be sensitive to this and incorporate the existing character into its designs. Consequently, it will be important to pay close attention to the location and quality of development in this area, such as picnic pavilions and signage. Future land uses will be limited to recreation opportunities as well as



interpretation of the ecological value of the marsh. Additional uses in the district should also enhance interpretation and protection of the cultural and environmental aspects of the marsh and the region as a whole.

Infrastructure Improvements

Utica Marsh Access – Alternative Southern Access

The Barnes Avenue Bridge over the CSX railroad line has been permanently closed due to poor structural conditions. Currently, there is no official automobile and pedestrian access into the Utica Marsh. A new pedestrian and automobile access route into the marsh will need to be established.

The preferred concept is to convert the access road following the Adirondack Railroad north of Charles S. Donnelly Drive to a public road. This road would lead to a new parking lot to be constructed approximately 2000 feet northwest from Charles S. Donnelly Drive. From this parking area a trail for bikers and pedestrians would cross the Mohawk River and connect with the existing trail system at the Utica Marsh near the existing public pavilion. The trail that leads to Dousharm Road would also be upgraded. Dousharm Road connects to Barnes Avenue approximately 800 north of the river.

At the end of Schuyler Road, north of the river, there is an unofficial non-motorized boat launch. This boat launch was one of the primary access points for non-motorized boaters in the City of Utica, although it was not easily found or accessible. With the closing of Barnes Avenue Bridge, there is no longer access to this launch. A new non-motorized launch could be constructed on the south side of the river near the Adk. Railroad Bridge. A low dock should be developed to provide for improved ADA accessibility.

In addition to pedestrian traffic, emergency vehicle access from the new parking area to Barnes Avenue via the upgraded trail and Dousharm Road could be allowed. This alternative will require significant coordination with and approvals from CSX, NYSDEC and NYSDOT, among other state and federal agencies. Despite the need for multiple approvals, maintaining access into the Utica Marsh should be considered a priority for the City of Utica.

Future Northern Access into Utica Marsh

There is currently no automobile access from the north into the Marsh. Opportunities for providing a north access point is severely limited due to several features including the canal, I-90, the interchange, and the railroad line. While not a priority recommendation, the City may consider evaluating potential northern access points into the Marsh to increase opportunities for residents north of I-90 to more easily access this valuable resource.



Schuyler Road surface and Parking Improvements

In the fall of 1979, the Utica Marsh was established as a wildlife preserve. In the thirty-two years since, numerous efforts have been made to expand and improve the Marsh and take advantage of its unique habitats and ecological environments. Even with these improvements, many of the regional residents and visitors alike do not realize the unique recreational and interpretative opportunities available within the Marsh. This is due in larger part to its inaccessibility. For those that are aware of the Utica Marsh, it has a poor reputation for security issues and attracting illicit activities. These perceptions can be changed with a series of improvements beginning with the gateway to the pavilion area noted below, followed by roadway and parking facility improvements.

Currently, Schuyler Road, once accessible from Barnes Avenue (now closed) in the Town of Marcy, was the primary access points for visitors to the Utica Marsh. Once an alternative southern access point into the marsh is constructed (as discussed above), a series of improvements could be considered to enhance both the perception of safety and to celebrate what the Marsh has to offer. Streetscape improvements could include a paved roadway lined with native trees and lighting. The lighting used should be compliant with International Dark Sky Standards. At the terminus of Schuyler Road, improved parking accommodations should be completed to allow for both hikers and car top boaters. Appropriate lighting will also be an important feature in the parking areas. The surface of the parking area and roadway should be comprised of sustainable road construction materials. One waste material increasingly used for this purpose is lignite fly ash. In addition to lighting improvements, security cameras could be strategically located along Schuyler Road and the parking area to enhance user safety.

Recreation Improvements

New Bike/Ped Bridge Connections from Utica Marsh to Harbor Point

An interpretive trail network could be established and linked with footbridges over the river. A major impediment to this recommendation will be the rail line and how to safely cross it. A pedestrian bridge (as discussed below) may be a solution as crossing the tracks in these areas is illegal and extremely dangerous. Approvals from CSX are required for all new crossings of their railroad lines. Permission from



CONCEPTUAL IMAGE OF POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT SOUTHWESTERN CORNER OF HARBOR POINT CONNECTING WITH UTICA MARSH.

NYSDOT to extend the trail network under the 790 Bridge would also be required.

Understanding that Harbor Point will evolve as a mixed-use recreational/office/commercial destination area, there will be opportunities to improve accessibility to the Mohawk River and Utica Marsh. In order to facilitate this, footbridges are recommended: one at the southwestern edge of the Harbor Point area along the Mohawk River, another at the northwestern edge of Harbor Point along the Mohawk River and a third just west of the DOT facility. The bridge proposed for the southwestern edge may be more substantial as to allow for emergency vehicle access into the Utica Marsh area and connecting with Schuyler Road. This connection may also allow for improved police patrols along Schuyler Road.

Historic, Cultural and Interpretive Improvements

Utica marsh Interpretive Trail Network including “Bird Watching Haven”

The Greenway Plan for the Mohawk River Corridor within Oneida County recognizes the corridor’s natural resources and that the wetland complexes provide important habitat for waterfowl, resident and migrating birds. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan identifies the Oneida Lake Plain as an important area for migratory waterfowl and recommends habitat protection and creation. The Greenway Plan recommends development of a series of “bird watching havens” along the Mohawk River including observation/photography blinds, educational programs and interpretive panels about birds and waterfowl, migration routes, habitat, etc. This development concept could support the recommendations of the Waterfowl Management Plan and create opportunities for bird watching enthusiasts, students, and casual visitors alike. An identified potential location is the Utica Marsh.





CONCEPTUAL IMAGE OF BOARDWALK NETWORK THROUGH UTICA MARSH WITH INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE AND BIRD WATCHING OPPORTUNITIES.

Municipal Partnership Opportunities with the Town of Marcy

Future Remedial Clean-Up of Junk Yard on Barnes Avenue

A perceived negative aesthetic element for the Utica Marsh is the existing salvage yard located along Barnes Avenue. While cleaning up this facility would improve the aesthetics of the area, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has stated that they do not have any action pending on this site and therefore, no plans for environmental remediation are planned. Any contamination issues that exist will likely be discovered during a property transaction. Therefore, the property will remain in its current condition unless other options are pursued with the owner.

