

## Acknowledgments

---

### Village Official

Judy Phillips, Mayor

### Planning Advisory Committee

Kelsey Jones	Danielle Hautaniemi
Brian Williams	David Lisk
Charles Peacock	Max Neal
Judy Phillips	Paul Marcellus
Kevin Murphy	Rocky Kambo
Tim O'Hearn	Vicki Schamel

### Planning Consultants



### *Funded By:*

**NYS Office of Community Renewal**

**Appalachian Regional Commission, Schuyler County**

**Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd)**

**Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency**



© 2010 Laberge Group, Project #2010007

# Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>What is a Lakefront Management &amp; Development Strategy? .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Project Understanding &amp; Partners .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Local &amp; Regional Setting.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Community Overview.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Study Area .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Previous Planning Efforts .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Community Outreach Process .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Watkins Glens’ Highlights &amp; Opportunities .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
Demographics.....	ix
Economic Development .....	x
Existing Conditions in Study Area .....	xi
Lakefront Management .....	xiii
<b>Watkins Glen’s Vision &amp; How to Achieve It .....</b>	<b>xv</b>
Guiding Principles.....	xv
Strategies & Implementation .....	xv
<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Project Understanding &amp; Partners .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Local &amp; Regional Setting.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Study Area Boundary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Community Overview.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Previous Planning Efforts .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROCESS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Planning Advisory Committee Meeting (PAC) .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Key Issues Identified by PAC .....	13
<b>Stakeholder Interviews Summary .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Public Workshops .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Workshop 1: “Reevaluating, Restructuring & Reprioritizing” the Lakefront Vision.....	14
Workshop 2: Lakefront Design Workshop.....	15
<b>III. DEMOGRAPHIC &amp; GROWTH TREND ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Demographic Profile.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Population .....	19
Age Distribution .....	20
Household Composition .....	21
Housing Resources .....	22
Education.....	23
Income.....	24
<b>IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Employment Trends .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Employment by Industry Sector and Occupation Type.....	25
Top Schuyler County Employers .....	27
Commuting Patterns .....	27

<b>Tourism.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Village of Watkins Glen Attractions & Festivals .....	28
<b>Retail Sales and Consumer Spending.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Spending Habits .....	30
<b>Retail Sales Leakage &amp; Market Capture .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Retail Sales Analysis .....	33
<b>Lifestyle Segmentation Analysis .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Top Lifestyle Segments .....	37
<b>Regional &amp; County Economic Development Resources .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd) .....	39
Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA) .....	39
Watkins Glen Chamber of Commerce.....	39
<b>V. EXISTING CONDITIONS IN STUDY AREA .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Study Area Boundary .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Existing Land Use .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Zoning Districts.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Land Ownership .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Infrastructure.....</b>	<b>52</b>
Public Water Supply.....	52
Public Sewer Disposal.....	52
Rail .....	52
<b>Natural Resources &amp; Environmental Features .....</b>	<b>53</b>
Water Resources.....	53
Flood Plains & Wetlands.....	53
Topography .....	55
Soils.....	55
Fish & Wildlife Habitats .....	58
<b>Parks and Open Space.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Trails .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>VI. LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT PLAN.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Waterfront Planning as a Strategy for Community Enhancement and Livability .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Key Principles in Waterfront Planning and Management.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Waterfront Management Strategy .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>VII. STRATEGIES &amp; IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Development of Strategies.....</b>	<b>80</b>
Funding Sources .....	82
Implementation Timeline .....	82
<b>Physical Improvements .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Access &amp; Awareness .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Signage &amp; Streetscape .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Economic Development .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Sustainability &amp; Environmental Quality .....</b>	<b>90</b>

---



---

**LIST OF TABLES**

**Table 1: Population Trends** .....20

**Table 2: Age Distribution (2000)** .....20

**Table 3: Household Composition (2000)**.....21

**Table 4: Housing Inventory (2000)**.....23

**Table 5: Educational Attainment (2000)** .....24

**Table 6: Household Income (2000)**.....24

**Table 7: Residents Employment by Industry** .....26

**Table 8: Schuyler County Top Ten Employers**.....27

**Table 9: Retail Goods and Services Expenditures** .....31

**Table 10: Spending Index Comparison** .....32

**Table 11: Retail Marketplace Profile**.....35

**Table 12: Existing Village of Watkins Glen Land Use** .....43

**Table 13: Existing Land Use in Study Area** .....45

**Table 14: Village of Watkins Glen Land Ownership**.....48

**Table 15: Village of Watkins Glen Publicly Owned Land** .....48

**Table 16: Study Area Land Ownership**.....49

---



---

**LIST OF FIGURES**

**Figure 1: Household Composition in Watkins Glen (1990 & 2000)** .....22

**Figure 2: Resident Occupation** .....26

**Figure 3: Commuting Patterns**.....28

**Figure 4: Retail Marketplace Profile** .....36

---



---

**LIST OF MAPS**

**Map 1: Community Context** .....3

**Map 1: Community Context** .....3

**Map 2: Study Area** .....4

**Map 3: Existing Land Use**.....44

**Map 4: Zoning**.....47

**Map 5: Village Land Ownership** .....50

**Map 6: Study Area Land Ownership**.....51

**Map 7: Natural Resources – Water Features**.....54

**Map 8: Natural Resources – Soil**.....57

**Map 9: Seneca Lakefront Improvement Plan** .....84

**Map 10: Clute Park/Tank Beach Improvement Plan**.....85

**Map 11: Seneca Canal Improvement Plan** .....86

---



---

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Previous Plans & Studies Recommendations**

**Appendix B: Public Participation**

**Appendix C: Community Profile Handout**

# Executive Summary

---

## ***What is a Lakefront Management & Development Strategy?***

---

The purpose of the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* is to identify new approaches to key waterfront issues and establish a set of high-priority initiatives that can be implemented over the next several years. This Strategy addresses important issues relating to the future development of the lakefront while establishing a broad community consensus. The vitality of the Village's lakefront requires a strategic vision that weaves together the facts of changing economic conditions, the importance and value of quality housing, convenient community services, recreation areas, functional public infrastructure, and vibrant businesses that meet the needs and desires of a diverse population of Village residents and tourists alike. Simultaneously, it promotes economic development on the lakefront that is balanced with preserving the natural integrity of Seneca Lake and its associated ecosystems. The Strategic Plan weighs these factors, as well as synthesizes the visions of its community leaders, stakeholders, and the public, to establish a blueprint for implementing quality development.



**Watkins Glen, New York**

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the information found in the *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management & Development Strategy*. During the planning process a comprehensive inventory, research, and analysis was conducted to provide a foundation from which to create the Strategy. A detailed inventory of the Village's resources and the associated implementation strategies are included later in the planning document.

---

## ***Project Understanding & Partners***

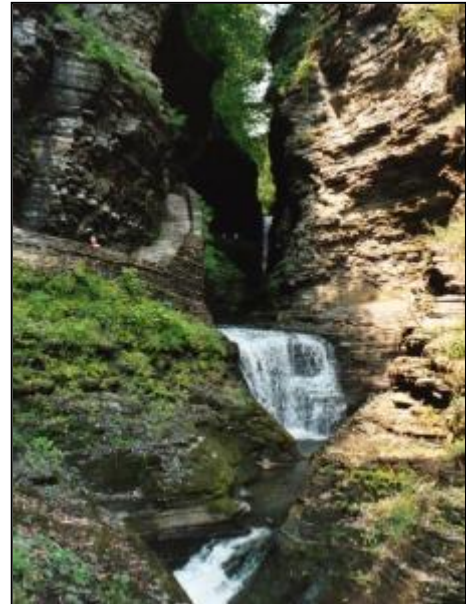
---

The Seneca Lakefront is of vital importance to the Village of Watkins Glen and Schuyler County as a whole. In order to encourage sound development and maximize good stewardship of the lakefront within the Village of Watkins Glen, Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPED) applied for and was granted funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 2009 to develop the *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management and*

*Development Strategy.* A local cash match was dedicated by SCOPED, Schuyler County, and the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA). Schuyler County secured additional funds from the New York State Office of Community Renewal to cover the remaining project costs.

*The Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* identifies key opportunities for improving the Village's waterfront and outlines strategies to achieve these goals, setting forth a new long range vision for Watkins Glen's waterfront. Building on the past planning efforts and a strong set of existing policies, the *Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* accomplishes the following:

- Establishes a vision for the Village's waterfront for the next 10 years (2010 – 2020).
- Provides an assessment of the Village's waterfront resources, the current opportunities, and the challenges.
- Identifies multiple action strategies and planning policies, in consultation with appropriate governmental agencies and elected officials, to implement the Village's long-term vision.

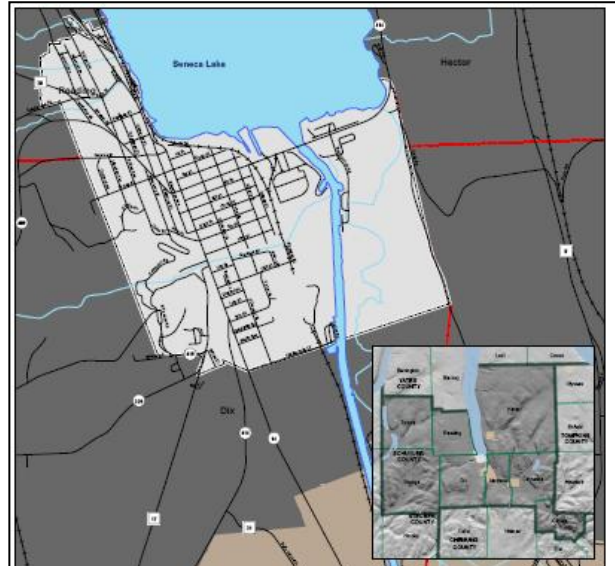


The future revitalization of the waterfront will be accompanied by significant improvements in water quality, presenting new but untapped opportunities for the use of the water by the public. This will include significant opportunities for expanding the use of the water for transportation, recreation, education and improving water quality. With these new opportunities come new challenges. The *Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* looks at both the opportunities and the challenges facing the Village of Watkins Glen. The *Strategy* includes the following general components:

- Expanding public access to the waterfront on public and private property.
- Balancing the natural waterfront, the public waterfront, the working waterfront, and the redeveloping mixed use waterfront.
- Enlivening the waterfront with attractive uses, high-quality public spaces, and publicly oriented water-dependent uses, integrated with adjacent communities.
- Supporting economic development activity on the waterfront.
- Restoring degraded natural waterfronts and protecting wetlands and shorefront habitats.
- Enhancing the public experience by expanding water transportation, in-water recreation, as well as water-oriented educational and cultural activities.
- Maintaining and improving the environmental quality of the Village's water bodies.
- Pursuing strategies to improve the sustainability of the Village's waterfront.

## Local & Regional Setting

The Village of Watkins Glen is situated at the southern tip of Seneca Lake, in the heart of the Finger Lakes region of New York State. The Village serves as the County Seat of Schuyler County and is located within the Towns of Dix and Reading. The total area of the Village is 2.2 square miles, including both land and water. Major transportation routes that connect the Village to the rest of New York State include the east-west NYS Routes 329, 409, and 79 and the north-south NYS Routes 14 and 414. Route 14 and Route 414 run concurrently through Watkins Glen, serving as the Village's main thoroughfare. The Village is centrally located to the upstate cities of Ithaca, Corning, and Elmira.



## Community Overview

The Village of Watkins Glen was established by Doctor Samuel Watkins in 1828. Settlers were drawn to the surrounding region by the new era of commercial and industrial activity in Schuyler County, fostered by the construction of the Chemung Canal in 1829. The Village of Watkins Glen served as the northern terminus of the canal, which was crucial for linking communities along the Chemung River to the rest of the region. As a result of the Village's location along this important waterway, boat building and the lumber industry became leading business. Saw mills were constructed to supply timber for dock, boats, and buildings.

Watkins Glen's economy expanded again in the late 19th century due to the discovery of salt over 1,000 feet below the earth's surface. In 1882, the Watkins Oil Well Company discovered the first salt well in Watkins Glen. The first well was drilled by the Glen Salt Company in 1893, on land which is now owned by U.S. Salt.<sup>1</sup> Now, in the early 21st century, U.S. Salt and Cargill Salt are two of the area's largest industries. Other major employers in the present day include Wal-Mart, Arc of Schuyler County, and the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel.

The Village of Watkins Glen's scenic beauty, abundant recreational amenities, and proximity to population centers such as Ithaca, Corning, and Elmira also make it an attractive locale for potential investors. The economy of the Village of Watkins Glen, and Schuyler County as a whole, is heavily dependent on tourism. Major attractions located in the Village and the surrounding areas include Seneca Lake, Franklin Street, Watkins Glen State Park, the Catharine

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Salt, [www.ussaltllc.com/salthome.htm](http://www.ussaltllc.com/salthome.htm), Accessed 4/10/2010.

Valley Trail, Watkins Glen International, and the International Motor Racing Research Center. Visitors can also sample wines from over 30 wineries on the Seneca Lake Wine Trail, take a cruise aboard the Stroller IV or the Seneca Legacy, shop on Franklin Street, or partake in a variety of water sports on Seneca Lake. These area attractions draw an estimated 1.5 million visitors to Schuyler County each year.<sup>2</sup> In addition, there are many major Schuyler County private-sector employers located in or within close proximity to the Village of Watkins Glen, including:

- BMS Manufacturing
- Camp Monterey
- Cargill, Inc.
- NYS Fire Academy
- Parmenter
- Schuyler Hospital
- The Arc of Schuyler County
- The Falls Home
- Wagner Lumber
- Wal-Mart
- Welliver McGuire
- US Salt Company

The Village of Watkins Glen works closely with the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce and the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd) to foster economic development in the Village and assist Schuyler County businesses in obtaining valuable financial resources.

### **Study Area**

The Lakefront Study Area is divided into two main areas of interest; the Primary Study Area and the Secondary Study Area. The Primary Study Area includes the majority of the Seneca Lakefront within the Village of Watkins Glen. The northern boundary extends from Magee Point Landing, along the Seneca Lakefront, to Tank Beach. The western and eastern boundaries are Madison Avenue and Clute Park/Tank Beach, respectively. The southern boundary begins at Fourth Street, extends south on Magee Street to include Wal-Mart and Clute Park. The Secondary Study Area encompasses the southern portion of the Seneca Canal and includes the Watkins Glen Yacht Club and Ervay's Marina.



<sup>2</sup> Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd), [www.scoped.biz](http://www.scoped.biz), Accessed 4/10/2010.

---

## Previous Planning Efforts

---

The Village of Watkins Glen has taken significant strides in recent years to increase the accessibility and usage of the Seneca Lake waterfront. In 2008, the Village developed and adopted the Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) to encourage economic development along the lakefront. The completion of the LWRP has allowed the Village to capitalize on one of its greatest assets by providing new opportunities for development to emerge.

The Village of Watkins Glen understands that in order to continue advancing the development of the lakefront area, it is necessary to once again engage in a visioning and planning process, which will maximize citizen input and involvement and articulate the goals and activities needed. The *Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* will build upon the vision established in the LWRP, the Village of Watkins Glen/Montour Falls Business District Improvement Strategy (2005), and the Schuyler County Comprehensive Plan (2005) to further promote smart development and sound planning of the Seneca Lakefront in Watkins Glen.

Currently, the Seneca Lakefront in Watkins Glen is dotted with vacant parcels and abandoned properties. With the Lakefront Management and Development Strategy, the Village of Watkins Glen hopes to enhance its waterfront by promoting responsible commercial development. In order to realize this goal, the Village will need to build upon the recommendations of the LWRP and the Village of Watkins Glen/Montour Falls Business District Improvement Strategy and identify new opportunities through the Strategic Plan. A great deal of work is already under way to revitalize the Seneca Lake Waterfront in Watkins Glen. Key existing and future projects on the lakefront include:



- *Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel.* The development of the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel is currently underway on the lakefront. The 110-room hotel will draw tourists hoping to experience Seneca Lake and the Finger Lakes Region.
- *Seneca Harbor Station.* Seneca Harbor Station is a restored 1876 train station on the Seneca waterfront, which now operates as a restaurant.
- *Magee Point Landing.* The Village of Watkins Glen was awarded a Restore New York grant in September 2009 for the rehabilitation of the former public works building. This lakefront property will be converted into apartments and a restaurant with indoor and lakeside dining.

These projects will serve as the basis for encouraging further development of lakeside properties in the near future.

### **Community Outreach Process**

The intent of the Community Outreach Process was to inform participants about the planning process and its findings, as well as to solicit their views and suggestions for items to be included within this Strategy. Members of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) were instrumental in assisting the consultant team in identifying areas of focus as well as identifying additional stakeholders. Three methods were used to solicit stakeholder input throughout the planning process: 1) coordination meetings with the PAC; 2) Stakeholder Interviews; and 3) Public Workshops. The feedback obtained through these outreach efforts formed the basis for the development of preliminary and final recommendations for the *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management & Development Strategy*.

### **Watkins Glens' Highlights & Opportunities**

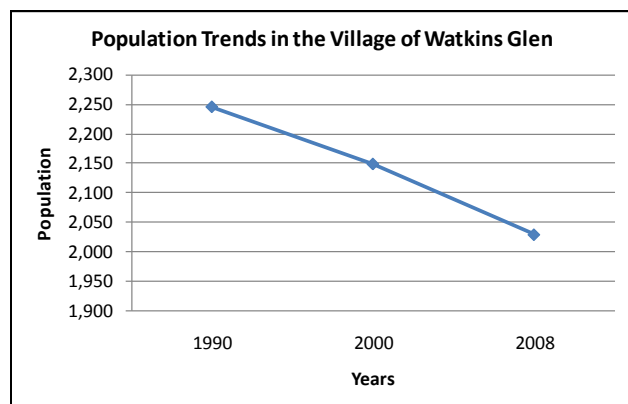
During the development of the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy*, the consultants worked closely with the Steering Committee and the community to identify the community's highlights and challenges that needed to be overcome and the opportunities that could be capitalized on to continually improve the quality of life in Watkins Glen. This partnership helped to identify the opportunities and challenges facing the community, and create statements of future conditions or goals that provide the framework for the community's vision of the future.

The inventory of the existing opportunities and challenges in the Village are divided within the Plan by topics: demographics, economic development, existing conditions (including: land use, zoning, land ownership, infrastructure, natural resources, parks and open space, and trails), and lakefront management. The highlights and opportunities for each section of the Strategy are found below.