Barnes Avenue Gateway Enhancements at Schuyler Road

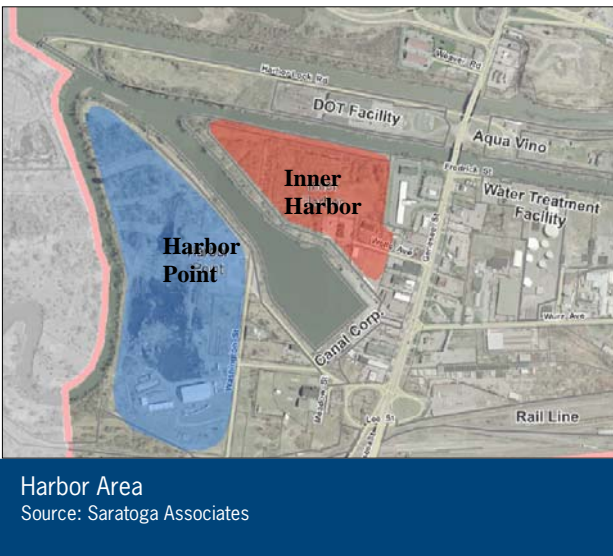
Gateways play a critical role in forming lasting impressions upon visitors. Barnes Avenue is currently the only access road to Schuyler Road, the primary road into the Utica Marsh. As discussed, the Barnes Avenue Bridge is proposed to be abandoned and an alternative access point will need to be identified. Even if the bridge is abandoned, and an alternative access is identified, Barnes Avenue north of the river would continue to provide access into the marsh and therefore aesthetic improvements should be made. This area is significantly compromised by the junkyard and the overgrown nature of the surrounding vegetation. Improvements should be made to create a positive first impression for visitors to the Utica

Marsh. Utilize signage, landscaping, public art, and decorative lighting (consistent with International Dark Sky Association Standards) to enhance the gateway experience.

Central Portion Access Improvement Recommendations

Future Land Use recommendations

The Central Portion of the project area has a strong connection to the City's long-time industrial and port-related activities. Redevelopment of this portion provides significant opportunity to establish new business opportunities as well as new active recreational uses. Large portions of the area have been contaminated by previous industrial uses and have either been remediated or are in the process of remediation. Investments in infrastructure, such as sewer, water and access will take priority in the short-term. As redevelopment takes place over time, some properties will transition from industrial uses to more modern commercial and light industrial uses, while others will provide for cultural and recreational interpretation of the areas historical significance. As this portion transitions through redevelopment, opportunities for meaningful open space as well as bike and pedestrian connections will become possible and should be integrated into each successive redevelopment phase.



The vision for redevelopment of the Inner Harbor area and the area just south of the Canal Corporation property (around Meadow Street) is to take on a stronger urban form and perhaps with aesthetically pleasing architectural details reflective of the areas industrial past. As opportunities develop and environmentally challenged properties are reclaimed, the character of the area will integrate the working waterfront areas of the NYS Canal Corporation with new commercial/light industrial uses.

It will be important to encourage continued use of the harbor for commercial purposes – a Working Harbor. A working or active harbor with a mix of commercial, recreational and residential uses will result in a more vibrant and attractive location than an area with limited or no commercial use. With proper planning and guidelines in place, the integration of the working harbor with recreational opportunities, restaurant, other commercial uses as well as residential uses will be possible. In addition, the continued presence of the Canal Corporation in the harbor will be important for maintaining harbor activity and will also provide more opportunities for partnerships with the City for future improvements and continued long-term maintenance of the harbor.

The character of the area between Washington Street and the Utica Marsh, referred to as Harbor Point, will generally be defined by its natural features, with active recreational activities as well as educational

and interpretation opportunities. New and enhanced connections will be made to the Utica Marsh from Harbor Point. The Inner Harbor and Harbor Point development will forge new public/private partnerships for the benefit of the City and economy.

The area west of the DOT facilities, on the land between the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River, will be developed for passive uses that create opportunities for an arts and cultural setting. The area west of Leland Avenue, bordered by both the Erie Canal to the north and the Mohawk River to the south, has the long-term potential to be developed for higher density residential development. Extension of the Canalway Trail following the Erie Canal side of the property will further this development. Just north of this area, where a national chain hotel was previously located, has the potential to be redeveloped as a mixed-use professional/residential.

The long-term revitalization of the Central Portion will be approached systematically, to include a series of incremental additions that will ultimately result in a multi-use, multi-season commercial and recreational destination in the City of Utica. These investments will contribute to Utica's Master Plan vision to be a "place for people seeking a culturally rich, economically successful and environmentally friendly place to live, visit, and conduct business."

Infrastructure Improvements

Gateway Improvements

Gateways play an important role in forming first impressions and welcoming visitors and residents alike. Both the form and the character of a gateway can influence the overall experience of a particular area. Enhancements at key intersections can also help to lead visitors to the waterfront and key community destinations. Generally, the goal should be to create signature gateways that give an enlivened feeling and a sense of arrival into the various waterfront areas and set a clear direction to key future destinations like Harbor Point, the Inner Harbor and "Mohawk Wildlife Center." The more interesting the gateways are, the more likely visitors are to explore and find the activities along the waterfront areas. With that in mind, the City of Utica could engage the local art community and consider partnering opportunities with organizations such as Proctor Munson Williams and Sculpture Space and incorporate locally created public art into the waterfront area gateways. Special consideration should be taken at the following intersections:

GATEWAY	ACCESS TO:	IMPROVEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION
LEE STREET	Potential “Northeast Conference & Events Center” and “Harbor Point Recreation Complex”.	As a primary gateway to significant waterfront destinations, improvements should include large monument-style signage with landscaping and lighting. Roadway should be widened nearing intersection with Genesee Street to improve recognition of roadway.
WURZ AVENUE	Canal Corporation and connection to Leland Avenue.	At Canal Corporation side, landscaping and new curbing to define entry point. To Leland Avenue, enhanced landscaping and lighting with medium-sized monument-style signage if RV Parking and “Mohawk Wildlife Center” projects are realized.
WELLS AVENUE	Future commercial development at Harbor Point.	As primary gateway to future Inner Harbor commercial development, roadway should be widened, with enhanced lighting and landscaping surrounding monument-style signage.
HARBOR POINT ROAD	Harbor Point with proposed Waterfront Garden & Sculpture Park; DOT Facility; Aqua Vino.	Monument-style signage, landscaping and lighting.
SOUTH OF I-90 INTERCHANGE ENTRANCE	Potential Mixed-Use Development site	Widened roadway to accommodate increased vehicle access/egress, curbing, lighting, landscaping, potential bus stop (consider unique shelter design with opening turned away from the road to shelter bus riders)
INCINERATOR ROAD	Potential Recreational Vehicle Parking; Potential site for	Unique monument-style signage highlighting the “Mohawk Wildlife



	“Mohawk Wildlife Center.”	Center”. Significant landscaping. Banners and/or flags for special events at proposed Wildlife Center.
WASHINGTON STREET	Washington Street holds significant potential to provide a direct connection to the waterfront and all future activity at Harbor Point and the Inner Harbor and connect to the Baggs Square and Downtown.	Gateway would be developed in the form of a pedestrian bridge providing direct connections between developed waterfront areas, the Gateway District Revitalization and Downtown. Bridge design should be of a unique design character reflecting the heritage of the area and provide for pedestrian crossings.