### **Demographics**

As of 2008, the Village of Watkins Glen had 2,029 residents according to Census estimates. The Village's population has been declining over the past two decades. Between 1990 and 2000, the Villages population dropped 0.44 percent. Other important demographic trends are listed below:

- *The Village's population is projected to decrease 5.1 percent between 2000 and 2014.*



- *The median age of Watkins Glen residents is approximately 40 years old. The age groups with the largest increases between 1990 and 2000 were 45-59 (3.7%) and 10-19 (2.9%) while the age cohorts that experienced the greatest decreases were 70+ (-6.7%) and 20-29 (-4.9%).*
- *The percentage of Village residents in the 65-and-over age cohort (18.0%) is considerably higher than the State and Schuyler County averages (12.9% and 14.6%).*
- *The median household income for Watkins Glen residents has increased 2.7 percent from 1990 to 2000. The median household income was \$23,065 in 1990 and \$30,089 in 2000. In 2000, approximately 43.8 percent of the households in Watkins Glen earned under \$25,000.*
- *Approximately 85% of housing units in Watkins Glen were built in 1969 or earlier.*
- *The median home value in Watkins Glen has increased 2.7 percent from 1990 to 2000. The median home value was \$51,484 in 1990 and \$67,229 in 2000.*
- *Approximately 88 percent of Watkins Glen residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma or higher and 20 percent of residents have a Bachelors degree or higher.*
- *Top industries in Watkins Glen include educational, health and social services (22.6%), manufacturing (15.1%), and retail trade (12.7%).*

## Economic Development

The demographic and socioeconomic profile presents a range of quantitative data on the Village of Watkins Glen and Schuyler County. This data provides a brief analysis of trends that impact the area under study and will allow the Village to better understand the socioeconomic issues that it is currently combating. The *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* expands upon this data to provide a complete understanding of the Village's economic conditions.



The data used in this Strategy was compiled from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and the NYS Department of Labor. In addition, demographic, socioeconomic, and retail sales data was purchased from ESRI, a leading national provider of market information. ESRI prepares demographic updates and projections based on federal data sources, and offers retail market data derived from public and proprietary sources at varying levels of geography. Important economic development highlights include the following:

- *The Village's top three industrial sectors were educational-health-social services (22.6%), manufacturing (15.1%), and retail trade (12.7%) in 2000.*

- *Top Schuyler County employers include Schuyler Hospital, Wal-Mart, and Welliver McGuire, Inc.*
- *Five of the top-ten employers in Schuyler County are located in the Village of Watkins Glen, including Wal-Mart, Arc of Schuyler County, US Salt Company, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel, and Cargill, Inc.*
- *Approximately 67 percent of Village residents commuted less than 25 minutes to work.*



- *Village residents consistently spend less than the national average for all retail expenditures.*
- *The top three retail goods and services expenditures for Village residents are Health Care (79 SPI), Food at Home (73 SPI), and Investments (72 SPI).*
- *Village businesses that attract shoppers from outside of the Village include: motor vehicle and parts dealers; gas stations; clothing and accessories stores; sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; general merchandize stores; miscellaneous store retailers; and food services and drinking places. These businesses are supplying \$29,557,156 to the local economy, \$19,309,902 of which is from patrons outside of the Village of Watkins Glen.*
- *The business retailers not represented within the Village and the business retailers that are under-serving the Village total \$4,880,693 in potential income revenue. These businesses include: furniture and home furnishings stores; electronics and appliance stores; building materials, garden equipment, and supplies dealers; food and beverage stores; health and personal care stores; non-store retailers.*

### **Existing Conditions in Study Area**

In order to understand the many intricacies facing Watkins Glen, the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* included an evaluation of the Study Area's land use, zoning, land ownership, infrastructure, parks and open space, and trails. A field survey was conducted to confirm land use information and identify the strategic or priority sites for redevelopment and revitalization. The redevelopment plans were ultimately designed based upon information received during the community participation process and information obtained during the research and analysis of the project.



- *Vacant land is the predominant land use within the Primary Study Area, covering 147.5 acres (44.2%) of all land.*



- *Within the Primary Study Area, the land adjacent to the lakefront is exclusively zoned as Lakefront*

*Development (LD). Lakefront Development is intended for a mix of certain commercial, industrial, service, and/or residential uses, which are enhanced by or dependent on their location along the waterfront. Other major zoning districts in the Primary Study Area include Commercial Light Industrial (CL) and Conservation I (C-I).*

- *Over half of the privately owned land in the Primary Study Area is owned by Cargill, Incorporated (146 acres). In addition, there is a relatively high amount of publicly owned properties, particularly by the NYS Canal Corporation land. In some cases, NYS Canal Corporation-owned land blocks water access to private land owners along the canal.*
- *Public water is supplied to all residents of the Village of Watkins Glen via Seneca Lake.*
- *The majority of Watkins Glen is serviced by public sanitary sewers and only excludes the parcels on the northwest edge of the Lake and Village. Sanitary sewage is directed to the sewage treatment plant, located on the Seneca Lakefront, via pumps and/or gravity. The Village is seeking a grant to conduct a feasibility study to relocate the sewage treatment plant.*
- *In 2009, a \$349,000 Rail Line Relocation grant from the Federal Railroad Administration was approved to relocate the existing track and build turnarounds at each salt plant to improve rail service and safety.*
- *The Finger Lakes Railway Corporation owns and operates the rail line located along the Seneca Lakefront, and serves as an important freight line for Watkins Glen's salt mining plants as well as limited passenger rail excursion trips.*
- *Seneca Lake is the largest of the Finger Lakes and is also one of the deepest lakes in North America. The Seneca Canal extends from the southern end of Seneca Lake connecting the lake to the New York State Erie Barge Canal System.*
- *The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated floodplains along the immediate shorelines of Seneca Lake and the Seneca Canal. A floodplain also covers the majority of the land that comprises Clute Park.*
- *Although the Queen Catharine Marsh is not included in either the Primary or Secondary Study Areas, careful evaluation should be given to any development proposal that may infringe upon this 1,000 acre wetland area due to its status as a NYS Bird Conservation Area and its pending designation as a Critical Environmental Area.*
- *Seneca Lake and Catharine Creek support a diverse population of warm and cold-water fish species. Cold-water species include lake trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, landlocked salmon,*

*and rainbow smelt. Catharine Creek is also considered to be the lake's most important tributary for rainbow trout spawning.*

- *Within the Study Area, the Seneca Lake waterfront is generally flat with a base elevation at the shoreline of 440 feet above sea level. Along the western edge of the lake, the elevation increases to 700 feet and exposed rock on the slopes come within 50 to 100 feet of the lakeshore.*
- *Watkins Glen has four (4) major parks located within the Village's boundaries. Of these parks, Seneca Harbor Park and Clute Memorial Park are located within the Primary Study Area.*
- *The Catharine Valley Trail is a multi-use trail which stretches from Watkins Glen, through the Queen Catharine Marsh to Horseheads; permitted recreational uses of the marsh include hiking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, and fishing.*



### **Lakefront Management**

Historically, waterfronts have provided a working gateway into many American communities and commercial centers developed next to the waterfronts. Today, the downtown areas in small communities, like Watkins Glen, typically can be found within a few blocks of the waterfront.

Best practices used in similar communities helps to see Watkins Glen's waterfront in the context of trends in waterfront development, redevelopment possibilities, and management for implementation. It discusses the critical factors facing smaller communities in their efforts to revitalize their downtown waterfronts and nearby shopping districts. The Plan is presented in two sections. The first addresses some basic principles of Lakefront or Harbor development and management, how similar smaller communities have worked to revitalize their downtown waterfronts and how they might impact Watkins Glen. The second addresses a management structure to implement the planning principles in Watkins Glen, including the following highlights:

- *Watkins Glen needs to be sensitive to environmental issues, including dredging the canal, protecting the marsh and birding areas as well as planning for the impacts of the salt factories and sewer treatment facilities with a 20 year horizon.*
- *Successful downtown waterfronts typically build on their historic and cultural assets; Watkins Glen should explore building on its brand to capture other activities not only at the track but on the water.*
- *Harbors should be integrated inland as extensively as possible; significant planning and design work is required to integrate the harbor with Watkins Glen's downtown.*

- *Harbors must plan for a 16-hour day and should be oriented to an active life style.*
- *Waterfronts must be planned for multi-use activities.*
- *Tourism can provide a significant economic boost to older waterfront areas; linkages between the waterfront, guided tours to wineries and wine tasting opportunities, festivals, parades, fishing derbies, antique markets, gourmet food options, trails and treks, and bike paths are all activities that would need coordination and promotion to attract more tourists to Watkins Glen.*
- *The recreation potential of harbors has dramatic potential in the coming decade; the harbor presents a great opportunity for increased recreational activity and Watkins Glen must look at these activities with a regional focus to encourage families to stay longer.*
- *Careful zoning, historic preservation, and architectural and site planning regulations can add great value to downtown waterfronts; water dependent or water related activities should be allowed and encouraged. It is important that Watkins Glen carefully articulates its long term vision in a manner that can be translated into the rules, regulations and guiding principles that will enhance this special place for decades to come.*
- *A physical, social, and psychological connectedness must be nurtured or developed between downtown and the waterfront; Watkins Glen will have to work extensively with state, regional, and local transportation facilities to ensure that its road system does not become a barrier.*
- *Downtown waterfronts benefit significantly from open spaces such as parks, plazas, and trails. The Waterfront Park is a great asset that can be expanded and enhanced to enable the rich, built environment of Watkins Glen to stand out.*
- *Harbors must be comprehensively linked to key transportations systems and adopt traffic management polices.*
- *Make the waterfront an essential part of the downtown; Watkins Glen is starting from strength, has done an enormous amount of work, and is well poised to reach greater potential.*
- *The optimal management of the waterfront reflects the proverbial three-legged stool. The first leg is the municipality which visions through its adopted long-range harbor plan, enforces its comprehensive zoning regulations, and actively pursues grants for waterfront improvements. The second leg is a Business/Waterfront Improvements District (B/WID) that would include all properties along the waterfront area including some inland areas that depend on waterfront uses. The third leg of the stool is a harbor management position in local government that is trained and understands the need to protect, administer, promote, and stimulate growth in the harbor district.*



**Watkins Glen, New York.**

Source: <http://www.watkinsglenyachtclub.com>

## ***Watkins Glen's Vision & How to Achieve It***

The Village of Watkins Glen is committed to developing a prosperous waterfront that is economically and environmentally friendly for current and prospective businesses and residents. To achieve this vision, the Village of Watkins Glen must take steps to develop and implement programs that will pave the way for targeted economic growth along its lakefront.

### ***Guiding Principles***

To assure Watkins Glen's continued economic success, several key principals must be observed:

- Long-term strategy drives short-term actions.
- Goals must be focused to achieve maximum impact.
- The redevelopment plans for the Village must be realistic.
- What gets measured gets done.
- Success requires everyone's strategic help throughout the Village of Watkins Glen and Schuyler County.
- Set priorities.
- Provide funding.

### ***Strategies & Implementation***

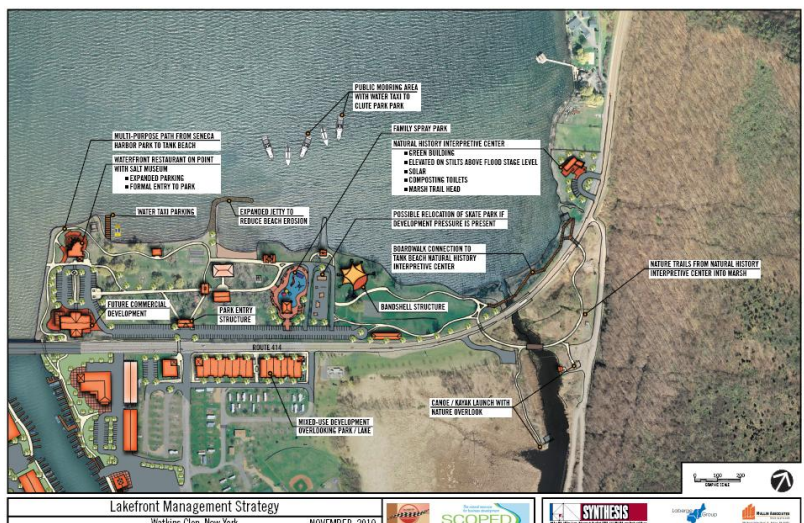
The great waterfronts of the world share a stubborn insistence on quality design, a vision for grand public spaces and are often attached to neighborhoods that act as an intimate place to escape the crowds. Implementation of the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* will allow the Village to not only imagine itself as a place where living, working and playing are linked to the unique natural resource of Seneca Lake; or to consider the possibility that this resource can be experienced as a continuous waterfront system, from vibrant public spaces, fresh-water beaches or from tree-lined, pedestrian scaled trails; but will be able to achieve, through collective public and private partnerships, a future waterfront that is a priceless asset and capable of generating an immeasurable return for generations to come.



Strategies were developed through multiple meetings, brainstorming sessions, and interviews with local businesses, industries, and government agencies. Feedback provided was incorporated into the analysis to create strategies that not only reflect public opinion, but are also practical. Furthermore, these strategies once implemented, are intended to guide the future growth, development, and economic revitalization efforts of the Village.

As a result, five focused elements with specific strategies were created for the Village. In addition, Design Maps were created for three strategic areas of the Village's waterfront (shown to the right, see **Maps 9, 10 and 11** for full size images). The five focused elements included:

- **Physical Improvements** (Seneca Lakefront Improvements, Clute Park/Tank Beach Improvements, and Seneca Canal Improvements)
- **Access & Connections** (Regional Access, Local Access & Improvements, and Water Transportation Improvements)
- **Signage & Streetscape** (Signage, Streetscape, and Design Guidelines, Site Planning & Land Use Regulations)
- **Economic Development** (Tourism, Recreational & Cultural Activities, Economic Development Opportunities, and Land Use Recommendations)
- **Sustainability & Environmental Quality** (Reduce, Reuse & Recycle, Natural Resources, and Education & Policy)



# I. Introduction

---

## *Project Understanding & Partners*

---

The Seneca Lakefront is of vital importance to the Village of Watkins Glen and Schuyler County as a whole. In order to encourage sound development and maximize good stewardship of the lakefront within the Village of Watkins Glen, Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPED) applied for and was granted funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 2009 to develop the *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management and Development Strategy*. The ARC is a regional economic development



agency that funds projects through grant programs in the 13 Appalachian states. Eligible projects must increase job opportunities, strengthen the capacity of the workforce to compete in the global economy, develop, and improve infrastructure, or improve the highway system.<sup>3</sup> The funds from this grant will assist the Village and County with strategic planning. A local cash match was dedicated by SCOPED, Schuyler County, and the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA). Schuyler County secured additional funds from the New York State Office of Community Renewal to cover project costs.



The *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* will address important issues relating to the future development of the lakefront while establishing a broad community consensus. The vitality of the Village's lakefront requires a strategic vision that weaves together the facts of changing economic conditions, the importance and value of quality housing, convenient community services, and recreation areas, functional public infrastructure, and vibrant businesses that meet the needs and desires of a diverse population

of Village residents and tourists alike. Simultaneously, promoting economic development on the lakefront must also be balanced with preserving the natural integrity of Seneca Lake and its associated ecosystems. The Strategic Plan will weigh these factors, as well as synthesize the visions of community leaders, stakeholders, and the public, to establish a blueprint for implementing quality development.

---

<sup>3</sup> Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov), Accessed 5/10/2010.

## Local & Regional Setting



The Village of Watkins Glen is situated at the southern tip of Seneca Lake, in the heart of the Finger Lakes region of New York State. The total area of the Village is 2.2 square miles, including both land and water. The Village serves as the County Seat of Schuyler County and is located within the Towns of Dix and Reading. The Village is located within 30 miles of the upstate cities of Ithaca, Corning, and Elmira. State roads provide the major transportation routes that connect the Village to the region. The Village is primarily accessed by NYS Routes 414 and 14, which run parallel to Seneca Lake’s eastern and western shores, respectively. These routes connect the Village to I-90 to the north and I-86 to the south. The Village can also be accessed by air via the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport, Ithaca-Tompkins Regional Airport, Greater Rochester International Airport, and Syracuse Hancock International Airport. (**Map 1: Community Context**).

## Study Area Boundary

The Lakefront Study Area is divided into two main areas of interest; the Primary Study Area and the Secondary Study Area (**Map 2: Study Area**). The Primary Study Area includes the majority of the Seneca Lakefront within the Village of Watkins Glen. The northern boundary extends from Magee Point Landing, along the Seneca Lakefront, to Tank Beach. The western and eastern boundaries are Madison Avenue and Clute Park/Tank Beach, respectively. The southern boundary begins at Fourth Street, extends south on Magee Street to include Wal-Mart and Clute Park. The Secondary Study Area encompasses the southern portion of the Seneca Canal and includes the Watkins Glen Yacht Club and Ervay’s Marina.



## Community Overview

The Village of Watkins Glen was established by Doctor Samuel Watkins in 1828. Settlers were drawn to the surrounding region by the new era of commercial and industrial activity in Schuyler County, fostered by the construction of the Chemung Canal in 1829. The Village of Watkins Glen served as the northern terminus of the canal, now part of the Barge Canal, which connected Seneca Lake to the Chemung River. The 23-mile canal was crucial for linking communities along the Chemung River to the rest of the region due to Seneca Lake’s connection to the Erie Canal, the Oswego Canal, and Lake Ontario via the Seneca and Cayuga Canals.

**Map 1: Community Context**

**Map 2: Study Area**

As a result of the Village's location along this important waterway, boat building and the lumber industry became leading business. Saw mills were constructed to supply timber for dock, boats, and buildings. Through these water-dependent industries, the Watkins Glen community was able to grow and thrive throughout the 19th century.

Watkins Glen's economy expanded again in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the discovery of salt over 1,000 feet below the earth's surface. In 1882, the Watkins Oil Well Company discovered the first salt well in Watkins Glen. The first well was drilled by the Glen Salt Company in 1893, on land which is now owned by U.S. Salt.<sup>4</sup> Now, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, U.S. Salt and Cargill Salt are two of the area's largest industries. Other major employers in the present day include Wal-Mart, Arc of Schuyler County, and the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel.



The Village of Watkins Glen's scenic beauty, abundant recreational amenities, and proximity to population centers such as Ithaca, Corning, and Elmira also make it an attractive locale for potential investors. The economy of the Village of Watkins Glen, and Schuyler County as a whole, is heavily dependent on tourism. Major attractions located in the Village and the surrounding areas include Seneca Lake, Franklin Street, Watkins Glen State Park, the Catharine Valley Trail, Watkins Glen International, and the International Motor Racing Research Center. Visitors can also sample wines from over 30 wineries on the Seneca Lake Wine Trail, take a cruise aboard the Stroller IV or the Seneca Legacy, shop on Franklin Street, or partake in a variety of water sports on Seneca Lake. These area attractions draw an estimated 1.5 million visitors to Schuyler County each year.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Previous Planning Efforts***

The Village of Watkins Glen has taken significant strides in recent years to increase the accessibility and usage of the Seneca Lake waterfront. The *Lakefront Management and Development Strategy* will build upon the vision established in the *Local Waterfront Revitalization Program*, the *Village of Watkins Glen/Montour Falls Business District Improvement Strategy* (2005), the *Schuyler County Comprehensive Plan* (2005), and other previous studies to further promote smart development and sound planning of the Seneca Lakefront in Watkins Glen. The recommendations of the previous plans and studies, accompanied by their associated completion status, are included in **Appendix A**.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Salt, [www.ussaltllc.com/salthome.htm](http://www.ussaltllc.com/salthome.htm), Accessed 4/10/2010.

<sup>5</sup> Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd), [www.scoped.biz](http://www.scoped.biz), Accessed 4/10/2010.

### Watkins Glen Tomorrow – 1980

*Watkins Glen Tomorrow* was adopted in 1980 in response to increasingly difficult economic times in Schuyler County. The purpose of the plan was to explore Schuyler County's development potential by concentrating on the Village of Watkins Glen waterfront, which was considered to be the County's key economic development opportunity. Key opportunities and obstacles for transforming the dilapidated industrial waterfront were identified through an exhaustive market and physical analysis of the project study area.



Objectives for development were vetted during Steering Committee Meetings and a Citizens' Workshop. Through the public participation process, it was determined that Watkins Glen should capitalize on its potential for recreational and cultural tourism. A Preliminary Development Program was assembled as a working list of potential projects to help revitalize the Watkins Glen waterfront. Public consensus for the plan's objectives and Preliminary Development Program evolved through a three-part series of interactive television shows.

The Steering Committee and the Design Team analyzed the Preliminary Development Program to determine market support and financial feasibility. The projects with the greatest market support formed the two-phased Final Development Program. Prospective projects included a marina, condominium housing, a hotel, specialty retail, and a waterfront park. The potential economic impact of this program on Watkins Glen and Schuyler County were analyzed. The plan estimated that the program would extend the average visitor's length of stay, resulting in increased spending in the area.

### Watkins Glen Lakefront Development Concept Plan – 1990

The *Watkins Glen Lakefront Development Concept Plan* was completed in 1990 as a follow-up to



*Watkins Glen Tomorrow*. The purpose of the concept plan was to re-evaluate Watkins Glen's waterfront development potential and to suggest a revised development approach in response to market and funding conditions. The plan intended to build upon over \$11 million invested over the past ten years in the redevelopment of the waterfront. Project partners included the Five Lakes Development Corporation, Schuyler County, the Village of Watkins Glen, and private property owners.

The Lakefront Development Area was bounded to the east by Cargill Salt and by NYS Route 14 to the west. The Study Area's southern boundary was Second Street, North Perry Street and Fourth Street. The plan identified preferred development uses for four sites in the 18.6-acre Lakefront Development Area. Preferred uses included the following:

- Facilities for research and development
- Office headquarters for regional institutions
- Banks, insurance companies, or financial institutions
- Specialty retail
- Discount retail
- Parking
- Restaurants
- Educational, civic, institutional or religious facilities
- Business service uses
- Public and quasi-public uses
- Open space and outdoor recreation

The uses outlined for each site were intended to provide guidance to interested parties in order to ultimately improve waterfront connectivity and access. The plan also explained the means through which the implementation of the project would be pursued. These methods included private developer solicitation, identification of potential occupants, and identification of potential public and private funding mechanisms.

### **Clute Park Schematic Plan – 1994**

The *Clute Park Schematic Plan* was adopted in 1994 as a comprehensive master plan for the existing Clute Park. The plan reflects three primary intentions: unify the park in terms of visual identity and pedestrian access across NYS Route 414; interpret the unique natural and cultural history of the park site; and accommodate future public recreational use of the park. Special attention was given to the rehabilitation of the shoreline, development, and relocation of recreational activities, development of a new park entrance, and building and design proposals for the Barge Canal and Tank Beach areas. The park was surveyed to develop a topographic base map and intensive research was conducted on the site's natural and cultural history. Existing conditions were assessed through the analysis of the base map and site visits.



Two schematic design alternatives were generated for the review of the Clute Park Committee. The alternatives illustrated potential patterns of pedestrian and vehicle circulation; locations for significant elements such as the park entry, historic salt derrick, recreation areas and facilities,

new plantings; and provisions for significant views to and from the park. A third and final design was submitted in response to the comments of the committee.

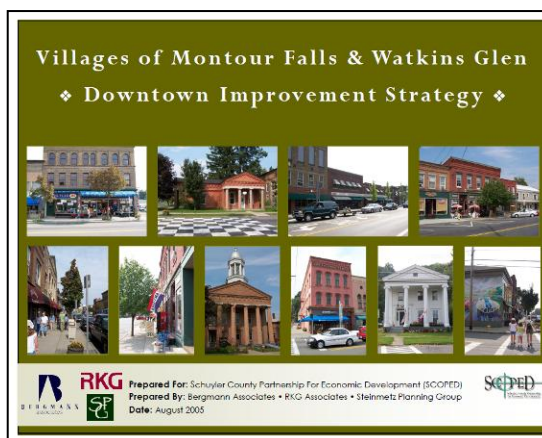
The final design designated the historic waterfront area for primarily passive uses, with the exception of active water sports. Active recreational facilities, including a soccer field, tennis courts, and a ball field, were to be located on the park's south side. A regional Salt Museum was a major component of the Schematic Plan. The historic Watkins Salt Well No. 1, which was scheduled to be moved from its current location on Franklin Street to Clute Park, was the proposed focus of the museum. The museum would serve as a landmark, visible from NYS Route 414, Seneca Lake, and within the park. In addition, a new park office building was proposed on NYS Route 414 at the main vehicular entrance to the park.

### Schuyler County Comprehensive Plan – 2004

The *Schuyler County Comprehensive Plan* was adopted in 2004. The goals of the plan were to facilitate positive growth, protect natural resources, reduce reliance on property taxes to provide local services, and maintain a sense of community character. The plan's goals and objectives were shaped by the input of residents through task groups and a countywide survey. The plan's main focus areas were as follows: agriculture; economic development; education, historic and cultural resources; environment, natural resources and recreation; government, public services and land use; housing, population and social concerns; infrastructure; and transportation.

### Villages of Montour Falls & Watkins Glen Downtown Improvement Strategy – 2004

In 2004, the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd) was awarded a grant from the federal Appalachian Regional Commission and the New York State Governor's Office for Small Cities to develop a *Downtown Improvement Strategy* for the Villages of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls. The planning process was guided by a Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) composed of business-owners, residents, and agency representatives from both downtown districts. Specific issues to be addressed and studied during



the project included the current mix of retail, recreation and entertainment, infrastructure, traffic flow, and retail growth opportunities. The plan also examined the impact of regional retail plazas and the new Wal-Mart shopping center on both of the business districts. A marketing study was conducted, which reviewed economic indicators, demographics, the real estate market, and consumer income and spending potential. A survey was also distributed to employees of local establishments, merchants, and consumers. Additional public input was obtained through three public meetings. The mission statement and the main strategies of the plan were based on the results of a SWOT analysis conducted during the first public workshop.

The plan recommended that the Main Street Approach be used as a model to facilitate downtown improvements. Efforts were to be focused on five strategy areas identified during the planning process. The five strategy areas are listed below:

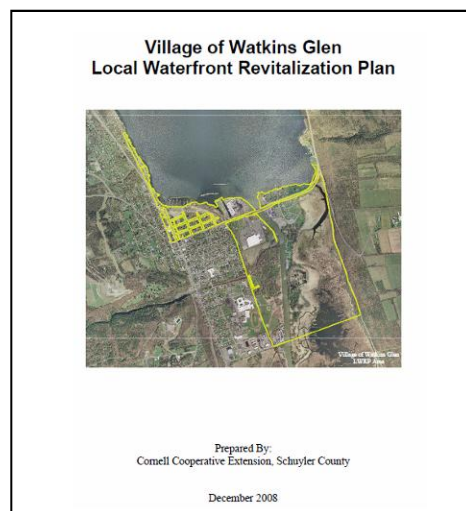
- **Economic Development:** Increase revenues of existing business owners while identifying new enterprises that may be beneficial to the downtown areas.
- **Marketing & Promotion:** Increase the popularity of the downtown areas to local residents and visitors through image development and special events.
- **Design:** Improve the physical appearance and function of the district.
- **Infrastructure:** Facilitate the ongoing investment in the facilities necessary to operate a successful downtown area.
- **Community:** Ensure the ongoing operation of the program, such as human and financial resources.

### Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) – 2008

The *Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan* (LWRP) was adopted in 2008. The study area included those portions of Seneca Lake, Seneca Canal, and Queen Catharine Marsh that are located within the Village, as well as lands immediately adjacent to the lake and east of the Conrail railroad right-of-way. The goals of the LWRP were to provide greater public access along the lakefront and Seneca Canal, reuse and revitalize under-utilized areas, and guide development away from environmentally sensitive lands. These goals were identified through the Inventory and Analysis and a public participation process.

The LWRP included a list of proposed projects that would aid in the revitalization of the Seneca Lakefront. The projects aimed to increase pedestrian and vehicular access to the waterfront, foster downtown improvements, enhance the Village’s “Northern Gateway,” improve recreational areas, and promote aesthetic consistency throughout the Village. The proposed projects were accompanied with cost estimates and timelines.

Techniques for local implementation of the LWRP were also provided. The plan pointed out aspects of the existing Zoning Law that would serve to implement the policies and projects of the program, including the Lakefront Development District, the Canal District, and the site plan review process. The plan also detailed the necessary actions that would need to be undertaken by the Village of Watkins Glen, the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPED), the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA), New York State, and private stakeholders in order to implement, manage, and finance the LWRP.



## Village of Watkins Glen Parking Census – 2009

The *Village of Watkins Glen Parking Census* was developed in 2009 by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County. The purpose of the study was gain a better understanding of parking availability in the Village. A study area was identified, which spanned north-to-south from the waterfront to 6<sup>th</sup> Street and east-to-west from Madison Avenue to Porter Street. The number of parking spaces within the study area was counted and occupancy rates were identified in order to determine if a parking problem existed.



Photo Credit: Watkins Glen Parking Census

Occupancy rates were established through a four-day parking census, which represented different times during the tourist season. Occupied spaces were also counted during three different time periods each day (8:30-10:30 am, 11:30-1:30 pm, and 5:00-8:00 pm). The study found that the parking spaces with the highest occupancy were concentrated within the Village's business district between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> streets and Franklin and Decatur streets, as well as between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets and Madison and Franklin streets. Occupancy was found to be low in the morning, highest mid-day and lowest in the evening. However, it was found that a special event could increase evening occupancy rates. The municipal off-street parking lot between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> streets demonstrated a consistently high level of occupancy across all days with highest occupancy during mid-day and evening. Other parking hot spots include 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets in the evenings, the portion of 5<sup>th</sup> street between Franklin and Decatur in the morning, and the middle portion of Franklin Street between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets in the afternoon and evening.

Overall, the study determined that there is adequate parking in the study area. Although there were areas of congestion in the study area, additional parking was available within a half-block radius. In order to eliminate perceived parking issues, the study recommended the following:

- Provide signage indicating the location of additional parking,
- Ask employees to park further from where they work to allow more space for patrons,
- Paint parking lines to help direct people how to park,
- Introduce lighting and streetscaping in order to create more inviting space away from downtown,
- Repave portions of the existing parking areas, and
- Maintain consistent enforcement of parking time limits.

## Villages of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls Area Transportation Study – 2009

In 2009, the *Village of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls Area Transportation Study* was conducted as a scoping exercise geared toward providing an inventory and planning-level analysis of existing conditions and future opportunities along the NYS Route 14 corridor. The study area extended approximately three miles along NYS Route 14 and also included a three-quarter mile segment of NYS Route 414 within the Village of Watkins Glen. The transportation goals of previously conducted reports and studies were reviewed and synthesized, as well as the results of various traffic counts and traffic impact statements. As a result of the existing conditions analysis, eight viable projects/improvements were identified for further consideration and are listed below:



- ***Safety Issues with NYS Route 414:*** Address safety issues with NYS Route 414 involving the weight restriction and truck bypass.
- ***Northern Gateway Improvements:*** Implement traffic calming measures to remedy current issues, including a center median and road narrowing at the “S” curve.
- ***Corridor-Wide Access Management:*** Develop standards for setbacks, curb cuts, and shared access for the entire NYS Route 14 corridor within the Village of Watkins Glen and incorporate further south towards the Village of Montour Falls.
- ***Development Coordination Group:*** Establish a more formalized process for the review and coordination of projects between the Town, Village, County, NYSDOT, and regional transportation agencies.
- ***Watkins Mill Crossing:*** Conduct further traffic evaluation to determine the feasibility of extending the grid system over the creek through the creation of a new bridge.
- ***Village-Wide Parking Assessment:*** Inventory and assess on-street and municipal lots for their capacity and ability to meet current and future demands.
- ***Improved Access to Salt Point Road:*** Improve the connection through adjustments to the current roadway or explore the feasibility of a new connector.
- ***Circulator Streetcar Bus:*** Foster local and regional support for the concept and begin to identify what organization/agency is best equipped to pursue funding, conduct ridership estimates, plan routes, and determine ultimate project feasibility.

These projects would require more detailed engineering and cost/benefit analysis. Funding for additional evaluation or implementation was recommended to be obtained through the NYSDOT Access Management Program or the municipalities.

## II. Community Outreach Process

---

The intent of the Community Outreach Process was to inform participants about the planning process and its findings, as well as to solicit their views and suggestions for items to be included within the *Study*. Members of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) were instrumental in assisting the consultant team in identifying areas of focus as well as identifying additional stakeholders. Three methods were used to solicit stakeholder input throughout the planning process: 1) coordination meetings with the PAC; 2) Stakeholder Interviews; and 3) Public Workshops. The feedback obtained through these outreach efforts formed the basis for the development of preliminary and final recommendations for the *Village of Watkins Glen Lakefront Management & Development Strategy*.

*Vision it:*

*Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.*

*Vincent Van Gogh 1853-1890, Dutch Painter*

### ***Planning Advisory Committee Meeting (PAC)***

---

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) served as the “eyes and ears” of the community during the development of the *Plan* by representing the Village’s and County’s various constituencies. The PAC was vital in providing insight on community needs, assisting with data collection, and identifying stakeholders. The Committee also provided constructive input on the *Plan* throughout the process and served as a mechanism to build consensus and generate ideas.



Three meetings were held between the PAC and the consultant team. At the project kick-off meeting, the consultant team worked with the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPED) and the members of the advisory committee to finalize the scope of services in order to ensure the activities and tasks to be performed were directly responsive to the needs of the Village and its residents. The second meeting served as an interim coordination meeting mid-way through the project. The focus of the meeting was to review the findings from research efforts as well as the feedback from public outreach. The final meeting was used to finalize the proposed action plan and recommendations and to prepare the project towards the next steps of implementation.

The PAC was also actively involved in facilitating the public workshops. The Committee assisted the consultant team by leading small group exercises and presenting the findings back to the group at the end of the meeting.

### ***Key Issues Identified by PAC***

At the Kick-Off Meeting, each member of the PAC was provided with a Committee Member's Questionnaire. The questionnaire asked committee members to identify the Village's economic and community needs, the types of services that would compliment the lakefront, the Village's greatest assets and impediments, as well as their overall opinion of the lakefront. The questionnaire also asked committee members to identify groups, organizations, and individuals who they believed to be the most important stakeholders in developing the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy*. The full results of the Committee Member's Questionnaire are included in **Appendix B**. The key opportunities identified by the PAC are summarized below.

### ***Key Opportunities***

- Establish a solid connection between Watkins Glen State Park and the Seneca Lake waterfront;
- Create better pedestrian and vehicular access to the waterfront;
- Improve appearance of the business district through street beautification and landscaping;
- Address the parking issues by providing signage, enforcement, lighting, striping, and landscaping;
- Address downtown car dealerships (both vacant and operational facilities);
- Promote new business development downtown to provide greater variety for visitors, create jobs for residents, and expand the tax base;
- Attract more retail and recreational development;
- Improve/expand/update infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, lighting);
- Revitalize unused/deteriorated buildings; and
- Discourage parochialism.

### ***Stakeholder Interviews Summary***

---

Stakeholder Interviews were held in March and April of 2010 with Village of Watkins Glen stakeholders. The group of stakeholders was identified by the PAC based on their respective interests in the Seneca Waterfront Study Area. Thirteen stakeholders were interviewed during the process, answering questions regarding current and future waterfront development. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes, providing insight and perspective on local needs. The stakeholders included lakefront business and property owners, downtown business owners, local leaders, and other entities with a vested interest in the Watkins Glen waterfront.

The results of the Stakeholder Interviews are compiled in **Appendix B**. Overall, the greatest challenges mentioned by stakeholders were parking, transient boat dockage, extending the tourist season through winter, and finding opportunities for land assemblages for waterfront development. The greatest opportunities cited by stakeholders included waterfront housing and providing pedestrian access along the lakeshore.

### ***Public Workshops***

#### ***Workshop 1: “Reevaluating, Restructuring & Reprioritizing” the Lakefront Vision***

The “Reevaluating, Restructuring & Reprioritizing” the Lakefront Vision Public Workshop was held April 6, 2010 at the Clute Park Community Center in the Village of Watkins Glen. The workshop was attended by 51 interested members of the community. The workshop included a presentation, which provided a brief overview of the planning process to date, the key issues, and preliminary opportunities. The presentation also reviewed the previous plans conducted by the Village of Watkins Glen including Watkins Glen Tomorrow, Watkins Glen Lakefront Development Concept Plan, Clute Park Schematic Plan, Villages of Montour Falls and Watkins Glen Downtown Improvement Strategy, Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, and Villages of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls Area Transportation Study. The accomplishments of these plans were highlighted as well as the status of those recommendations that were in progress or incomplete.



Following the presentation, workshop participants were guided through an exercise designed to solicit feedback on recommendations from the Village’s previously conducted plans and studies. Attendees were asked to review a checklist of previous recommendations related to the Lakefront Study Area related to seven topics or themes, which included: 1) Downtown, 2) Waterfront, 3) Recreation, 4) Access, 5) Parking, 6) Housing, and 7) Promotion & Economic Development. Each table was assigned a topic sheet with previous recommendations. Participants indicated with a sticker if they “agreed” or “disagreed” with each recommendation. Each table also brainstormed to come up with additional recommendations for each topic. The topic sheets were then rotated to each table. Following this exercise, the sheets were taped to the wall and participants were asked to select three overall “Top Priority” recommendations. In addition, participants were asked to identify the recommendation for which they would most support funding.