Develop a Coordinated Wayfinding Signage Program

In large measure, visitors to the City are arriving in automobiles. Within the Central Waterfront area, though, there has been an increase in visitors arriving by boat and bicycle. The goal of a coordinated wayfinding system is to get visitors to stop and visit the various opportunities the waterfront has to offer. Specifically, effective signage should provide sufficient direction to get visitors out of their initial mode of transportation (i.e., cars, boats, bicycles) and become pedestrians who then immerse themselves into the commercial/recreational assets of the community. To do this, it is important to develop a coordinated communication network that starts with automobile and boat travelers, and then conveniently moves the visitors into and around the waterfront area with clear connections to downtown. Based on a model developed for the Connecticut River Byway, the following list of sign types could be considered:

TYPE OF SIGN	DESCRIPTION
GATEWAY	Monument-style signage should be located at Lee Street, Wells Avenue and Harbor Lock Road, along the Erie Canal near Aqua Vino, just west of Harbor Point, and at the NYS Thruway exit ramps.
UNIQUE AREA IDENTIFICATION	Single-sided signs with City logo welcoming visitors to the specific unique areas of the waterfront. For instance, a unique sign could be developed that arches over the roadway welcoming visitors to the “Harbor Point Recreation Complex” at Lee Street.
PARKING DIRECTIONAL	Single- or double-sided panels identifying public parking areas. Unique public parking signs should be developed to clearly and conveniently move visitors into parking areas.



PEDESTRIAN WAYFINDING	Single- or double-sided panels guiding visitors to points of interest and demarcating distances to other attractions
INTERPRETIVE	Single- or double-sided printed graphic panels that interpret the significance of a particular site or event (environmental, cultural, or historical).



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING OF MONUMENT-STYLE GATEWAY SIGNAGE AT LEE STREET ENTRANCE TO HARBOR POINT

Amend Zoning Regulations to improve waterfront connectivity

Although the City's Zoning Ordinance generally provides for uses consistent with the vision for enhanced waterfront accessibility, improvements could be made to promote more meaningful public waterfront access. Many of the areas within the Central Portion do provide varying levels of public waterfront access, the following design elements could be added, modified or enhanced to improve the quality of the existing public waterfront access areas. The following is a summary of key design elements that could be incorporated in future waterfront development planning, design and reviews.

Signage and Gateways: As noted above, uniform and attractive informational, interpretive and locational signs should be included as part of each project. Signage should be used both on and off site within the public rights-of-way. The intent will be to make it as easy and comfortable for visitors to circulate throughout the waterfront areas and adjoining destinations.

View Corridors: Whenever feasible, linear view corridors from the street level to the water's edge or public access components should be left unobstructed. Design guidelines or standards could provide direction for building location and height to assist in preserving specific view corridors.

Pedestrian Corridors: Where possible, linear pedestrian connections should be made from the public street level to the water's edge or the primary public access component of a project.

Handicap Accessibility: All improvements to the waterfront shall be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sustainable Design: Consistent with the goals of the Utica Master Plan, public facilities, whether they include paved walkways, gravel paths, timber boardwalks, interpretive signage, protective railings, or ornamental landscaping, should be designed and constructed of quality, sustainable materials. The design and construction materials selected should require minimal maintenance to reduce future costs for upkeep and maintenance. The City of Utica may also want to consider encouraging all improvements be consistent with LEED Certification Standards.

Site Amenities: Where feasible and appropriate, site amenities such as landscaping, historical or interpretive signage, benches, rain/sun shelters and public restrooms should be incorporated into the site design.

Recreation Improvements

Waterfront Promenade at Harbor Point

The Utica Harbor area will offer a variety of opportunities including connections to the Canalway Trail – a world-class trail network, and the Utica Marsh – a unique natural resource in an urban center. In addition, the area will provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, viewing of an active working waterfront (Canal Corporation facilities), cultural experiences as well as commercial and retail development. Creating a promenade along the harbor's edge will provide a continuous route forming a key pedestrian link between the varied opportunities available. It will also act as an ideal catalyst for events in and around the Utica Harbor.

The promenade should include unique features and use sustainable materials and practices in all improvements. Specifically, the City may consider integrating interpretive signage and lights to provide a visual experience at night along with an outdoor sound system that can be used for special events or to enhance the ambience. Using energy efficient fixtures and recycling materials to create unique features could also be considered. Consideration could also be given to creating family-oriented space that would draw children and their parents to the waterfront at various times. An interesting green development could be the construction of a small pavilion with solar-powered fans that could help cool visitors on hot summer days.

Potential "Canoe and Kayak Park"

The City of Utica is part of a regional effort known as the Mohawk River Corridor Greenway in Oneida County. Formation of this greenway not only provides opportunity to Oneida County communities, but also



brings New York State one step closer to the creation of the “Empire State Greenway,” a series of three linked greenways (the Erie Canal, Niagara, and Hudson Valley Greenways) outlined in the 2006 NYS Open Space Conservation Plan. In November 2008 an amended report was developed outlining a vision for the Greenway, which included a series of “Potential Development Concepts” to enhance the Greenway experience. One such concept is a “Canoe and Kayak Park.”

The idea of locating a canoe and kayak park in Utica is one that has had significant support over the years. Located just about one mile from the Harbor Point area is the Bicycling, Rowing, Kayak & Canoe Hall of Fame at the Children’s Museum. In years past, the floating dockage adjacent Aqua Vino was used for rentals/sales of canoes, kayaks, pedal boats (bicycle on water), rowing and bicycles.

The City should work with the Bicycling, Rowing, Kayak & Canoe Hall of Fame, the NYS Canal Corporation and others to construct a facility that promotes the use of the river and canal for nonmotorized boating and the recreational use of the Canalway Trail. Such an establishment could organize various water-based trips based on ability, distance and desired trip duration. The facility should also include an instructional component such as a canoe and kayak school, provide for canoe and kayak as well as bike rentals, and provide a venue for the establishment of local canoe and kayak clubs. Related support services might include boat launches/portages, picnic areas, concessions, bus service, multi-boat trailers to transport boaters and boats back to their origination point, and public rest rooms. Public investments such as these could draw private sector dollars and corporate sponsorships to the area. A potential location for the facility could be on the property adjacent to Aqua Vino, allowing launches to occur on both the Erie Canal and the Mohawk River.