---

## **Workshop #1 Results**

“Top 5” priorities identified by workshop participants:

1. Relocate sewage treatment plant (14%)
2. Improve the variety and appearance of housing stock (11%)
3. Encourage recreational uses on the Seneca Canal (9.9%)
4. Accommodate larger boats (32’ length) at the Village Marina (7.4%)
5. Boardwalk along canal and in marsh for walking and viewing wildlife (4.9%)

Top funding priorities as identified by workshop participants:

1. Accommodate larger boats (32’ length) at the Village Marina (32.6%)
2. Relocate sewage treatment plant (17.4%)
3. Boardwalk along canal and in marsh for walking and viewing wildlife (6.5%)
4. Encourage recreational uses on the Seneca Canal (6.5%)
5. Explore solutions to divert truck traffic (6.5%)
6. Improve the variety & appearance of housing stock (6.5%)

## **Workshop 2: Lakefront Design Workshop**

The Lakefront Design Workshop was held June 10, 2010 and was comprised of two parts; a “Walk & Talk” Tour of the Target Area and a public presentation. The purpose of the “Walk & Talk” was to engage the public and gain an understanding from the public of existing conditions and key issues unique to the Target Area. The “Walk and Talk” focused on connectivity between the Lakefront and Watkins Glen’s Downtown, land uses, traffic and pedestrian safety concerns, aesthetics, and other opportunities for design improvements. The tour concentrated on three major areas; Seneca Harbor Park, Clute Park, and the Seneca Canal.



Following the “Walk and Talk” tour, the Laberge Team presented to the public the findings from the first public workshop and the tour. The key components of a vibrant downtown and waterfront were also discussed with workshop attendees. The presentation concluded with the unveiling of the preliminary conceptual development plan for the Target Area. The plan was comprised of three illustrations, which focused on the three areas highlighted during the “Walk & Talk” tour. The illustrations were based upon discussions with stakeholders and the Plan Advisory Committee, feedback from the first public workshop, the results of the inventory and analysis, and the tour. Following the presentation, participants were asked to identify elements of the preliminary concept plan that they liked or disliked, as well as to discuss aspects of the Lakefront Target Area that they would like to change or improve. After the meeting, the Laberge Team reviewed the comments from the workshop and incorporated them accordingly into the preliminary conceptual development plan.

**Workshop #2 Results**



**Positive Aspects**

- Planted median on NYS Route 414 to promote traffic calming and gateway improvements
- Light Tower Gateway Element
- Improved visual connection between Franklin Street and Seneca Lake
- Replacement of parking with Great Lawn in Seneca Harbor Park
- 3-4 Story Mixed-Use Parking Garage
- Mixed-Use infill development on Franklin Street
- Redevelopment of Clifford’s and Lil Joes
- Amphitheater in Seneca Harbor Park
- Trellis swings in Seneca Harbor Park
- Improved signage and lighting

**Concerns**

- Removal of parking lot from Seneca Harbor Park will necessitate a drop-off area near docks and additional parking for boaters
- Wind may interfere with concert shell
- Truck traffic noise on Franklin Street not addressed
- Sewage treatment plant not addressed
- Docks at Seneca Harbor Park need to be upgraded with light



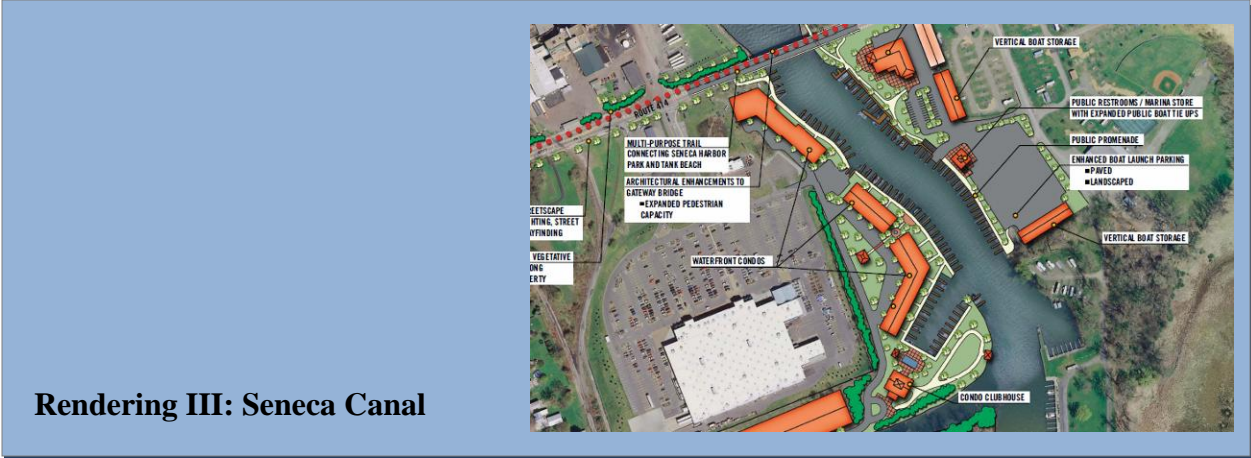
**Rendering II: Clute Park**

**Positive Aspects**

- Addition of splash park and amphitheater
- Nature Center at Tank Beach
- Salt Museum/Restaurant
- Commercial development south of NYS Route 414
- Eco-theme for Tank Beach
- Linking Tank Beach to Queen Catharine Marsh inlet
- Relocation of RV park

**Concerns**

- Proposed docks west of Clute Park limit fishing
- Too much commercial development proposed



**Positive Aspects**

- Boat storage behind Wal-Mart
- Enhanced Public Boat Launch
- Condominiums on Seneca Canal

**Concerns**

- Land along Seneca Canal may not be suitable for development
- Area is not a top priority
- High visibility of Wal-Mart from condominiums
- Boat storage behind Wal-Mart

### III. Demographic & Growth Trend Analysis

---

#### Highlights:

- *The total population for the Village of Watkins Glen was 2,149 in the year 2000.*
- *The Village's population is projected to decrease 5.1 percent between 2000 and 2014.*
- *The median age of Watkins Glen residents is approximately 40 years old. The age groups with the largest increases between 1990 and 2000 were 45-59 (3.7%) and 10-19 (2.9%) while the age cohorts that experienced the greatest decreases were 70+ (-6.7%) and 20-29 (-4.9%).*
- *The percentage of Village residents in the 65-and-over age cohort (18.0%) is considerably higher than the State and Schuyler County averages (12.9% and 14.6%).*
- *The median household income for Watkins Glen residents has increased 2.7 percent from 1990 to 2000. The median household income was \$23,065 in 1990 and \$30,089 in 2000. In 2000, approximately 43.8 percent of the households in Watkins Glen earned under \$25,000.*
- *Approximately 85% of housing units in Watkins Glen were built in 1969 or earlier.*
- *The median home value in Watkins Glen has increased 2.7 percent from 1990 to 2000. The median home value was \$51,484 in 1990 and \$67,229 in 2000.*
- *Approximately 88 percent of Watkins Glen residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma or higher and 20 percent of residents have a Bachelors degree or higher.*
- *Top industries in Watkins Glen include educational, health and social services (22.6%), manufacturing (15.1%), and retail trade (12.7%).*

#### Demographic Profile

---

This section highlights a number of trends within the Village of Watkins Glen including population, age, housing, education, and income. Comparisons to Schuyler County and New York State have also been made where appropriate. These comparisons provide the necessary context required to assimilate an understanding of past and future estimated growth patterns for the Village of Watkins Glen. The information is gathered primarily from the 2000 U.S. Census. Data from the 1990 Census and population estimates for 2009 and 2014 are also utilized to show the progression of trends over time. It should be noted that the demographic data presented in this section may need to be re-examined when the 2010 Census data is available.

#### Population

Local population growth and decline is dependent on several factors including economic expansion, environmental capacity, housing suitability, age-driven needs, and regional desirability. According to U.S. Census data, the Village of Watkins Glen's population decreased

from 2,246 in 1990 to 2,149 in 2000. This reflects a 4.3 percent population decrease for the Village. During the same period, the total populations of Schuyler County and New York State grew at rates of 3.0 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively.

As illustrated in **Table 1: Population Trends**, it is estimated that the Village will experience a 1.9 percent loss in population by 2014.

**Table 1: Population Trends**

Year	Village of Watkins Glen		Schuyler County		New York State	
	Number	Growth	Number	Growth	Number	Growth
1990	2,246	NA	18,662	NA	17,990,455	NA
2000	2,149	-4.3%	19,224	3.0%	18,976,457	5.5%
2009	2,079	-3.3%	19,273	0.3%	19,495,049	2.7%
2014	2,039	-1.9%	19,093	-0.9%	19,645,949	0.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, & ESRI Business Analyst Online

### Age Distribution

According to the 2000 Census, 27 percent of the total population in the Village of Watkins Glen is under 19 years of age. This trend is similar to the County (28.4%) and the State (27.5%) respectively. The next largest age cohorts in the Village are 35-44 years of age (15.2%) and 45-54 years of age (13.3%). These numbers are consistent with Schuyler County and New York State averages. Conversely, the percentage of Village residents in the 65-and-over age cohort (18.0%) is considerably higher than the State and Schuyler County averages (12.9% and 14.6%).

The median age for the Village of Watkins Glen (39.5) is slightly higher than the median ages for Schuyler County (38.6) and New York State (35.9). See **Table 2: Age Distribution (2000)** below.

**Table 2: Age Distribution (2000)**

Age	Village of Watkins Glen		Schuyler County		New York State	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
0-14	419	19.5%	3,934	20.5%	3,923,707	20.7%
15-19	150	7.0%	1,512	7.9%	1,287,544	6.8%
20-24	126	5.9%	953	5.0%	1,244,309	6.6%
25-34	235	10.9%	2,154	11.2%	2,757,324	14.5%
35-44	327	15.2%	2,965	15.4%	3,074,398	16.2%
45-54	287	13.3%	2,915	15.2%	2,552,936	13.5%
55-64	219	10.2%	1,976	10.3%	1,687,987	8.9%
65-74	184	8.6%	1,460	7.6%	1,276,046	6.7%
75+	202	9.4%	1,355	7.0%	1,172,306	6.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,149</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19,224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>17,976,457</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>39.5</b>		<b>38.6</b>		<b>35.9</b>	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

### Household Composition

The U.S. Census Bureau provides information on household composition, which details the structure of the individuals and families living within the Village boundaries. According to **Table 3: Household Composition (2000)**, the majority of households in the Village are comprised of families (58.0%), as compared to non-family households (42.0%), which include non-traditional family structures and individuals living alone. The Village had a lower percentage of family households than Schuyler County (70.4%) and New York State (65.7%).

**Table 3: Household Composition (2000)**

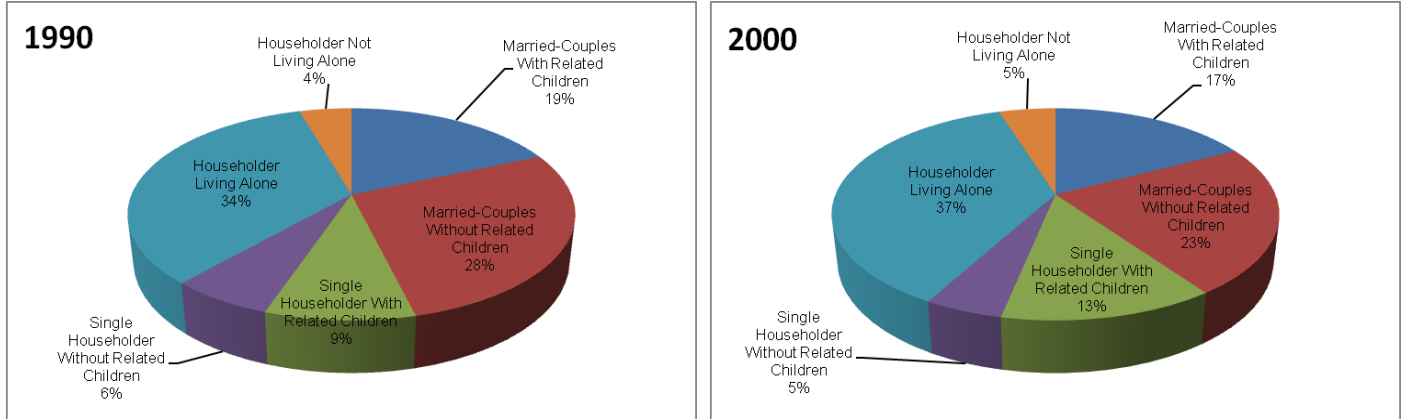
	Village of Watkins Glen		Schuyler County		New York State	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
<b>Family Households</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>5,189</b>	<b>70.4%</b>	<b>4,639,387</b>	<b>65.7%</b>
<i>Married-couple Families</i>	378	40.2%	4,110	55.7%	3,289,514	46.6%
With Related Children	164	17.4%	1,759	23.9%	1,600,827	22.7%
With No Related Children	211	22.8%	2,351	31.8%	1,688,687	23.9%
<i>Other Family (No Spouse)</i>	168	17.9%	1,079	14.6%	1,349,873	19.1%
With Related Children	123	13.1%	775	10.5%	830,592	11.8%
With No Related Children	45	4.8%	304	4.1%	519,281	7.3%
<b>Nonfamily Households</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>2,185</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>2,417,473</b>	<b>34.3%</b>
<i>Householder Living Alone</i>	349	37.1%	1,743	23.6%	1,982,742	28.1%
<i>Householder not Living Alone</i>	46	4.9%	442	6.0%	434,731	6.2%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,374</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,056,860</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

**Figure 1: Household Composition in Watkins Glen (1990 & 2000)** indicates that the number of family households in Watkins Glen decreased from 61.6 percent in 1990 to 58.0 percent in 2000. The decline in family households can be attributed to the decrease in the number of married-couple households, which fell from 47 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 2000. The decline in family households resulting from the decrease in married-couple households was mitigated by an increase in the percentage of single householders from 15 percent in 1990 to 18 percent. The number of non-family households in Watkins Glen increased from 38.4 percent in 1990 to 42.0 percent in 2000 due to the rise in percentage of householders living alone and householders not living alone.

The average household size in Watkins Glen decreased nominally from 2.24 persons in 1990 to 2.23 persons in 2000.

**Figure 1: Household Composition in Watkins Glen (1990 & 2000)**



### Housing Resources

The availability, affordability, and condition of housing within a community are important factors that residents and employers consider when determining relocation. Homeownership is also directly linked to household spending on services and supplies for home improvements, home furnishings, and other home-related items. Therefore, housing resources contribute to the overall image and desirability of a community.

As of Census 2000, the Watkins Glen housing stock consisted of 1,035 total housing units. As shown in **Table 4: Housing Inventory (2000)**, occupied housing units comprised the majority (90.9%) of the housing stock. This figure was higher than Schuyler County (80.3%) but lower than the State (91.9%). Approximately 50.9 percent of occupied homes were owner-occupied while 40.1 percent were rented. It is important to note that Watkins Glen had a lower percentage of owner-occupied housing units than did the State (53%) and Schuyler County (61.9%).

Vacant housing units comprised 9.1 percent of the total housing stock in Watkins Glen. The majority of vacant homes were for rent (3.5%) or for sale only (1.1%). The percentage of vacant housing units for seasonal, recreation, or occasional purposes in Watkins Glen (1.8%) was significantly lower than for Schuyler County (13.7%) and New York State (37.8%). Housing for seasonal, recreation, or occasional purposes is defined by the Census as “vacant units used or intended for use only in certain seasons or for weekend or other occasional use throughout the year.”

**Table 4: Housing Inventory (2000)**

Characteristics	(V) Watkins Glen		Schuyler County		New York State	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Housing Units	<b>1,035</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9,181</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,679,307</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Occupied housing units	941	90.9%	7,374	80.3%	7,056,860	91.9%
Vacant housing Units	94	9.1%	1,807	19.7%	622,447	8.1%
<i>Seasonal, recreation, or occasional</i>	19	1.8%	1,254	13.7%	235,043	3.1%
Occupied housing units	<b>941</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,374</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,056,860</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Owner-occupied housing units	527	50.9%	5,685	61.9%	3,739,166	53.0%
Renter-occupied housing units	414	40.1%	1,689	18.4%	3,317,694	47.0%
Vacant housing units	<b>94</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,807</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>622,447</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
For rent	36	3.5%	157	1.7%	158,569	25.5%
For sale only	11	1.1%	133	1.4%	59,405	9.5%
Rented or sold, not occupied	10	1.0%	39	0.4%	40,439	6.5%
Migrant workers	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	750	0.1%
Seasonal, recreation, or occasional	19	1.8%	1,254	13.7%	235,043	37.8%
Other vacant	18	1.7%	224	2.4%	128,241	20.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in the Village of Watkins Glen was \$67,229 as of the 2000 Census. The value of the majority of owner-occupied housing units was between \$50,000 and \$99,000 (64.6%). Of renter occupied housing units, the median rent was \$385 per month.

The majority of Watkins Glen’s housing units were built in 1969 or earlier (85.3%). The median construction year of the Village’s housing units was 1940. Only 15 new housing units (1.4%) were built between 1999 and 2000. The highest percentage of Watkins Glen householders moved in from 1995 to 1998 (27.6%) followed by 1999 to 2000 (16.2%).

**Education**

In comparing the Village, County, and State, Watkins Glen has a low percentage of residents over the age of 25 who have pursued higher education. Only 26.8 percent of residents in the Village have an associate, bachelor, or graduate college degree. This percentage is relatively low in comparison to New York State (34.6%) but is consistent with Schuyler County (23.6%). The majority of Watkins Glen residents have a high school degree or less (52%). See **Table 5: Educational Attainment (2000)**.

**Table 5: Educational Attainment (2000)**

Attainment Level	(V) Watkins Glen	Schuyler County	New York State
Less than 9th grade	3.3%	4.9%	8.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	9.2%	12.7%	12.9%
High School graduate	39.5%	39.9%	27.8%
Some college, no degree	21.3%	19.0%	16.8%
Associate degree	7.3%	8.0%	7.2%
Bachelor's degree	9.8%	8.5%	15.6%
Graduate or professional degree	9.7%	7.1%	11.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000

**Income**

**Table 6: Household Income (2000)**, demonstrates that the median household income in Watkins Glen has been consistently lower than Schuyler County and New York State median household incomes. In 2000, the median household income in Watkins Glen was \$30,089, while Schuyler County’s was \$35,858 and New York State’s was \$43,582. The median household income in Watkins Glen is projected to reach \$41,676 by 2014.

According to the Census, approximately 43.8 percent of Watkins Glen households earn less than \$25,000 per year. There are a significantly higher percentage of households in this income bracket in Watkins Glen than in Schuyler County (32.2%) and New York State (29.6%).