Improved and Expanded Boat Docking

While boat docking is provided at the Utica Marina on the Erie Canal (area is currently located in front of Aqua Vino restaurant), there are limitations on both the number and size of boats that the Marina can accommodate. Residents and waterfront personnel have noted the need to enhance services and facilities at the marina. Improved services could be offered at the Utica Harbor and should include the following:

- > Fueling services
- > Maintenance services
- > A boating supplies store/facility
- > Development of new full-service docks, including water and electric hook-ups and a pump-out station that is regularly open
- > Over night slip rental
- > Long-term off-season storage
- > City-owned boat launch

Currently, due to an inadequate number of tie-ups and services, many 40-foot and larger recreational boats pass-through Utica. Consequently, any new improvements should include additional docking and services for boats 40 feet and above. It will also be important that that Utica develop a coordinated wayfinding



system (see Wayfinding recommendations above) that informs boaters of the services available downtown. Thus, creating clear connections that draw visitors up from the marina to the commercial core and downtown. Creating a new bridge at Washington Street will be foundational in getting visitors to downtown from the harbor marina.

Commercial Improvements

“Northeast Conference & Events Center”

As noted, the City of Utica is part of a regional effort known as the Mohawk River Corridor Greenway in Oneida County. In November 2008 an amended report was developed outlining a vision for the Greenway, which included a series of “Potential Development Concepts” to enhance the Greenway experience. One such concept is a “Northeast Conference & Events Center.”

The greenway’s central location in New York State and the relative ease of access via the Thruway, rail, etc. may provide an opportunity to develop a site within the greenway for a “Northeast Conference and Events Center.” This concept could offer an array of privately operated, large-scale conference facilities. A potential location is the area surrounding Utica Harbor and could incorporate waterfront development on both the canal and the river. Coordination with the City’s gateway district, downtown development, and numerous support services such as restaurants, public transportation services and shopping would enhance the appeal of this development. Other recommendations noted previously call for a waterfront promenade, recreational amenities, outdoor cultural amenities such as display of public art and environmentally sustainable developments. Collectively, these amenities could provide a unique and appealing centrally located setting for a conference and event center in Central New York.

Historic, Cultural and Interpretive Improvements

Waterfront Gardens & Sculpture Park at Harbor Point

The City of Utica has a variety of attractions related to arts and culture including the Stanley Center for the Arts, the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute/Pratt Institute, Children’s Museum and Sculpture Space, among others. The Master Plan recognizes how these organizations are making significant contributions to the quality-of-life in Utica as well as their role in economic development. Building off of the success of these organizations and others, the city should consider developing a sculpture park on the portion of the land west of the DOT Facilities between the Mohawk River and Erie Canal. A number of sculptures could be developed here and then connected via a network of trails and gardens. Some of the gardens could include traditional plantings while others, or a designated section, could be developed as a community garden supporting the efforts of the Local Food Policy Council. Locating the art and gardens along the Erie Canal system would promote some of the many attributes and innovative ideas at work in the City of Utica



“Outdoor Concert & Event Center”

As noted, the City of Utica is part of a regional effort known as the Mohawk River Corridor Greenway in Oneida County. In November 2008 an amended report was developed outlining a vision for the Greenway, which included a series of “Potential Development Concepts” to enhance the Greenway experience. One such concept is an “Outdoor Concert and Event Center.”

The report recommends the establishment of a facility within the greenway that offers seasonal outdoor concerts and events modeled after the “Saratoga Performing Arts Center” atmosphere. Potential locations might include Lock 20 Canal Park in Marcy or the Utica Marina. Events such as “Betsy the Barge” provide related support services and facilities such as a band shell, performance barge or stage, seating, concessions, restrooms, etc. Such a concept fits in well with the destination/attraction-type of amenities that are proposed in combination with the Harbor Point commercial development, ultimately creating a multi-use, multi-season area that continuously draws people to the waterfront.

Eastern Portion Access Improvement Recommendations

Future Land Use recommendations

Defined by its peacefulness and diversity, the Eastern Portion is a unique place. It provides an important expression of the City’s rich economic history as well as the ecological value of the water. Because the area is located between the Mohawk River and Erie Canal, the Eastern Portion is recognized for its long established green space and fishing opportunities. Yet, because the area once included an incinerator and municipal dump, its use has been limited for any type of development potential due to residual contamination from these past activities.

The Eastern Portion is easily accessible from the Thruway via Exit 31, which could be enhanced to facilitate future redevelopment opportunities. With this location being conveniently located near the Thruway, a possible future land use may be spaces for recreational vehicles along what is now called Incinerator Road. Combined with investments made in the proposed Canalway Trail connection, visitors would have convenient access to the Inner Harbor and Harbor Point areas, while placing them along the City’s waterfront.

Another possibility for long-term redevelopment in the area is at the intersection of Leland Avenue and Sewage Plant Road. This area could be redeveloped for mixed-use light industrial/warehousing space or could become a low-intensity site for manufacturing, processing, assembly and distribution uses. Longer-term, the site could be redeveloped for those activities that offer the greatest positive community impact by reinforcing connections to necessary industries within the City. The City should consider working with the property owners to examine the potential for redevelopment and then determine the public sector improvements necessary for this. The State’s Brownfield Opportunity Area Program may be a good option to engage in this examination in coordination with the property owner.



Infrastructure Improvements

Make Improvements to Incinerator Road for Future Recreational Vehicle Parking

With baby boomers starting to hit the retirement age, more and more people are taking to the road with their motor homes, RVs, or travel trailers. The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association recently reported that nearly 8 million American households have an RV, motor home, or travel trailer and there are as many as 30 million RV enthusiasts in the US. This is potentially a significant market of which the City of Utica may be able to capture a segment as travelers cross New York State or head into the Adirondacks. One potential location for brief over-night stays may be at Incinerator Road. Incinerator Road is easily accessible from the New York State Thruway via North Genesee Street and Wurz Avenue.

Not only is this location easily accessible from the Thruway, with an extended Canalway Trail and the “Mohawk Wildlife Center” identified below, visitors will have an opportunity for short nature hikes as well as bike and/or pedestrian connectivity to places like Aqua Vino and a redeveloped Harbor Point.