**Table 6: Household Income (2000)**

Income in 1999	(V) Watkins Glen	% Total	Schuyler County % of Total	New York State % of Total
Less than \$25,000	291	43.8%	32.2%	29.6%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	311	31.5%	35.6%	26.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	152	15.4%	19.9%	18.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	47	4.8%	7%	10.6%
\$100,000 or more	45	4.5%	5.2%	15.3%
<b>Households</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median HH income - 1990</b>	\$23,065		\$25,712	\$32,965
<b>Median HH income - 2000</b>	\$30,089		\$35,858	\$43,582
<b>Median HH income - 2009</b>	\$39,117		\$43,709	\$58,747
<b>Median HH income - 2014</b>	\$41,676		\$44,713	\$62,337

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, & ESRI Business Analyst Online

## IV. Economic Development Analysis

---

### Highlights:

- *The Village's top three industrial sectors were educational-health-social services (22.6%), manufacturing (15.1%), and retail trade (12.7%) in 2000.*
- *Top Schuyler County employers include Schuyler Hospital, Wal-Mart, and Welliver McGuire, Inc.*
- *Five of the top-ten employers in Schuyler County are located in the Village of Watkins Glen, including Wal-Mart, Arc of Schuyler County, US Salt Company, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel, and Cargill, Inc.*
- *Approximately 67 percent of Village residents commuted less than 25 minutes to work.*
- *Village residents consistently spend less than the national average for all retail expenditures.*
- *The top three retail goods and services expenditures for Village residents are Health Care (79 SPI), Food at Home (73 SPI), and Investments (72 SPI).*
- *Village businesses that attract shoppers from outside of the Village include: motor vehicle and parts dealers; gas stations; clothing and accessories stores; sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; general merchandize stores; miscellaneous store retailers; and food services and drinking places. These businesses are supplying \$29,557,156 to the local economy, \$19,309,902 of which is from patrons outside of the Village of Watkins Glen.*
- *The business retailers not represented within the Village and the business retailers that are under-serving the Village total \$4,880,693 in potential income revenue. These businesses include: furniture and home furnishings stores; electronics and appliance stores; building materials, garden equipment, and supplies dealers; food and beverage stores; health and personal care stores; non-store retailers.*

### Employment Trends

---

This section summarizes a number of trends, including employment industries, occupational types, commuting patterns, businesses, and consumer spending habits. The following information is primarily culled from the 2000 U.S. Census and ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO).

#### **Employment by Industry Sector and Occupation Type**

According to the 2000 Census data, **Table 7** illustrates residents' employment by industry in the Village compared to Schuyler County and New York State. The Village's top three industrial sectors were educational-health-social services (22.6%); manufacturing (15.1%); and retail trade (12.7%). These were also the top three employment industries in Schuyler County, with 24.4%, 19.2%, and 11.1%, respectively.

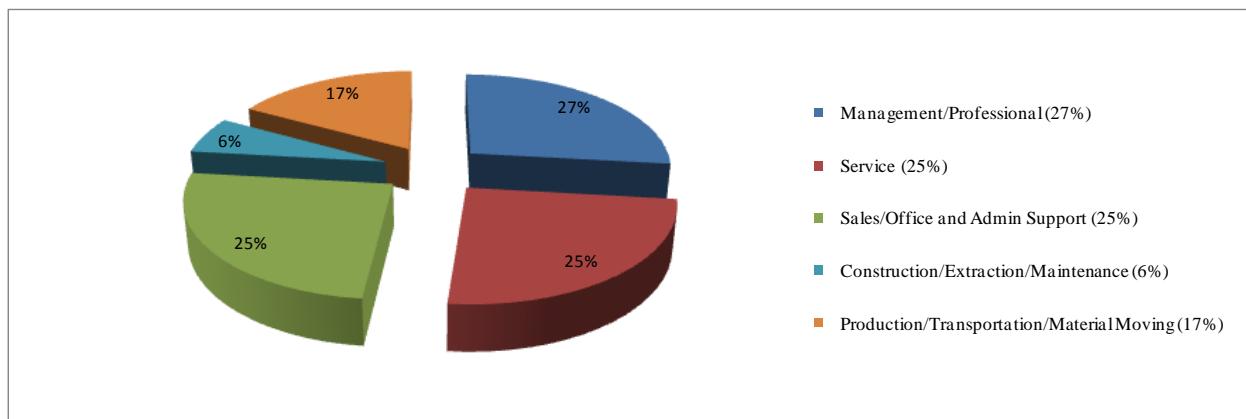
**Table 7: Residents Employment by Industry**

Classification	(V) Watkins Glen		Schuyler County	New York State
	Number	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0.0%	5.4%	0.6%
Construction	64	6.9%	6.5%	5.2%
Manufacturing	140	15.1%	19.2%	10.0%
Wholesale trade	15	1.6%	2.3%	3.4%
Retail trade	118	12.7%	11.1%	10.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	45	4.8%	4.3%	5.5%
Information	8	0.9%	1.0%	4.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	26	2.8%	2.4%	8.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative	58	6.2%	4.5%	10.1%
Educational, health and social services	210	22.6%	24.4%	24.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and food services	103	11.1%	7.1%	7.3%
Other services (except public administration)	70	7.5%	5.6%	5.1%
Public administration	73	7.8%	6.1%	5.2%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Summary File 1.

**Figure 2** shows a breakdown of Village resident occupations according to the major categories provided in the 2000 Census. The top occupational type was management/professional (27.0%), followed closely by sales/office and administrative support (25.0%), and the service industry (25.0%). The least represented occupations were farming/fishing/forestry, comprising zero percent of the Village’s workforce.

**Figure 2: Resident Occupation**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Summary File 1.

### Top Schuyler County Employers

The largest and most influential employer in Schuyler County is Schuyler Hospital with 450 employees. Located in Montour Falls, Schuyler Hospital is the parent corporation that oversees two Primary Care and Family Health Centers and three specialty offices, one of which is located in Watkins Glen. The County's second largest employer is Wal-Mart, employing 294 workers. The Wal-Mart Supercenter is located in the Village of Watkins Glen.

**Table 8** lists the top ten employers in Schuyler County. In addition to Wal-Mart, four other top ten employers are located in the Village of Watkins Glen. These businesses include the Arc of Schuyler County, US Salt Company, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel, and Cargill, Inc.

**Table 8: Schuyler County Top Ten Employers**

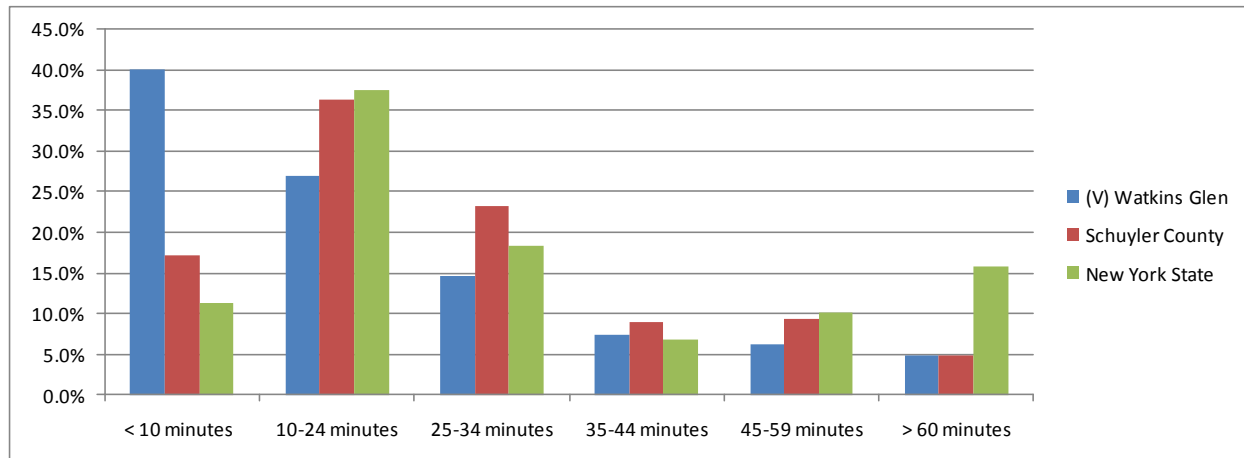
Employer	Employment Level
Schuyler Hospital	450
Wal-Mart	294
Welliver McGuire, Inc.	169
The Arc of Schuyler County	150
Camp Monterey	140
US Salt Company	130
Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel	121
Cargill, Inc.	98
Wagner Lumber	95
Parmenter	69

Source: Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (<http://www.stcplanning.org/usr/SchuylerProfile2009.pdf>)

### Commuting Patterns

When analyzing employment opportunities and trends of a community it is important to observe the commuting patterns of residents. In 2000, a large percentage (67.1%) of Village residents commuted less than 25 minutes to work in one direction.<sup>6</sup> This is most likely the result of the majority of top employers in Schuyler County being located in the Villages of Watkins Glen and Montour Falls. Residents many also commute to the nearby population centers of Ithaca, Corning, and Elmira, which are all located within 30 miles of the Village. This short commuting pattern is not common in New York State where approximately 16 percent of residents travel 60 or more minutes to work, as opposed to only 4.8 percent of Village residents. The combination of short commuting patterns and lack of long distance commuting patterns are positive attractions to potential residents, businesses, and employers. See **Figure 3: Commuting Patterns**.

<sup>6</sup> Residents who work from home were not included in this percentage.

**Figure 3: Commuting Patterns**

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Summary File 1.

## Tourism

The Village of Watkins Glen, and the Finger Lakes Region as a whole, is largely dependent on tourism. In 2005, the overall tourism expenditures in the region by visitors totaled \$2.2 billion.<sup>7</sup> The Finger Lakes are renowned for their scenic beauty, bountiful recreational amenities, and first-class dining and lodging establishments. The majority of tourists visit the Finger Lakes for leisure, with popular activities including shopping, wineries, sightseeing, and other outdoor activities. Major attractions include the Finger Lakes Wine and Cheese Trails, Corning Museum of Glass, and the State Parks. In recent years, agri-tourism and eco-tourism have also become a major tourism draw, with activities including farm tours and “pick-your-own” opportunities. Most visitors to the region arrive from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, and Canada and stay an average of three days in the area.<sup>8</sup>



### Village of Watkins Glen Attractions & Festivals

The Village of Watkins Glen has much to offer visitors to the area. The Seneca Lake Wine Trail, with over 30 wineries, is a major draw for the Village of Watkins Glen. Along the wine trail, two micro-breweries and a distillery have also emerged. The Seneca Lakefront in Watkins Glen provides many opportunities for visitors to take part in water-related activities, including sailing, kayaking, and dinner cruises on the Seneca Legacy. Rides aboard excursion and sightseeing vessels, such as the Stroller IV and the True Love, are also popular. Lakefront dining and lodging

<sup>7</sup> Randall Travel Marketing, *Comprehensive Tourism Research Update* for the Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance, 2007. Tax Revenue & Tax Relief Analysis conducted by Oxford Economics, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Randall Travel Marketing, *Comprehensive Tourism Research Update* for the Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance, 2007.

options are also available. One of the most recent additions to the lakefront is the 110-room Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel, which is utilized frequently for weddings and special events.

A couple blocks away from the waterfront is “downtown” Watkins Glen, comprised of North Franklin Street and its side streets. Throughout the downtown are shopping and dining establishments, as well as a number Bed and Breakfast’s. The restored 1920s Glen Theater is also located on North Franklin Street and shows a variety of first-run movies.

Continuing down North Franklin Street, visitors will find the entrance to Watkins Glen State Park. The park boasts 19 waterfalls, as well as hiking and biking trails, a swimming pool, and campsites. Other outdoor attractions in the Village include the Catharine Valley Trail and the Queen Catharine Marsh. The Catharine Valley Rail is a multi-use trail, which stretches from Watkins Glen to Horseheads and allows for hiking, cross-country skiing, and fishing. The Queen Catharine Marsh, a habitat for a variety of wildlife and plant species, was designated a NYS Bird Conservation Area in 2008 and provides a wonderful location for bird watching.



Adding to the charm of Watkins Glen is the Village’s rich road racing history. Over 60 years ago, road racing took place on a 6.6 mile course that wound through the Village of Watkins Glen. Today, that Village has retained its racing culture through Watkins Glen International and the International Motor Racing Research Center. Watkins Glen International hosts approximately 180 events per year, racing and non-racing. Major events include the NASCAR Sprint Cup, the Indy Racing League, and the Grand-AM. The venue

also hosts several luxury car shows. The track’s major events attract over 100,000 people while the smaller events attract 10,000 to 15,000 people.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to its numerous attractions, the Village of Watkins Glen also hosts a number of annual festivals, described below.

### ***Festivals***

- **Cardboard Boat Regatta:** The Cardboard Boat Regatta is held during the annual Waterfront Festival in June at Seneca Harbor Park. Regatta contestants craft their boats of recycled cardboard and race them in Seneca Harbor. There is also live music, a parade, vendors, and other activities.
- **Grand Prix Festival:** The Grand Prix Festival has been held annually each fall since 1993 on the historic road course in Watkins Glen. Five-hundred sports cars and classic cars participate in the 6.6 mile race. The event, which draws approximately 20,000 spectators, also features a fireworks show.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Watkins Glen International, Spring 2010.

- **Italian-American Festival:** The Italian-American Festival is an annual event, which is held in Clute Park each year. Activities include a pasta eating competition, parade, and fireworks. Festival-goers can purchase concessions or browse the goods of a variety of craft vendors. Admission to the festival is free.
- **Finger Lakes Wine Festival:** The Finger Lakes Wine Festival is held each summer at Watkins Glen International. Over 90 wineries participate along with local breweries and a variety of other vendors. Festival-goers can also enjoy music and culinary classes.

### ***Retail Sales and Consumer Spending***

---

Many communities across the country have researched consumer-spending patterns to understand local trends. In general, consumers prefer to shop for everyday items close to home. In contrast, consumers are willing to travel farther from home for larger ticket items and take longer day trips from home in search of specialty shopping experiences.

ESRI uses data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Consumer Expenditure Surveys to identify baseline-spending patterns or communities. Data is obtained from a Daily Survey for daily purchases and an Interview Survey for general purchases, which is integrated to provide a comprehensive database on all consumer expenditures.

The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount of money spent for a product or service relative to a National average of 100. However, if a community spends less on specific goods or services, it may reflect that residents obtain those goods at a cheaper cost, local interest is low for those goods, and/or there is less disposable income in the area.

### ***Spending Habits***

According to the SPI, for every \$1.00 spent nationally on retail goods and services, Village residents spend between \$0.48 and \$0.79. This means that for all the categories listed in the Village's expenditure ranking, there are no areas where Village residents spend equivalent to the national averages (100 SPI), and in fact, Village residents consistently spend less than the national average for all categories. As shown in **Table 9**, the top three retail goods and services expenditures for Village residents are Health Care (79 SPI), Food at Home (73 SPI), and Investments (72 SPI).

As described previously, low spending habits should not be viewed as negative, for example, Village residents have an SPI of 79 on Health Care and 68 on Shelter. Both of these categories are extremely expensive in most regions of the Country and the low cost of living in the Village should be viewed as an advantage to potential residents, employers, and businesses.

**Table 9: Retail Goods and Services Expenditures**

<b>Apparel &amp; Services: Total \$</b>		<b>\$1,103,885</b>
	National Average Spent	\$1,199.88
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Computers &amp; Accessories: Total \$</b>		<b>\$139,538</b>
	National Average Spent	\$131.67
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Education: Total \$</b>		<b>\$767,362</b>
	National Average Spent	\$834.09
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Entertainment/Recreation: Total \$</b>		<b>\$2,095,245</b>
	National Average Spent	\$2,277.44
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Food at Home: Total \$</b>		<b>\$3,053,050</b>
	National Average Spent	\$3,318.53
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Food Away from Home: Total \$</b>		<b>\$2,131,759</b>
	National Average Spent	\$2,317.13
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Health Care: Total \$</b>		<b>\$2,725,529</b>
	National Average Spent	\$2,962.53
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Household Furnishings: Total \$</b>		<b>\$1,169,426</b>
	National Average Spent	\$1,271.12
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Investments: Total \$</b>		<b>\$947,625</b>
	National Average Spent	\$1,030.03
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Retail Goods: Total \$</b>		<b>\$15,986,652</b>
	National Average Spent	\$17,376.80
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Shelter: Total \$</b>		<b>\$9,496,658</b>
	National Average Spent	\$17,376.80
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>TV/Video/Sound Equipment: Total \$</b>		<b>\$794,511</b>
	National Average Spent	\$863.60
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Travel: Total \$</b>		<b>\$1,129,948</b>
	National Average Spent	\$1,228.20
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Vehicle Maintenance &amp; Repairs: Total \$</b>		<b>\$610,995</b>
	National Average Spent	\$664.13
	<b>SPI</b>	<b>71</b>

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions (ESRI BIS). Expenditure Data area derived from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data was updated in 2009 based on Consumer Expenditure Surveys from 2005 and 2006.

When comparing the spending habits of the Village to the County and State, several patterns become evident. As shown in **Table 10**, in Schuyler County, the SPI for most categories was within 10 points of the SPI of the Village, revealing that residents of the Village and County share similar spending habits. In most categories, the SPI for the County was higher than the SPI of the Village except for Education (SPI 66) and Shelter (SPI 68). When compared to the State, which spends over the national average in all but one category, residents in this region do not spend as often or as much on all categories of goods.

**Table 10: Spending Index Comparison**

Category	(V) Watkins Glen	Schuyler County	New York State
	SPI	SPI	SPI
Apparel & Services	48	50	99
Computers & Accessories	66	71	111
Education	66	64	119
Entertainment/Recreation	70	79	107
Food at Home	73	78	115
Food Away from Home	70	74	114
Health Care	79	86	105
HH Furnishings & Equipment	58	64	100
Investments	72	85	112
Retail Goods	68	75	106
Shelter	68	66	118
TV/Video/Sound Equipment	71	75	112
Travel	67	71	110
Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs	71	78	107

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions (ESRI BIS). Expenditure Data area derived from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data was updated in 2009 based on Consumer Expenditure Surveys from 2005 and 2006

### ***Retail Sales Leakage & Market Capture***

Changes in retail sales are regarded as current indicators of broad consumer spending patterns. A retail sales report is a measure of the total receipts of retail stores, however, does not include spending on services, which makes up over half of total consumption. Also, when retail sales are used to determine consumer demand it is important to take in consideration the changes in prices for gas and food and adjust the results accordingly, considering that incomes do not change as quickly as these prices.

The following section highlights the retail areas where the Village should look to improve its market offerings. The discussion presented in the following pages also highlights the stable market sectors where the residents of the Village are currently spending their money.

Data was obtained from ESRI's estimates of sales (supply) which originate from the U.S. Census Bureau's Retail Trade Database. This is supplemented with a variety of demographic and business databases, including InfoUSA business database, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Current Population Survey, and NPA Data Services. Supply estimates also incorporate data from the Census Bureau's Nonemployer Statistics (NES) division. Consumer spending (demand) is estimated from the Bureau of Labor Statistic's annual Consumer Expenditure Surveys, which provides consumer-spending information on households.

In comparing the supply with demand, a "Surplus/Leakage Factor" is identified. This is the difference between what residents of the local area buy and what local area retailers sell. A "Leakage" takes place when the local residents are buying more than what is sold in the area, therefore, the residents must be traveling outside the area to shop. A "Surplus" is when residents are purchasing less than the amount actually being sold in the area. This indicates local retailers are attracting shoppers from outside the area to their stores.

### ***Retail Sales Analysis***

According to **Table 11** there are sixteen business categories in Village of Watkins Glen that are attracting shoppers from outside the Village, and are thus experiencing a "Surplus." These retail sectors are indicated by a negative percentage in the Leakage/Surplus column and are highlighted in the table. These businesses are supplying \$29,557,156 to the local economy, \$19,309,902 of which is from patrons outside of the Village of Watkins Glen. These retail sectors include:

#### **Retail Sectors Experiencing a Surplus**

- Automobile Dealers
- Other Motor Vehicle Dealers
- Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores
- Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores
- Gasoline Stations
- Clothing Stores
- Book, Periodical & Music Stores
- Department Stores, Excluding Leased Departments
- Other General Merchandise Stores
- Florists
- Used Merchandise Stores
- Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers
- Full Service Restaurants
- Limited-Service Eating Places

- Special Food Services
- Drinking Places – Alcoholic Beverages

There are a few businesses retailers that are not represented at all within the Village of Watkins Glen. These businesses represent a 100 percent leakage of local dollars outside of the area and are indicated by a positive 100 in the Leakage/Surplus column. For these retail categories, the Village is losing \$1,218,376 in potential revenue to other municipalities. These retail sectors include:

#### **Retail Sectors Experiencing a Leakage**

- Furniture Stores
- Home Furnishings Stores
- Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses
- Vending Machine Operators
- Direct Selling Establishments

Retailers that are located in the Village but fail to meet all of Village residents retail needs are indicated by a positive percentage in the Leakage/Surplus column. These categories supply \$2,340,186 to the local economy, but are losing \$3,662,317 in potential revenue to other municipalities. These retail sectors include:

#### **Retail Sectors Not Meeting All Village Needs**

- Electronics & Appliance Stores
- Building Material & Supplies Dealers
- Grocery Stores
- Specialty Food Stores
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores
- Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores

Taken together, the business retailers not represented within the Village and the businesses retailers that are under-serving the Village total \$4,880,693 in potential income revenue. While the Village may not wish to encourage every type of business listed in the **Table 11** to locate in the Target Area, these numbers can serve as a springboard for further discussion. This data will aid in the exploration of the feasibility of encouraging existing businesses to expand or pursuing additional businesses to locate within in the Target Area (See **Figure 4** for a Leakage/Surplus by Industry Group).

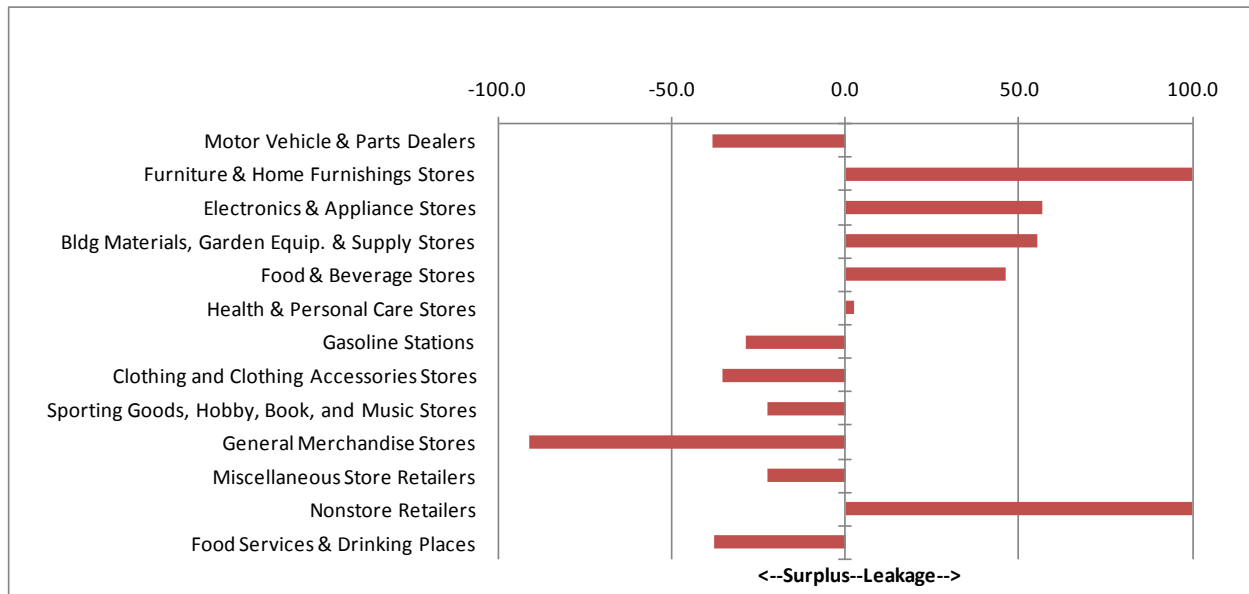
**Table 11: Retail Marketplace Profile**

Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Gap	Surplus/Leakage (%)	# of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$3,653,464	\$8,180,291	-\$4,526,827	-38.3	6
<i>Automobile Dealers</i>	\$3,074,524	\$7,208,856	-\$4,134,332	-40.2	4
<i>Other Motor Vehicle Dealers</i>	\$369,564	\$714,162	-\$344,598	-31.8	1
<i>Auto Parts, Accessories &amp; Tire Stores</i>	\$209,376	\$257,273	\$47,897	-10.3	1
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$482,088	\$0	\$482,088	100.0	0
<i>Furniture Stores</i>	\$306,699	\$0	\$306,699	100.0	0
<i>Home Furnishings Stores</i>	\$175,389	\$0	\$175,389	100.0	0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$607,271	\$168,285	\$438,986	56.6	3
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$743,931	\$213,417	\$530,514	55.4	1
<i>Building Material &amp; Dealers</i>	\$641,672	\$213,417	\$428,255	50.1	1
<i>Lawn and Garden Equip. Stores</i>	\$102,259	\$0	\$102,259	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	\$3,947,409	\$1,441,875	\$2,505,534	46.5	3
<i>Grocery Stores</i>	\$2,617,824	\$408,736	\$2,209,088	73.0	1
<i>Specialty Food Stores</i>	\$1,115,427	\$634,521	\$480,906	27.5	1
<i>Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores</i>	\$214,158	\$398,618	-\$184,460	-30.1	1
<i>Health &amp; Personal Care Stores</i>	\$599,914	\$570,316	\$29,598	2.5	2
Gasoline Stations	\$2,475,331	\$4,437,621	-\$1,962,290	-28.4	2
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	\$549,331	\$1,149,125	-\$599,794	-35.3	1
<i>Clothing Stores</i>	\$507,401	\$1,149,125	-\$641,724	-38.7	1
<i>Shoe Stores</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0	0
<i>Jewelry, Luggage &amp; Goods Store</i>	\$41,930	\$0	\$41,930	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	\$405,512	\$639,433	-\$233,921	-22.4	6
<i>Sporting Goods/Hobby Instrument Stores</i>	\$242,657	\$214,640	\$28,017	6.1	4
<i>Book, Periodical &amp; Music Stores</i>	\$162,855	\$424,793	-\$261,938	-44.6	2
General Merchandise Stores	\$410,721	\$8,771,909	-\$8,361,188	-91.1	2
<i>Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.</i>	\$410,721	\$7,982,543	-\$7,571,822	-90.2	1
<i>Other General Merchandise Stores</i>	\$0	\$789,366	-\$789,366	-100.0	1
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$455,916	\$720,723	-\$264,807	-22.5	11
<i>Florists</i>	\$47,244	\$83,249	-\$36,055	-27.6	3

Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Gap	Surplus/Leakage (%)	# of Businesses
<i>Office Supplies, Stationery, and Gift Stores</i>	\$177,738	\$130,271	\$47,467	15.4	2
<i>Used Merchandise Stores</i>	\$41,792	\$103,992	-\$62,200	-42.7	4
<i>Other Misc. Store Retailers</i>	\$189,142	\$403,211	-\$214,069	-36.1	2
Non-Store Retailers	\$592,099	\$0	\$592,099	100.0	0
<i>Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0	0
<i>Vending Machine Operators</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0	0
<i>Direct Selling Establishments</i>	\$592,099	\$0	\$592,099	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$2,545,146	\$5,604,347	-\$3,059,201	-37.5	17
<i>Full-Service Restaurants</i>	\$1,939,546	\$2,414,110	-\$474,564	-10.9	7
<i>Limited-Service Eating Places</i>	\$535,908	\$2,858,594	-\$2,322,686	-68.4	8
<i>Special Food Services</i>	\$57,465	\$195,326	-\$137,861	-54.5	1
<i>Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages</i>	\$12,227	\$136,317	-\$124,090	-83.5	1

Source: Business data provided by InfoUSA, Omaha, NE Copyright 2009. All rights reserved. 2009 ESRI Forecasts. It should be noted that ESRI Business Information Solutions uses data from InfoUSA, a data compiler for creation of this table. As InfoUSA uses a variety of data sources, including phonebooks, business directories, and other databases of public record, it may not include every establishment located within a community and it may not reflect recent changes in a business. In addition, reliance upon mailing addresses to identify business location may result in location misidentification.

**Figure 4: Retail Marketplace Profile**



## ***Lifestyle Segmentation Analysis***

---

Premised on the belief that the spending habits of lifestyle segments will remain consistent over time, Lifestyle Segmentation Analysis is used to predict future consumer behavior, preferences, and expenditure patterns. Developing a “geo-demographic cluster system,” is one method communities can use to identify current customer trends and behaviors.

Conducting such an analysis can allow a community to more effectively target economic development and community revitalization efforts, whether the intent is to attract local shoppers or potentially tourists. Geo-demographic cluster systems are based on the premise that households living in socially and economically similar areas share a number of similar views, attitudes, values, and, consequently, buying behaviors.

By identifying these clusters, a clearer understanding of an area’s common lifestyle preferences, and therefore prevailing market tendencies, can be gained. For businesses, potential new customers and markets can be identified, and for communities, potential retail market needs and viable commercial development opportunities can be revealed.

### ***Top Lifestyle Segments***

A Life Style Segmentation Analysis was conducted to gain a better understanding of Watkins Glen consumers and to determine the potential demand for particular products and activities within the Village. The geo-demographic cluster system used for this study was the Community Tapestry Segmentation, developed by ESRI Business Information Solutions, Inc. This system uses more than 60 attributes, including income, source of income, employment, home value, housing type, occupation, education, household composition, age, and other key determinants of consumer behavior to create 65 lifestyle segments.

According to the Community Tapestry Segmentation, the Village of Watkins Glen residents fall into the following two segments: Simple Living (46.7%), Rustbelt Retirees (35.0%), Rural Resort Dwellers (16.2%), and Rooted Rural (2.1%).

#### **Simple Living**

The largest lifestyle segment in the Village of Watkins Glen is Simple Living with nearly half of the Village’s residents (46.7%) falling into this category. The median age for this segment is 40.5 years, slightly older than the median age of Village residents (39.5). Approximately one-fifth of Simple Living Residents are 65 years or older and 12 percent are 75 years or older. Half of the householders are singles who live alone or share housing while 32 percent are married-couple families.

The median household income for this market segment is \$28,202 and nearly 40 percent of this group collects Social Security benefits. Most residents of this group who are employed work in health care, retail trade, manufacturing, educational services, and accommodations or food services sectors.

Simple Living neighborhoods are typically found in the suburbs or urban outskirts and nearly a quarter of the households do not own a car. Both young and old residents of these neighborhoods enjoy auto racing, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and team sports. Younger residents like dancing and nightclubs while seniors play chess and bingo, and pursue hobbies such as painting and refinishing furniture. Simple Living households spend wisely on a restricted budget. They purchase essentials at discount stores and occasionally treat themselves to dinner and a movie.

### **Rustbelt Retirees**

The population of Rustbelt Retirees mostly resides in the Northeast or Midwest, especially in Pennsylvania and areas around the Great Lakes. Although many householders are still working, labor force participation is below average. More than 40 percent of the households draw Social Security benefits. The neighborhoods are typical of the older, industrial areas—owner-occupied, single-family homes with a current market value of \$118,500. Unlike many retirees, those in the Rustbelt are not inclined to move. Leisure activities include bingo, gambling, going to horse races, working crossword puzzles, and playing golf.

### **Rural Resort Dwellers**

Rural Resort Dwellers tend to favor milder climates and rural, nonfarm areas. Communities attracting these residents consist largely of single-family and mobile homes, with a significant amount of seasonal housing. Households are typically composed of married couples with no children living at home or singles who live alone. The median age is 46 years. The median household income is \$45,600 and a higher-than-average proportion of residents work from home. Lawn maintenance and gardening are a priority for these households. Residents enjoy boating, hunting, fishing, snorkeling, canoeing, and listening to country music.

### **Rooted Rural**

This older, predominantly family, market is found in rural areas. The population is older, with a median age of 41. These residents are typically stable and settled and tend to move infrequently. Approximately one-third of the households draw from Social Security. Neighborhoods are mostly single-family homes, with some mobile homes and seasonal housing intermixed. Median home value is \$82,000. Members of the Rooted Rural population enjoy hunting, fishing, target shooting, boating, and country music.

---

## ***Regional & County Economic Development Resources***

---

The Village of Watkins Glen works closely with the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce, the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd), and the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA) to foster economic development in the Village.

### ***Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd)***

The Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPEd) assists business owners in identifying the financial and professional resources necessary for business creation and expansion within Schuyler County. Such resources include:

- Schuyler County Empire Zone
- Empire State Development Corporation (ESD)
- Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA)
- Regional Economic Development and Energy Corporation (REDEC)
- Relending Corporation (RRC)
- Workforce Development Training Grants

The organization also offers the SCOPEd Revolving Loan Fund for qualified business owners. The program provides loans up to \$20,000 at a fixed rate of 4 percent. The organization is governed by the SCOPEd Board, which is composed of an equal number of public and private sector members.

### ***Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA)***

The Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA) was established in 1971 to encourage economic development in Schuyler County. The agency helps businesses to relocate, expand, and develop by providing financial assistance to qualified applicants. Incentive programs offered through SCIDA include:

- SCIDA Revolving Loan Fund
- Real Property Tax Abatement
- Sales Tax Exemption
- Mortgage Recording Tax Exemption
- Taxable Exempt & Taxable Bond Financing

### ***Watkins Glen Chamber of Commerce***

The Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce was established over 100 years ago to encourage community development on behalf of business, industrial, professional, and civic interests. The Chamber is comprised of volunteers representing local businesses. The Chamber's mission is to initiate and provide networking and services, which will enhance its members' ability to successfully conduct their business. Further, the Chamber assists with sponsorships of events and programs throughout the Village to continually promote the area.

## V. Existing Conditions in Study Area

### Highlights:

- *Vacant land is the predominant land use within the Primary Study Area, covering 147.5 acres (44.2%) of all land.*
- *Within the Primary Study Area, the land adjacent to the lakefront is exclusively zoned as Lakefront Development (LD). Lakefront Development is intended for a mix of certain commercial, industrial, service, and/or residential uses, which are enhanced by or dependent on their location along the waterfront. Other major zoning districts in the Primary Study Area include Commercial Light Industrial (CL) and Conservation I (C-I).*
- *Over half of the privately owned land in the Primary Study Area is owned by Cargill, Incorporated (146 acres). In addition, there is a relatively high amount of publicly owned properties, particularly by the NYS Canal Corporation land. In some cases, NYS Canal Corporation-owned land blocks water access to private land owners along the canal.*
- *Public water is supplied to all residents of the Village of Watkins Glen via Seneca Lake.*
- *The majority of Watkins Glen is serviced by public sanitary sewers and only excludes the parcels on the northwest edge of the Lake and Village. Sanitary sewage is directed to the sewage treatment plant, located on the Seneca Lakefront, via pumps and/or gravity. The Village is seeking a grant to conduct a feasibility study to relocate the sewage treatment plant.*
- *In 2009, a \$349,000 Rail Line Relocation grant from the Federal Railroad Administration was approved to relocate the existing track and build turnarounds at each salt plant to improve rail service and safety.*

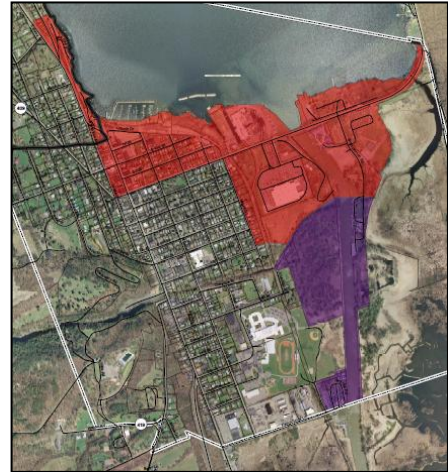


- *The Finger Lakes Railway Corporation owns and operates the rail line located along the Seneca Lakefront, and serves as an important freight line for Watkins Glen’s salt mining plants as well as limited passenger rail excursion trips.*
- *Seneca Lake is the largest of the Finger Lakes and is also one of the deepest lakes in North America. The Seneca Canal extends from the southern end of Seneca Lake connecting the lake to the New York State Erie Barge Canal System.*
- *The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated floodplains along the immediate shorelines of Seneca Lake and the Seneca Canal. A floodplain also covers the majority of the land that comprises Clute Park.*
- *Although the Queen Catharine Marsh is not included in either the Primary or Secondary Study Areas, careful evaluation should be given to any development proposal that may infringe upon this 1,000 acre wetland area due to its status as a NYS Bird Conservation Area and its pending designation as a Critical Environmental Area.*
- *Seneca Lake and Catharine Creek support a diverse population of warm and cold-water fish species. Cold-water species include lake trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, landlocked salmon, and rainbow smelt. Catharine Creek is also considered to be the lake’s most important tributary for rainbow trout spawning.*
- *Within the Study Area, the Seneca Lake waterfront is generally flat with a base elevation at the shoreline of 440 feet above sea level. Along the western edge of the lake, the elevation increases to 700 feet and exposed rock on the slopes come within 50 to 100 feet of the lakeshore.*
- *Watkins Glen has four (4) major parks located within the Village’s boundaries. Of these parks, Seneca Harbor Park and Clute Memorial Park are located within the Primary Study Area.*
- *The Catharine Valley Trail is a multi-use trail which stretches from Watkins Glen, through the Queen Catharine Marsh to Horseheads; permitted recreational uses of the marsh include hiking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, and fishing.*



## Study Area Boundary

As stated previously, the Lakefront Study Area is divided into two main areas of interest; the Primary Study Area and the Secondary Study Area. The Primary Study Area includes the majority of the Seneca Lakefront within the Village of Watkins Glen. The northern boundary extends from Magee Point Landing, along the Seneca Lakefront, to Tank Beach. The western and eastern boundaries are Madison Avenue and Clute Park/Tank Beach, respectively. The southern boundary begins at Fourth Street, extends south on Magee Street to include Wal-Mart and Clute Park. The Secondary Study Area encompasses the southern portion of the Seneca Canal and includes the Watkins Glen Yacht Club and Ervay's Marina.