To move this project forward, the City should develop a brief market analysis to understand the market potential as well as coordinate with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to put in place development parameters consistent with the August 2003 DEC Record of Decision for the Utica City Dump (Site No. 6-33-015).

Examine the Potential to Connect East and North Utica via Culver Avenue and Sewage Plant Road

Prior studies have looked at potential connections from East Utica to North Utica. These connections are made difficult because of four major crossings: the railroad corridor, Mohawk River, Erie Canal, and New York State Thruway. Given these complications, it may be more feasible to investigate solutions that would facilitate additional use of Leland Avenue as a secondary access to North Utica. Leland Avenue passes over the Mohawk River, Erie Canal, and Thruway.

While Mohawk Street is directly across the railroad tracks from Leland Avenue, a bridge along this alignment is likely too close in proximity to the North Genesee Street Bridge to be deemed feasible. Another solution would be to extend Culver Avenue over the railroad and onto the Albert E. Schuler Memorial Highway (Sewage Plant Road), approximately 1.2 miles east of Leland Avenue. This would allow improved access to North Utica by traveling west on Sewage Plant Road to Leland Avenue and from Leland Avenue north to Herkimer Road (NYS Route 5).

Despite the lack of connectivity, some of the waterfront amenities being considered in this report could be accessible from Leland Avenue. This project would provide an alternative route to the Oneida-Herkimer County Solid Waste Authority’s Eastern Transfer Station which has become a vital part of the community’s recycling program but currently has only one access point via Sewage Plant Road, a dead-

end street. The project may also facilitate the reconstruction of Sewage Plant Road, which has become necessary due to substantial waste hauler traffic to the Transfer Station.

Sewage Plan Improvements

The Mohawk River runs parallel and only a few hundred feet from Sewage Plant Road but the river at this location is very near sewer overflows associated with the City's combined sewer system. However, the City is undertaking a number of major control projects to help reduce overflows, particularly at this location, and these investments will result in water quality improvement to the Mohawk River at Utica.

Recreation Improvements

Extend the Canalway Trail into the Town of Frankfort

The New York State Canalway Trail System is comprised of a network of more than 260 miles of existing multi-use, recreational trails across upstate New York. Major segments are adjacent to the waterways of the New York State Canal System or follow remnants of the historic original canals of the early 1800s that preceded today's working Canal System.

The Canalway Trail System is comprised of four major segments:

- 1) the 100-mile Erie Canal Heritage Trail in Western New York;
- 2) the 36-mile Old Erie Canal State Park Trail in Central New York;
- 3) the 60-mile Mohawk-Hudson Bikeway in the eastern Capital Region, and
- 4) the eight-mile Glens Falls Feeder Canal Heritage Trail in the foothills of the Adirondacks near Lake George.

In addition, there are smaller segments of Canalway Trail, such as the segment, which comes into Utica from the Town of Marcy. These trail segments and other areas of the Canalway Trail System connect with trails leading throughout New York State, providing one of the most extensive trail networks in the country.

The New York State Canal Corporation's long-range goal for the Canalway Trail System is to create a cross-State network of multi-use trails that will span nearly 500 miles across upstate New York, paralleling major portions of the 524-mile New York State Canal System. When completed, the Trail System will provide a means for those who are not boaters to enjoy the beauty and the history found all along New York's Canals. The System will include both urban and rural trails to meet the needs of both visitors and local residents alike.

In 2010, Canalway Trails Association New York collaborated with Parks & Trails New York to assess the current gaps along the trail. The report found that, "only by closing the six significant remaining gaps will the State and the communities along the corridor reap the full benefit of additional tourism dollars." The gap from Utica to Little Falls was one of those six identified gaps. Currently, the Canalway Trail enters the City of Utica from the Town of Marcy, travels along the northern edge of the Utica Marsh before it



crosses the Mohawk River at Harbor Point and essentially terminates at about the end of Harbor Lock Road, before bikers are directed to follow the roadway network to continue between Utica and Little Falls. The “Closing the Gaps” report further found that “a top priority for 2011 will be to bring various stakeholders together regionally to identify and pursue opportunities for completing trail segments that are ready to build except for the needed construction funding.” With that, Utica appears to be in a prime position to implement its connection into Schuylar as a Final Design Report and Final Plans have been indicated as “complete” by the NYS Canal Corporation.

Examine the Potential for the “Mohawk Wildlife Center” with interpretive trail network

The City of Utica is part of a regional effort known as the Mohawk River Corridor Greenway in Oneida County. In November 2008, an amended report was developed outlining a vision for the Greenway, which included a series of “Potential Development Concepts” to enhance the Greenway experience. One such concept is “The Mohawk Wildlife Center.”

Historic, Cultural and Interpretive Improvements

The report suggests that “The Mohawk Wildlife Center” be established and constructed at a central location along the corridor. The report specifically recognizes the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority property near Wurz Avenue as a potential location. The Mohawk Wildlife



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING OF THE “MOHAWK WILDLIFE

Center is envisioned to be a wildlife or nature education center including exhibit and classroom building, observation platforms, walking trails, educational programs, etc. The center could incorporate NYS DOT wetland mitigation sites and could be linked to canoe and kayak activities. This concept complements the concepts outlined in this Waterfront Access Plan and should be further explored for the “island area” between the Mohawk River and Erie Canal at the end of Incinerator Road.

Implementation Strategy

The Utica Master Plan challenges the people of Utica to extend public, private and institutional coordination through partnerships and the pursuit of grants from federal and state government, private, and community foundations. This approach to implementation will provide not only new funding streams for the City, but also affords the City the opportunity to create new strategic alliances and partnerships that will foster greater innovation and creativity. Through grant writing and the pursuit of these new resources in a collaborative manner, the City will expand the impact it can make as a center of regional opportunity, furthering the City's vision as the place for people seeking a culturally rich, economically successful and environmentally friendly place to live, visit and conduct business.

In order for many of the projects outlined in this WAP to occur, the City will look to a variety of funding sources and creative partnerships. The resources outlined in this report provide basic information about potential partnerships as well as suggested funding sources. While the matrix below outlines potential Federal and State resources, these will not be the only sources for investment in this WAP; creative partnerships with the private sector and philanthropic organizations as well as Foundations and educational endowments must be aggressively pursued. In addition, the availability of State and Federal monies through a variety of grant programs is always changing and the current fiscal condition of New York State may limit funding in the foreseeable future.

Whenever possible, the City will look to engage regional partners in projects. Further, investments made, as a part of the WAP will aim to develop opportunities for public/private resources while leveraging complementary investments by other public entities and/or non-profits and institutions.