## Existing Land Use



A land use analysis was developed to compare the Village of Watkins Glen and the Primary and Secondary Study Areas. Using Geographic Information System (GIS) data provided by the Schuyler County Department of Planning and Community Development at Cornell Cooperative Extension, the analysis assigned a land use category based upon the New York State Real Property Type Classification Codes. The local tax assessor uses these codes to complete real property tax assessment for the Village. The following ten (10) categories classify the land uses in the Village of Watkins Glen and are illustrated on **Map 3: Existing Land Use**:

- **Single-Family Residential:** Property used for one-family, year round and seasonal residences, including apartments.
- **Multi-Family Residential:** Property used for two or more residences.
- **Mixed-Use:** Downtown buildings with ground level commercial uses and upper floor residential/ office uses.
- **Vacant Land:** Property that is not in use, in temporary use, or is lacking any permanent improvements.
- **Commercial:** Property used for hotels, restaurants, automobile services, storage, retail, banks, offices, funeral homes, etc.
- **Recreation & Entertainment:** Property used for parks, theaters, racetracks, bowling centers, health spas, beaches, campgrounds, etc.

- **Community Services:** Property used for schools, libraries, places of worship, cultural facilities, welfare services, hospitals, clinics, government, police, armed forces, correctional facilities, shelters, cemeteries, etc.
- **Industrial:** Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and non-durable goods, mining, quarrying, etc.
- **Public Services:** Property used for electric or gas power generation or transmission, public drinking water and water treatment facilities, communications, train, plane and bus terminals, canals, waste disposals, etc.
- **Public Parks & Recreation:** Includes State, Federal and privately owned forestlands, reforested lands, and preserves; County and State public parkland; and private hunting and fishing clubs.

**Table 12: Existing Village of Watkins Glen Land Use** summarizes the existing land uses present on the Village’s 1,100 parcels. With large portions of the Village, including sizeable parcels along Seneca Lake and the Seneca Canal, comprised of Vacant land, it is not surprising that these parcels total 227.2 acres (25%) of current land use. The second largest land use is Public Parks and Recreation, which totals 196 acres (21.6%) of the Village’s land area. Single Family Residential comprises the third largest land use, covering almost 18 percent of the Village’s total acreage.

**Table 12: Existing Village of Watkins Glen Land Use**

Land Use Category	Land Area (Acres)	% of Total Acres	# of Parcels	% of Total Parcels
Single-Family Residential	164.8	18.1%	591	53.7%
Multi-Family Residential	44.1	4.9%	105	9.5%
Mixed Use	6.1	0.7%	52	4.7%
Vacant	227.2	25.0%	159	14.5%
Commercial	57.5	6.3%	104	9.5%
Recreation & Entertainment	30.7	3.4%	14	1.3%
Community Services	98.1	10.8%	41	3.7%
Industrial	21.2	2.3%	3	0.3%
Public Services	61.3	6.7%	12	1.1%
Public Parks & Recreation	196.0	21.6%	11	1.0%
Other Values	2.0	0.2%	8	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Laberge Group, 2010

**Map 3: Existing Land Use**

As illustrated in **Table 13: Existing Land Use in Study Area**, The predominant land use in the Primary Study Area is Public Services, with a total coverage of 57.9 acres, or approximately 24 percent of total land use. Vacant land is the second largest land use within the Primary Study Area, covering 57.1 acres (23.5%) of all land. Vacant parcels within the Primary Study Area are predominantly located between Cargill Salt and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Public Parks and Recreation is the third largest land use, totaling approximately 12.8 percent of the Primary Study Area.



Within the Secondary Study Area, the predominant land uses are Public Parks and Recreation (41.8%) and Vacant (26.1%). Vacant parcels within the Secondary Study Area are located along the Seneca Canal, southeast of Wal-Mart.

**Table 13: Existing Land Use in Study Area**

Land Use Category	Land Area (Acres)	% of Total Acres	# of Parcels	% of Total Parcels
<b>Primary Study Area</b>				
Single-Family Residential	14.6	6.0%	59	28.4%
Multi-Family Residential	3.2	1.3%	19	9.1%
Mixed Use	3.0	1.2%	32	15.4%
Vacant	57.1	23.5%	39	18.8%
Commercial	27.9	11.5%	31	14.9%
Recreation & Entertainment	24.7	10.2%	10	4.8%
Community Services	6.4	2.6%	7	3.4%
Industrial	16.0	6.6%	1	0.5%
Public Services	57.9	23.8%	4	1.9%
Public Parks & Recreation	31.0	12.8%	4	1.9%
Other Values	1.3	0.5%	2	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>243.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Secondary Study Area</b>				
Single-Family Residential	1.0	0.4%	1	5.3%
Multi-Family Residential	1.1	0.5%	1	5.3%
Vacant	62.3	26.1%	11	63.2%
Recreation & Entertainment	21.9	9.2%	4	21.1%
Public Services	52.5	22.0%	1	5.3%
Public Parks & Recreation	99.8	41.8%	1	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>238.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Laberge Group, 2010

---

## **Zoning Districts**

---

The Village of Watkins Glen has taken great strides over the past decades to revise its local zoning law in order to promote waterfront development. In 1994, the lands along the western bank of Seneca Canal, south of NYS Route 414, were rezoned from Industrial to Canal District in order to encourage mixed-use development along the canal. The Canal District provides opportunities for retail services to accompany marina and boat related services. In addition, the western waterfront was rezoned as Lakefront Development to encourage more flexibility in development opportunities. The zoning ordinance was most recently revised in 2004.

As showing in **Map 4: Zoning**, within the Primary Study Area, the land adjacent to the lakefront is exclusively zoned as Lakefront Development (LD). The group of parcels east of NYS Route 14 and north of East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street are also zoned as Lakefront Development, fostering the important linkage between the lakefront and downtown. Lakefront Development is intended for a mix of certain commercial, industrial, service, and/or residential uses, which are enhanced by or dependent on their location along the waterfront.

Other major zoning districts in the Primary Study Area include Commercial Light Industrial (CL) and Conservation I (C-I). The area within the Primary Study Area zoned Commercial Light Industrial includes Wal-Mart and its surrounding parcels. This zoning district encourages primarily business and industrial uses. The land zoned Conservation I within the Study Area encompasses the parcels along the eastern edge of the Seneca Canal, south of NYS Route 414 and north of the Watkins Glen Yacht Club. The Conservation I zoning district encourages tourism-related uses.

Additional zoning districts within the Primary Study Area include Central Business (CB), Business Transition I (BT-I), and Canal District (CD). Central Business allows for commercial uses and includes the portion of the Study Area along North Franklin Street. Business Transition II (BT-II) allows for residential and commercial uses and is primarily located between East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and NYS Route 414. The Canal District is intended for residential, commercial, and tourism related uses enhanced by or dependent on waterfront location. Within the Primary Study Area, these parcels are located on the western bank of the Seneca Canal, east of Wal-Mart.

The Secondary Study Area is zoned Canal District west of the Seneca Canal and Conservation I east of the Seneca Canal.

**Map 4: Zoning**

**Land Ownership**

As illustrated by **Table 14: Village of Watkins Glen Land Ownership** and **Table 15: Village of Watkins Glen Publicly Owned Land**, over 61 percent of all land in the Village of Watkins Glen is owned by a private entity, while approximately 38 percent is owned by a local, county, state, or federal public agency (**Map 5: Village Land Ownership**). Quasi-public land, which includes those parcels owned and operated by utility and infrastructure related organizations, were also analyzed. The New York Electric and Gas Corporation owns approximately 0.8 acres within the Village. In general, New York State owns the greatest percentage (69.3%) of the publicly owned properties within the Village’s boundaries due to Watkins Glen State Park and NYS Canal Corporation-owned lands. The Watkins Glen Central School District owns the second largest amount of public land (17.1%), followed by the Village of Watkins Glen (7.9%). Cargill Incorporated owns approximately 30 percent of all privately owned land located within the Village.



**Table 14: Village of Watkins Glen Land Ownership**

Ownership Category	Land (Acres)	% of Total Acres	# of Parcels
Public	345.1	38.0%	80
Quasi-Public	0.8	0.1%	3
Private	562.4	61.9%	1015
Unknown	0.7	0.1%	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1100</b>

Source: Laberge Group, 2010

**Table 15: Village of Watkins Glen Publicly Owned Land**

Public Agency	Land (Acres)	% of Total Acres	# of Parcels
Village of Watkins Glen	27.2	7.9%	21
Schuyler County	16.4	4.8%	11
WG Central School District	59.0	17.1%	9
NYS	239.0	69.3%	30
Other	3.64	1.1%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>345.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>80</b>

Source: Laberge Group, 2010

The majority of the Primary Study Area is privately owned in addition to a relatively high amount of publicly owned properties. The publicly owned land in the Primary Study Area is largely owned by New York State (56 acres) and the Village of Watkins Glen (23 acres). Much of the State-owned land in the Primary Study Area is NYS Canal Corporation land. In some cases, NYS Canal Corporation-owned land blocks water access to private land owners along the canal. These private ‘Upland Owners’ have the right to apply for a permit for low-impact use of this land.<sup>10</sup> A large portion of the privately owned land in the Primary Study Area is owned by Cargill, Incorporated (20.5 acres).



Land ownership in the Secondary Study Area is primary public (72.8%). The publicly owned land in the Secondary Study Area consists of only six large parcels, predominantly owned by New York State (153 acres) and Watkins Glen Central School District (17 acres). Similar to the Primary Study Area, a large amount of privately owned land in the Secondary Study Area is owned by Cargill, Incorporated (35.9 acres). Please refer to **Table 16: Study Area Land Ownership** and **Map 6: Study Area Land Ownership** for a complete breakdown of public and private land ownership within the Primary and Secondary Study Areas.

**Table 16: Study Area Land Ownership**

Land Owner	Land (Acres)	% of Total Acres	# of Parcels
<b>Primary Study Area</b>			
Public	85.8	35.3%	32
Private	157.3	64.7%	176
<b>Total</b>	<b>243.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>Secondary Study Area</b>			
Public	173.9	72.8%	6
Private	65	27.2%	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>238.9</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>

Source: Laberge Group, 2010

<sup>10</sup> Interview with New York State Canal Corporation (March, 2010).

**Map 5: Village Land Ownership**

**Map 6: Study Area Land Ownership**

## Infrastructure

### Public Water Supply

Public water is supplied to residents of the Village of Watkins Glen via Seneca Lake. The water is pumped from a facility near the lakeshore and is then filtered, chlorinated, and pumped to three standpipes located on the Village hillsides. From the standpipes, the water is distributed to Village residents. According to the LWRP, the water system was upgraded in 1995 after the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) mandated the installation of a water filtration system and an upgrade of the distribution system.<sup>11</sup>

### Public Sewer Disposal

According to the LWRP, the public sanitary sewage disposal system in the Village of Watkins Glen is in good condition and is currently operating at 60 percent of capacity. Sanitary sewage is directed to the sewage treatment plant, located on the Seneca Lakefront, via pumps and/or gravity. The permitted capacity of the treatment plant is 0.7 MGD. Projected future wastewater amounts could potentially cause the plant to operate at full capacity. At the time of the LWRP (2008), the Village was actively addressing stormwater infiltration issues in the sanitary collection system.<sup>12</sup>

### Rail

The Finger Lakes Railway Corporation owns and operates the rail line located along the Seneca Lakefront. The Finger Lakes Railway, along with Norfolk Southern Railway, serves as an important freight line for the salt mining plants, U.S. Salt and Cargill Salt, located within the Village of Watkins Glen. In 2009, a \$349,000 Rail Line Relocation grant from the Federal Railroad Administration was approved to relocate the existing track and build turnarounds at each salt plant to improve rail service and safety. While this grant will serve the needs of U.S. Salt and Cargill Salt, the improved rail line will also be crucial to the success of Magee Point Landing.<sup>13</sup>



In 2000, Finger Lakes Rail expanded from freight to passenger rail by offering excursion trips. Excursion trains to Watkins Glen run on the railroad tracks extending from Himrod to Watkins

<sup>11</sup> *Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)*. (Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schuyler County: December 2008).

<sup>12</sup> *Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)*. (Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schuyler County: December 2008).

<sup>13</sup> O'Hearn, Timothy. *County Administrator's Corner: August '09*. *The Odessa File*, www.odessafile.com, Accessed 6/7/2010.

Glen. Excursion trips operate from April through December on weekends and some weekdays. An 8 mile-per-hour speed limit is set on this track due to track condition.

## ***Natural Resources & Environmental Features***

### ***Water Resources***

Watkins Glen's most vital water resource is Seneca Lake. The largest of the Finger Lakes, the lake is 38 miles long and one-to-three miles wide, depending on location. Seneca Lake is also one of the deepest lakes in North America, reaching depths of 640 feet. The extreme depth of the lake prevents water temperatures from falling below 50 degrees. The Seneca Canal extends from the southern end of Seneca Lake connecting the lake to the New York State Barge Canal System, which is maintained by the New York State Canal Corporation. Catharine Creek and Glen Creek also flow through the Village's waterfront area.



According to the LWRP, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has given an "AA" rating to Seneca Lake waters within Schuyler County, which means that the lake can best be used as a source for drinking water, culinary or food processing purposes, recreation, and fishing. The rating also means that the water is suitable for fish, shellfish, and wildlife propagation and survival. However, the water conditions are threatened due to elevated sodium levels in the water and, to a lesser extent, sediment, and pesticides.

These water conditions could limit the water's use for water supply and fish propagation. DEC identified silviculture, road bank erosion, agriculture, and stream bank erosion as the main sources of sediment and saline groundwater seepage exacerbated by deep well disposal of brine from industrial salt processing as the cause of high sodium levels. Future development may also affect water quality, therefore stormwater management practices should be an integral part of all new development.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Flood Plains & Wetlands***

Environmentally sensitive features within or in close proximity to the Study Area could pose constraints to development due to federal, state, and local regulations (**Map 7: Natural Resources - Water Features**). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated floodplains along the immediate shorelines of Seneca Lake and the Seneca Canal. A floodplain also covers the majority of the land that comprises Clute Park.

<sup>14</sup> *Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)*

**Map 7: Natural Resources – Water Features**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) owns and regulates the Queen Catharine Marsh, which is a Class I wetland consisting of nearly 1,000 acres. The marsh is not included in either the Primary or Secondary Study Areas, but is located within the Village boundary, east of the Seneca Canal. The marsh was designated as a New York State Bird Conservation Area (BCA) in 2008 and is in the process of being designated as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA). Because wetlands provide a natural habitat for a variety of wildlife and plant species as well as act as a natural water retention area, careful evaluation should be given to any development proposal that may infringe upon a wetland area.<sup>15</sup>

### **Topography**

The unusual topography of Seneca Lake and its surrounding areas can be attributed to glacial activity that occurred during the Ice Age. The glaciers carved vast ravines, which formed the uncharacteristically deep lake as well as the gorges and glens on its hillsides. Seneca Lake reaches depths of 640 feet in some areas. Within the Study Area, the Seneca Lake waterfront is generally flat. The base elevation at the shoreline is 440 feet above sea level. Along the western edge of the lake, the elevation increases to 700 feet and exposed rock on the slopes come within 50 to 100 feet of the lakeshore. The topography of the Primary and Secondary Study Areas and implications for development are dictated by the soil types described in the following section.

### **Soils**

The Village of Watkins Glen contains a variety of soil types with varying properties and characteristics. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, soil constraints are typically reflected by depth to bedrock and depth to the water table. Depth to bedrock is the distance from the surface of the soil to the upper surface of the rock layer. Depth of the seasonal high water table is the distance from the surface of the soil to the highest level that ground water or perched water reaches in the soil in most years. Studying soil types allows municipalities to understand how the land is best used, and how the land will drain when disturbed by impervious surfaces. Below is a summary of the six most frequent soils types found in the Primary and Secondary Study Areas based upon the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service's *Soil Survey of Schuyler County, New York*.<sup>16</sup>

- **Chenango Gravely Silt Loam (CnA):** These soils consist of deep, well drained to somewhat excessively drained soils, and are nearly level. In the Town of Dix, Chenango gravelly silt loam has 0 to 3 percent slopes. The water table in this soil is generally at a depth of more than 6 feet. This soil has potential for agricultural uses, but is also suitable for non-farm uses. However, gravel on the surface is a concern for some uses.

---

<sup>15</sup> *Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)*

<sup>16</sup> *Soil Survey of Schuyler County, New York*. United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in Cooperation with the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station. 1979.

- **Lordstown-Arnot Steep (LTE):** These soils consist of well drained, gently sloping to very steep soils on uplands. Lordstown Series soils tend to be moderately deep while Arnot Series soils tend to be shallow. These soils limit non-farm uses due to steep slope (25 to 35%) and shallow-to-moderate depth (20 to 40 inches) to bedrock. Farm uses are also limited.
- **Teel Silt Loam (Te):** These soils consist of deep, moderately well drained to somewhat poorly drained soils. Slopes of these soils can range from 0 to 3 percent, but are typically nearly level. These soils are found on flood plains, and as a result, have a seasonal high water table in the spring and other wet periods. This soils has potential for farming, however, nonfarm uses are limited due to the seasonal high water table and periodic flooding.
- **Udorthents Smoothed (UD):** These soils occur in areas near urban development that have been altered by grading operations for housing developments, industrial sites, and other non-farm uses. Some areas are filled with soil and rock materials trucked in from other sites following the excavation of soil for final grading and topdressing. These areas have little potential for farming and require investigation to determine the feasibility of other uses.
- **Wallkill Silt Loam (Wk):** These soils consist of deep, very poorly drained, nearly level soils on flood plains. Slope ranges from 0 to 3 percent, but is mostly less than 2 percent. These soils were formed in alluvium overlying organic material at a depth of 16 to 40 inches. The water table in this soil is at or near the surface much of the year, and is controlled by adjacent streams and Seneca Lake. For this reason, the soil is prone to periodic flooding. The soil has poor potential for farming and is better suited for wetland wildlife habitat and natural open areas. Nonfarm uses are limited by prolonged wetness and frequent flooding. The organic layer is also a limitation for roads. When dry, the soil could be used as a source of topsoil.
- **Wayland Silt Loam (Wy):** These soils consist of deep, poorly drained, and very poorly drained soils on flood plains. Slopes range from 0 to 3 percent, but are mostly less than 2 percent. These soils have water table at or near the surface for prolonged periods during the year and is subject to frequent flooding. The soil has poor potential for farming and is better suited for wildlife habitat and natural open areas. Nonfarm uses are limited by prolonged wetness and frequent flooding.

The most common soil types found within the Primary Study Area are Udorthents Smoothed (UD) and Teel Silt Loam (Te). Udorthents Smoothed soils are prevalent in the area that comprises Tank Beach, Clute Park, and the marinas to the east of Seneca Canal. Teel Silt Loam soils can be found immediately along the lakefront and the mouth of the Seneca Canal.

Soils prevalent in the Secondary Study Area include Wallkill silt loam, Wayland silt loam, and Udorthents. **Map 8: Natural Resources – Soils** shows all of the different soil types located in the Village of Watkins Glen and the Primary and Secondary Study Areas.