Recommendation	Time Frame*	Implementation Leader	Potential Implementation Partners	Funding Sources**
WESTERN PORTION ACCESS IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS				
ALTERNATIVE ACCESS TO BARNES AVENUE VIA WASHINGTON STREET EXTENSION	1-5 yrs	Utica Dept. of Engineering	Oneida County	EDA American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009
SCHUYLER ROAD SURFACE AND PARKING IMPROVEMENTS	1-5 yrs	Utica Department of Public Works & Utica Dept. of Engineering	Utica Marsh Council, Utica Engineering, Utica Parks & Recreation, Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, Town of Marcy	EDA American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009; NYS Department of State Environmental Protection Fund;



Recommendation	Time Frame*	Implementation Leader	Potential Implementation Partners	Funding Sources**
				NYS OPRHP Environmental Protection Fund.
SCHUYLER ROAD NON-MOTORIZED BOAT LAUNCH IMPROVEMENTS	1-5 yrs	Utica Engineering Department	Utica Marsh Council, Bicycling, Rowing, Kayak Canoe Hall of Fame, Town of Marcy, Utica Parks, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Department of Public Works, Oneida County Planning Department, Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, NYS OPRHP	EDA Public Works & Economic Facilities Program
NEW BIKE/PED CONNECTIONS FROM UTICA MARSH TO HARBOR POINT	1-5 yrs	Utica Parks & Recreation Department	Utica Marsh Council, Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, NYS OPRHP, Utica Engineering, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Public Works, Canalway Trails Association New York; Parks and Trails New York	NYS OPRHP Recreational Trails Program; NYS Canal Corporation; Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds
UTICA MARSH INTERPRETATIVE TRAIL NETWORK INCLUDING "BIRD WATCHING HAVEN"	6-10 yrs	Utica Parks & Recreation	Utica Marsh Council, Kirkland Bird Club, Canalway Trails Association New York, Canal Corporation, NYS OPRHP, NYS	US Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Bird Habitat Conservation Act's Grants Program; NYS Canal Corporation; US



Recommendation	Time Frame*	Implementation Leader	Potential Implementation Partners	Funding Sources**
			Department of State, Oneida County Planning, Utica Public Works	Fish and Wildlife Service; Natural Resources Conservation Service – Wetlands Reserve Program
FUTURE REMEDIAL CLEAN-UP OF JUNK YARD ON BARNES AVENUE	11-20 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development Department	Property owner, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of State	HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative; EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants; EDA Public Works & Economic Facilities Program; NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas
MARCY MOTOR BOAT LAUNCH IMPROVEMENTS	1-5 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	Bicycling, Rowing, Kayak Canoe Hall of Fame, NYS Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, NYS OPRHP, Oneida County Planning, Town of Marcy	Department of the Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service (apply thru NYS OPRHP) Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program;
CENTRAL PORTION ACCESS IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS				
GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS	1-5 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	NYS Department of Transportation, NYS Department of State, Oneida County Planning, Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study	NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization

DEVELOP A COORDINATED WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM	1-5 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	NYS Department of Transportation, NYS Department of State	NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization; National Park Service – Preserve American
AMEND ZONING REGULATIONS TO IMPROVE WATERFRONT CONNECTIVITY	1-5 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	NYS Department of State	
WATERFRONT PROMENADE AT HARBOR POINT	6-10 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	Canalway Trails Association New York, Utica Engineering, Utica Parks & Recreation, Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, NYS OPRHP	NYS Department of State, Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
POTENTIAL “CANOE AND KAYAK PARK”	6-10 yrs	Bicycling, Rowing, Kayak Canoe Hall of Fame	Utica Parks & Recreation, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Engineering, Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State	Department of the Interior, National Park Service - Land and Water Conservation Fund Program;
IMPROVED AND EXPANDED BOAT DOCKING	1-5 yrs	Canal Corporation	Utica Parks & Recreation, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Engineering, Utica Public Works	EDA Public Works and Economic Development Facilities;
“NORTHEAST CONFERENCE & EVENTS CENTER”	11-20 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	Mohawk Valley EDGE, Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce, Utica IDA, Oneida County Planning	EDA Public Works and Economic Facilities Program

WATERFRONT GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK AT HARBOR POINT	1-5 yrs	Utica Parks & Recreation	Sculpture Space, Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute, Federated Garden Clubs of NYS, Utica School District, Canalway Trails Association New York, Utica Youth Bureau	
"OUTDOOR CONCERT & EVENT CENTER"	1-5 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	Utica School District, Stanley Center for the Arts, Sculpture Space, Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute, Oneida County Planning, Utica Parks & Recreation, Utica Youth Bureau	EDA Public Works & Economic Facilities Program;
EASTERN PORTION ACCESS IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS				
IMPROVEMENTS TO INCINERATOR ROAD FOR FUTURE RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKING	11-20 yrs	Utica Urban & Economic Development	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Utica Engineering, Utica Public Works	HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative; EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants; EDA Public Works & Economic Facilities Program; NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas

EXAMINE THE POTENTIAL FOR SECONDARY ACCESS TO COUNTY TRANSFER STATION AT PITCHER STREET	11-20 yrs	Oneida County Planning	Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Engineering, Utica Public Works, Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority, Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study, NYSDOT Region 2	
EXTEND THE CANALWAY TRAIL INTO THE TOWN OF FRANKFORT	1-5 yrs	Canal Corporation	Canalway Trails Association New York, Parks and Trails New York, Utica Parks & Recreation, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Oneida County Planning, Oneida Counties Transportation Study	NYS OPRHP Recreational Trails Program; NYS Canal Corporation; NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization; National Trails Endowment – American Hiking Society; Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program
EXAMINE THE POTENTIAL FOR THE “MOHAWK WILDLIFE CENTER” WITH INTERPRETIVE TRAIL NETWORK	6-10 yrs	Utica Parks & Recreation	Canal Corporation, NYS Department of State, NYS OPRHP, Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission, Utica Parks & Recreation, Utica Urban & Economic Development, Utica Public Works, Oneida County Planning	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation – State Wildlife Grants (SWG); USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

* Short-Term=1-5 years; Medium-Term=6-10 years; Long-Term=11-20 years

** Note that this is not an exhaustive list of potential funding sources. Instead, these sources are intended to initiate the project, not necessarily to fully fund each project.



Appendices

APPENDIX A

DECEMBER 2010 NYSDEC FACT SHEET FOR THE NIAGARA MOHAWK – HARBOR POINT
SITE AND THE MOHAWK VALLEY OIL SITE



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

FACT SHEET

State Superfund Program

Receive Site Fact Sheets by *Email*. See "For More Information" to Learn How.

NM – Harbor Point Site, Site No. 633021
Mohawk Valley Oil Site, Site No. 633032
Utica, NY

December 2010

Cleanup Progress Made on Harbor Point Peninsula in 2010

A large-scale soil removal project and a sediment dredging project were completed this year to advance the environmental cleanup of the NM (Niagara Mohawk) Harbor Point and Mohawk Valley Oil inactive hazardous waste disposal sites. These sites are located on the Harbor Point peninsula adjacent to Utica Harbor in the City of Utica. The cleanup activities were performed by National Grid with oversight provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) through New York's State Superfund Program. The New York State Canal Corporation accomplished the dredging of Utica Harbor.

The following was accomplished in 2010:

Mohawk Valley Oil Site. The Mohawk Valley Oil Site (MVO) came under the complete ownership of National Grid in 2010. Following the demolition of a building, 80,000 cubic yards of soil (about 3,600 truckloads) were removed and disposed at an approved facility to enable construction of a dewatering structure and disposal area for Utica Harbor sediment. The excavation included all contaminated soil required to be removed at this site by the NYSDEC.

Utica Harbor. The Barge Canal from the Utica Harbor lock to the terminal wall was dredged to provide adequate navigation depth and to enable the placement of an engineered cap in the harbor. Sediment that was removed through dredging was placed into one of two disposal areas. Sediment that complied with soil cleanup standards for commercial and/or recreational uses was placed at Dredge Spoil Area 1, which is shown on the attached figure. Sediment with higher contaminant levels was placed within the four-acre dewatering structure at MVO. The sediment that was placed at MVO did not exceed the contaminant levels that were established for the clean-up of the peninsula. The sediment dredging required the treatment of approximately 70 million gallons by National Grid.

Upcoming Work

The sediment placed at MVO will be allowed to settle. It will then be covered with soil that is acceptable for commercial and recreational uses. A groundwater treatment program will be implemented at the same time the soil cover is being installed.

The engineered cap will be installed in Utica Harbor in 2011. Using gravel and other materials, the cap will create a barrier that will isolate remaining contaminated sediment from aquatic life in the harbor and from human exposure. The cap will be a minimum of two feet thick.

While the cap is being constructed, excavation of contaminated soil on National Grid property will be occurring. The contaminated soil will be treated at the site using a thermal desorption process.

In addition, toxicity testing of Mohawk River sediments will be performed in 2011. The results of that testing will assist the NYSDEC in determining a clean-up plan for the river.

Key Elements of the Harbor Point Clean-up Program Construction

Scheduled

Installation of Washington Street Storm Sewer liner and sealing of outfalls	Completed
Construction of a soil cover over Dredge Spoil Area 2	Completed
Removal of contaminated soil from Dredge Spoil Area 1	Completed
Containment of soil and purifier waste at the Water Gas Plant area	Completed
Rehabilitation of the Utica Harbor Lock	Completed
Dredging of Utica Harbor	Completed
Capping of Utica Harbor Sediments	2011
Lee Street Extension Outfall	Completed
Excavation and thermal treatment of contaminated soil	2011- 2013
Placement of peninsula soil cover	2013
Mohawk River additional investigations	2011
Mohawk River Proposed Clean-up Plan	2012

Additional information on the entire remediation project can be found at National Grid's website at www.harborpointsite.com

Monarch Chemical Site

The Monarch Chemical Site is being cleaned-up separately from the National Grid and NYS Canal Corporation project. Jones Chemicals Inc. installed groundwater extraction wells at the site in 2009 and completed the installation of a treatment system in 2010. Contaminated groundwater collected by the wells is pumped through the treatment system, which is monitored by the NYSDEC. The groundwater collection and treatment is an on-going operation.

Background

Harbor Point comprises approximately 140 acres of land located between the Utica Harbor and the Mohawk River. The area was developed for industrial purposes in the mid-1800s and was the site of two manufactured gas plants (MGPs), a coal-fired steam plant, a petroleum storage and distribution facility (MVO) and a tar products plant (New York Tar Emulsion Products). Currently, a gas regulator station and electric substation occupy Harbor Point, along with active maintenance and office facilities for the NYS Canal Corporation. The remainder of the Harbor Point Site is undeveloped land.

Coal tar, a byproduct of manufacturing gas, was released to the environment resulting in the contamination of soil and groundwater at the Harbor Point Site and the contamination of sediment within the Utica Harbor. Despite the presence of these contaminants, people are not currently exposed to contamination at the site since access to the site is restricted and groundwater in the area is not used for drinking water. Through a combination of clean-up actions, land use restrictions, and long-term management to prevent the potential for future exposures, the Harbor Point Site and surrounding sites may be redeveloped and used in the future in a protective manner.

Cleanup of environmental impacts on the peninsula and the adjacent Utica Harbor and Mohawk River are being undertaken primarily by National Grid. The New York Tar Emulsion Products Site has been remediated by Beazer East, Inc and Suit-Kote Corporation. National Grid and the NYS Canal Corporation have an agreement for the remediation of Utica Harbor and certain adjacent dredged sediment disposal areas. The remediation of all of these sites is overseen by the NYSDEC, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health. The clean-up activities will continue to be performed according to established health and safety regulations and guidelines. Safeguards will be in place to protect construction workers and the community during clean-up activities, including measures to monitor and control air emissions.

About the Manufactured Gas Plant Program:

NYSDEC has one of the most aggressive Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) site investigation and remediation programs in the country. Since the problems associated with the former MGP sites were identified, NYSDEC has been working with all the utilities on a state-wide basis to identify and address the issue of MGP sites for which they may have responsibility. This effort has resulted in approximately 253 sites identified for action by the eight utilities operating in New York State.

Currently NYSDEC has multi-site orders or agreements with six utilities, including National Grid, and several other individual site volunteers, to address 222 MGP sites in New York State. Multi-site agreements are under negotiation with a seventh utility and several other responsible parties which have newly-identified sites.

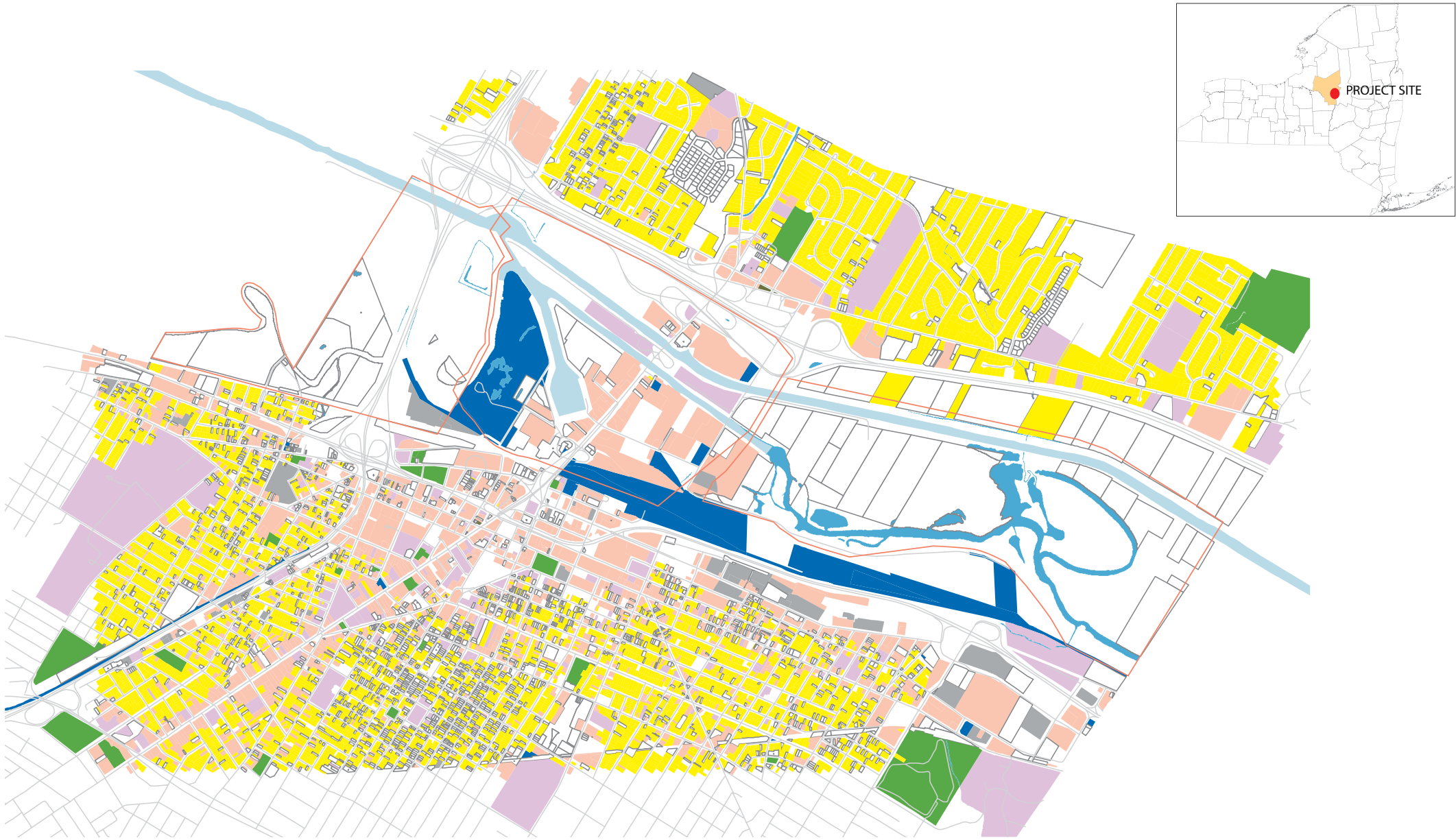
NYSDEC continues to seek to identify any other possible MGP sites throughout the State.

For more information about the NYSDEC's MGP program, visit: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html

APPENDIX B

CORNELL UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MAPS

- > ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY MAP
- > EXISTING RESOURCES MAP



Publicly Owned Land



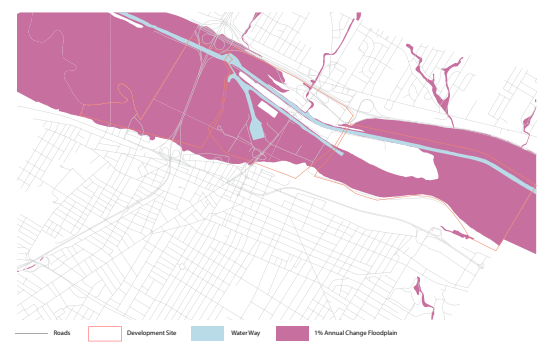
All publicly owned land shown on this map are land owned either by the State or the City. Ownership information is provided in the GIS parcel data layer. Parcels owned by the State or the City were extracted from the parcel data layer and they are represented in blue.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES



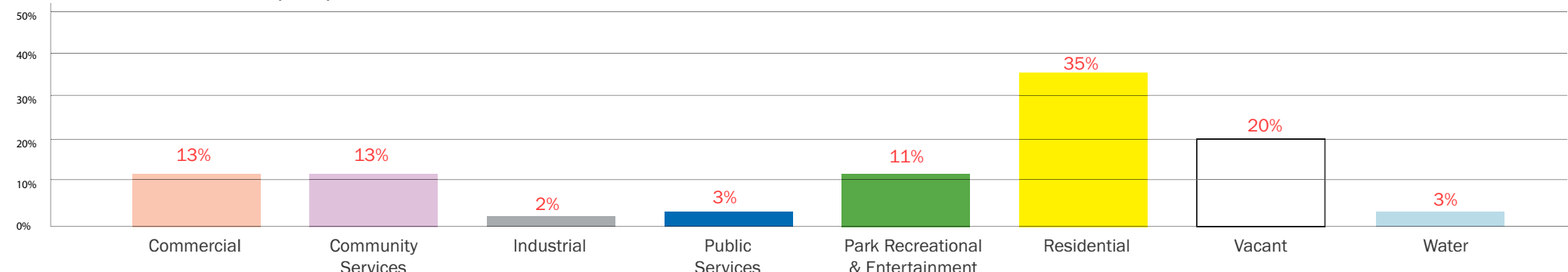
Cultural and historic resources shown are national register sites, which are places listed on the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that are of great significance in the American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture. These sites are worthy of protection and historic preservation.

FLOOD PLAIN
(1% Annual Chance Floodplain)



A 1% annual chance flood plain identifies areas that are expected to be inundated by the 1% annual chance flood. The 1% annual chance flood has been adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as the base flood for floodplain management and flood insurance purposes. These areas are also called a Special Flood Hazard Area, where the National Flood Insurance Program's floodplain management regulations must be enforced by the community as a condition of participation in the Program.

EXISTING RESOURCES - 11/15/2010



Note: These percentages are based on the area extent shown on the map. They do not reflect the land use in the entire City of Utica.