**Map 8: Natural Resources – Soil**

**Fish & Wildlife Habitats**

Seneca Lake and Catharine Creek support a diverse population of warm and cold-water fish species. Cold-water species include lake trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, landlocked salmon, and rainbow smelt. Catharine Creek is also considered to be the lake’s most important tributary for rainbow trout spawning. As a result, the canalized area of Catharine Creek may serve as a short-term nursery for rainbow trout and as a spawning, nursery, and adult habitat for other warm water species.<sup>17</sup>

**Parks and Open Space**

The Village currently has four (4) major parks located within its boundaries. These parks include Clute Memorial Park, Lafayette Park, Seneca Harbor Park, and Watkins Glen State Park. Of these parks, Seneca Harbor Park and Clute Memorial Park are located within the Primary Study Area. Seneca Harbor Park is located on Seneca Lake in the western portion of the Study Area. The park is County owned and offers public restrooms and a public pier and breakwater accessible to fishermen. Clute Memorial Park is located on the eastern edge



of the Study Area and is divided into northern and southern sections by NYS Route 414. The park’s northern portion offers swimming, playground equipment, a skate park, and picnic area complete with pavilions and bathhouse facilities. The southern portion offers a campground, athletic fields, tennis courts, community center, and a public boat launch. Clute Memorial Park is village-operated, however, the southern portion of the park is owned by Cargill Incorporated.



The boat launch located in Clute Memorial Park is the only public boat access in the Village and is owned by New York State. Five private marina facilities currently provide access to Seneca Lake and the Seneca Canal. Village Marina, Ervay’s Marina, and the Watkins Glen Yacht Club operate along the Seneca Canal. Glen Harbor Marina and Seneca Harbor Marina operate on the Seneca Lakefront. According to the LWRP, all marinas have a waiting list for seasonal slip rentals.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)

<sup>18</sup> Village of Watkins Glen Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)

Although Watkins Glen State Park and Lafayette Park are not located in the Study Area, efforts should be made to connect these important resources to the waterfront. Watkins Glen State Park attracts thousands of visitors each year due to its spectacular 19 waterfalls and natural gorges. Amenities include hiking and cross-country skiing trails, 305 campsites, picnic areas, playgrounds, playing fields, and a pool. A complete network of sidewalks exists on the 0.6 mile stretch between the North Franklin Street entrance to the State Park and the waterfront, however, there is limited signage provided to direct visitors to the business district and Seneca Lake.

Lafayette Park is located in the Village of Watkins Glen on the 200 Block of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, between Decatur and Porter Streets. The Watkins Glen Farmers Market has been held at this location since 2005. The park offers a pavilion and is located 0.2 miles from the Seneca Lakefront.

### **Trails**

---

The Catharine Valley Trail, which stretches from Watkins Glen to Horseheads, is a multi-use trail providing additional recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. The trail traverses the New York State owned Queen Catharine Marsh, which features a diversity of flora and fauna. Permitted recreational uses of the marsh include hiking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, and fishing. The trail redirects onto Decatur Street after the Watkins Glen Central High School. To accommodate bikers, on-street parking is only permitted on one side of Decatur Street. This on-street section of the trail requires additional signage in this section to better direct users.



The Friends of Catharine Valley Trail was established 4 to 5 years ago to provide stewardship and to encourage use of the trail. Sponsored events include, but are not limited to, nature walks and a half marathon. The events are permitted through the State. Parking for events is available at the Watkins Glen Central High School; however, parking is also available at the trailheads.

## VI. Lakefront Management Plan

---

### Highlights:

- *Watkins Glen needs to be sensitive to environmental issues, including dredging the canal, protecting the marsh and birding areas as well as planning for the impacts of the salt factories and sewer treatment facilities with a 20 year horizon.*
- *Successful downtown waterfronts typically build on their historic and cultural assets; Watkins Glen should explore building on its brand to capture other activities not only at the track but on the water.*
- *Harbors should be integrated inland as extensively as possible; significant planning and design work is required to integrate the harbor with Watkins Glen's downtown.*
- *Harbors must plan for a 16-hour day and should be oriented to an active life style.*
- *Waterfronts must be planned for multi-use activities.*
- *Tourism can provide a significant economic boost to older waterfront areas; linkages between the waterfront, guided tours to wineries and wine tasting opportunities, festivals, parades, fishing derbies, antique markets, gourmet food options, trails and treks, and bike paths are all activities that would need coordination and promotion to attract more tourists to Watkins Glen.*
- *The recreation potential of harbors has dramatic potential in the coming decade; the harbor presents a great opportunity for increased recreational activity and Watkins Glen must look at these activities with a regional focus to encourage families to stay longer.*
- *Careful zoning, historic preservation, and architectural and site planning regulations can add great value to downtown waterfronts; water dependent or water related activities should be allowed and encouraged. It is important that Watkins Glen carefully articulates its long term vision in a manner that can be translated into the rules, regulations and guiding principles that will enhance this special place for decades to come.*
- *A physical, social, and psychological connectedness must be nurtured or developed between downtown and the waterfront; Watkins Glen will have to work extensively with state, regional, and local transportation facilities to ensure that its road system does not become a barrier.*
- *Downtown waterfronts benefit significantly from open spaces such as parks, plazas, and trails. The Waterfront Park is a great asset that can be expanded and enhanced to enable the rich, built environment of Watkins Glen to stand out.*
- *Harbors must be comprehensively linked to key transportations systems and adopt traffic management polices.*
- *Make the waterfront an essential part of the downtown; Watkins Glen is starting from strength, has done an enormous amount of work, and is well poised to reach greater potential.*
- *The optimal management of the waterfront reflects the proverbial three-legged stool. The first leg is the municipality which visions through its adopted long-range harbor plan, enforces its*

*comprehensive zoning regulations, and actively pursues grants for waterfront improvements. The second leg is a Business/Waterfront Improvements District (B/WID) that would include all properties along the waterfront area including some inland areas that depend on waterfront uses. The third leg of the stool is a harbor management position in local government that is trained and understands the need to protect, administer, promote, and stimulate growth in the harbor district.*

### ***Waterfront Planning as a Strategy for Community Enhancement and Livability***

Historically, waterfronts have provided a working gateway into many American communities. For those lucky enough to be situated along rivers, lakes, and national harbors, small towns and villages with waterfronts were easily accessed by explorers, travelers, and eventually industry. The working waterfront of past years was the heart of the industrial and fishing communities in a small town. As a result, the commercial centers of these towns developed next to the waterfronts as well. Today, the downtown areas in small towns typically can be found within a few blocks of the waterfront.



**Watkins Glen, New York.**

Source: <http://www.watkinsglenyachtclub.com>

This *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* helps to see the Watkins Glen waterfront in the context of trends in waterfront development, best practices used in similar communities, redevelopment possibilities and management for implementation. This section discusses the critical factors facing smaller communities in their efforts to revitalize their downtown waterfronts and nearby shopping districts. It is primarily based upon research and practical waterfront planning projects in New England, Michigan, the Canadian Maritimes, Upstate New York, Northern Ireland, Germany and Portugal. These experiences have been in ports as large as Boston, to smaller harbors such as Westport, Gloucester and New Bedford (Massachusetts) to tiny waterfronts such as Menemsha (Martha's Vineyard) and Stonington (Connecticut). They have also involved industrial ports (Bridgeport, Connecticut), recreational ports (Nantucket), river ports (Port Chester, New York) and regional plans for waterfronts (Narragansett West Bay, Rhode Island). The Plan is presented in two sections. The first addresses some basic principles of Lakefront or Harbor development and management, how similar smaller communities have worked to revitalize their downtown waterfronts and how they might impact Watkins Glen. The second addresses a management structure to implement the planning principles in Watkins Glen.

## ***Key Principles in Waterfront Planning and Management***

- 1. Environmental policies and technological changes typically have transformative impacts on working waterfronts: These policies and changes will have an impact on the economic health of downtown waterfronts.**

One must respect the environmental movement along with its stringent regulations. We expect if environmental issues are handled in a “state-of-the-art” fashion, there will be reinvestment in the downtown. While more and more harbors are becoming more cognizant of environmental issues, there is still extensive work that is required. Moreover, great care must be taken to insure that sewer and/or combined sewer/storm water outflows are treated. Too frequently we have observed conditions where the lack of treatment has created less than optimally treated conditions. The environmental movement has also raised the consciousness of the public concerning the dredging of harbors. On one side, the depth of a harbor substantially dictates the size and type of vessel that can be welcomed. Thus, there is little mystery concerning why so many communities will endeavor to create deeper and deeper channels. On the other side, there are environmentalists who, justifiably, are concerned about the impact of this dredging on flora, fauna. This conflict is difficult to resolve and requires extensive work on the part of all parties.



**Baltimore, Maryland.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>



**Queens, New York.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

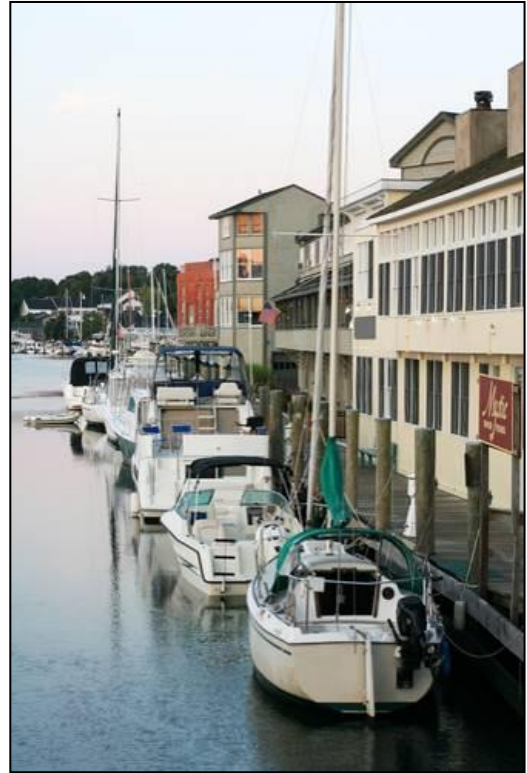
### **Implications for Watkins Glen**

*Watkins Glen needs to be particularly sensitive to environmental issues as it plans for the harbor and downtown areas. These issues include dredging the canal, protecting the marsh and birding areas as well as planning for the impacts of the salt factories and*

*sewer treatment facilities with a 20 year horizon should be addressed. It is clear that a long term dredging plan should be explored. Moreover, conversations with the owners of both the salt facilities and operators of the sewer facilities should begin over the long term continuation of their harbor front activities.*

## **2. Successful downtown waterfronts typically build on their historic and cultural assets.**

Many harbor communities are rich in history and culture. Many have historic forts and structures right on the waterfront. Lighthouses, maritime museums and trading ports all add to the charm and attraction of the harbor. These historic and cultural structures draw tourists and help with the educational aspects of harbors as well. Such is the case today in Boston where, after years of having its downtown waterfront inaccessible, one can walk along the harbor's edge from its Fort Point Channel in the south to its famed North End wharfs in the north. The maintenance and management of these elements are important to harbor planning and marketing. In smaller ports, they are too frequently ignored. In Port Chester, New York, for example, shoppers walking along its major retail street scarcely realize that its waterfront is less than 300' away. Indeed, harbors with long histories such as Point Judith, Rhode Island, and Stonington, Connecticut, make it extremely difficult for the pedestrian to observe and participate in the waterfront experience. What is most distressing is that gaining access to these historic and cultural facilities is not, typically, a costly endeavor. With careful planning, they can be enjoyed by downtown business owners, workers, residents, and tourists.



**Mystic Harbor, Connecticut.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

### **Implications for Watkins Glen**

*The Finger Lakes region is historically and culturally significant. Watkins Glen is home to several wineries, some of the oldest working salt wells in the region, a NASCAR research facility and other culturally significant resources. There is conversation of opening a salt museum with some educational opportunities. The notion of “speed and sport” is something that appears to have merit. In land, the presence of NASCAR racing has placed the “Watkins Glen” name and brand to the sporting public across the nation. It has a positive and powerful resonance. But there needs to be more: Watkins Glen should explore building on its brand to capture other racing activities not only at the track but on the*

*water. This could range from speed boating to wind-boating activities to period festivals (i.e.: Chris-Croft boats of the 1950's). Concerning museums, both the NASCAR facility and the salt mines have potential. However, we believe such facilities will be more beneficial if they are clearly tied to other activities including restaurants, conference facilities, and even retail activities. They are rarely effective when they are free-standing.*



**Alaska.**

Source: Mullin Associates

### **3. Harbors should be integrated inland as extensively as possible.**

The day-lighting (the opening up of these water bodies for public viewing) of channels, canals, rivers and streams can add value to communities and, perhaps more importantly, can integrate the harbor more fully into the fabric of the community. Nowhere can this be more vividly noted than in the integration of the Ipswich River into an existing downtown fabric in Peabody, Massachusetts. This river had been long forgotten: It was simply a partially covered, small stream that flowed behind the downtown shops and institutions. Approximately five years ago, the city cleaned the river and created walkways along its banks. Today, several buildings have re-oriented their entrances to focus on both the riverside and the City's Main Street. It is following the example of the nearby town of Ipswich which has long integrated the river into its downtown: Many shops have openings on both river and land sides. Similar plans for bringing the Thames River into the fabric of downtown Middleton, Connecticut are now being implemented.



**Peabody, Massachusetts.**

Source: Mullin Associates

### **Implications for Watkins Glen**

*Significant planning and design work is required to integrate the harbor with Downtown. In fact, one is hard pressed to even know that the harbor exists when in the shopping district. Opportunity to daylight the canal, create more accessible pathways through the marshlands, and create visual connections to the docks and waterside park are all in*

*order. While the Glen Harbor Hotel is a tremendous asset to the community, it is separated from the water's edge by a parking lot. This area has prime opportunity to be a true public space with pop-up markets and community based activities. Moreover, the banks of the canal have extensive potential for re-use. Watkins Glen should explore a wide range of uses including linear parks and cluster and planned unit developments.*

#### **4. Harbors must plan for a 16-hour day.**

Nothing represents a missed opportunity such as a tour boat full of affluent tourists arriving on a Sunday when the shops are closed. Harbor planners can learn a lesson from airport planners who insure that shop operations coincide with the arrival and departure of commercial aircraft. There should be recognition of the need to plan for multiple publics. The downtown areas adjacent to harbors are likely to attract different types of people all through the day. For example, from



**Copenhagen, Denmark.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

5:00 AM to 8:00 AM, the typical waterfront may be full of fishermen, repairmen and women and other laborers.

From 8:00 to 9:00, office workers will be

on the street. From 9:00 to 12:00, it will be tourists who would be followed by the lunch crowd.

From 2:00 to 5:00, tourists again will be commonplace along with school kids and shoppers. At five, the “night crowd” begins and continues until after midnight. While no two waterfronts will have the same mix at the same time, the fact remains that they all will have to cater to mixed publics: Workers, boat owners, business people, tourists, families, night-lifers and the like all have different requirements that need to be met.

#### **Implications for Watkins Glen**

*This is another area where careful planning can make a big difference. It is not readily noticeable that the waterfront caters to a 16-hour day. Can one come early in the morning to buy a cup of coffee and read the newspaper at a waterside café? The water is not even visible from the dining room of the Glen Harbor Hotel. Is there place for evening strolls? Does one feel safe after dark? It's critical that the area should be oriented to an active life style. The movement of boats, the wind moving flags, the sound of water splashing, and the play of sun and moon set the stage. Building on this via well planned harbor walks, vendor facilities, and restaurants will add value. Planning should also consider some facility, such as a seating area at the end of the docks to draw people deep into the harbor to its very edge. These are all issues that need to be addressed.*

## 5. Waterfronts must be planned for multi-use activities.

These include fishing, water-dependent industrial, recreational boating, educational and tourist activities. Furthermore, these uses are not mutually exclusive of each other. A working waterfront can co-exist with a recreational harbor if it is well planned and managed. In fact mixed uses might actually complement each other. Such is the case in Portland, Maine where the authorities, using municipal zoning powers, have limited recreational boating to certain places where there is limited threat to the fishing industry.



**Toronto, Canada.**

Source: <http://www.gcbi.org/planning/lakefront>

There is a place and need for the working harbor. Not only does it provide jobs and tax base for the community, it serves a locational niche for water-related industries and supporting businesses. Furthermore, a safe, well maintained and managed section of the working harbor can actually be a draw for tourists curious to learn and observe the working of various industries. Such facilities need not be large. They can consist of fuel dispensing businesses, waste pumping stations, boat repair companies and even simple coffee shops. We know, in virtually all of our experiences, that tourists are intrigued about how harbors actually work.

Museums, aquariums and teaching programs would certainly be a draw for tourists and residents alike. As well, teaching and research programs would be highly beneficial to the harbor related industries. A research laboratory for a specialized trade could make the harbor a special destination for professional groups as well as students. The federally funded "Sea Grant Program" provides resources for universities to become involved in such activities. New Bedford is staking a large part of its commercial future on the tourism/education components through its proposal to create an aquarium/hotel/conference center along its waterfront. Chatanooga's highly successful waterfront revitalization centers upon an aquarium that serves as both a tourist attraction and education center. Providence's Johnson and Wales Culinary College is now in the process of creating a campus at the very edge of the city's harbor front.

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*Watkins Glen can boast about mixed uses at its harbor! While these uses co-exist, careful thought on complimentary and long-term viability should be addressed. We are not convinced that the sewer treatment plant would be a viable use in the next 10 to 20 years. Furthermore, boat storage and RV parking is not the highest and best use of that land. We have already mentioned the concern with parking. Careful buffering of the salt factories is*

*also in order. The waterfront area has a great potential for more active use for both tourists and local residents alike. While the passive recreational uses are to be commended, they do little to add to the color and vitality of the area.*

## 6. Tourism can provide a significant economic boost to older waterfront areas.

Visitors tend to support ancillary activities such as specialized shops, restaurants and bars, and even hotels and conference facilities. As well, other related activities and amenities such as marinas, boardwalks, parks, bandstands, swimming, and fishing activities can be used by local residents. They also are drawn to “great events” whether parades of boats, fishing derbies, racing activities or sport matches. If the harbor is to serve as a tourist attraction, it is important to keep in mind services and amenities that are necessary for tourists. Information kiosks, telephone booths, public restrooms, benches, and trash receptacles need to be provided and be well marked.



**Watkins Glen, New York**

Source: Laberge Group.

It is also essential to remember that the tourism experience is intended to be unique and special. For this reason, ports that create a special atmosphere can gain an advantage. Historic preservation, architectural guidelines, period street lighting, and/or different street patterns (e.g. cobblestones) can all add flavor to the experience.

Finally, there is the issue of maintenance. It is all well and good to create a wonderful design scheme and/or to provide amenities. It is a disservice, however, if these features and facilities are not well maintained: Every implementation scheme must include a long term maintenance scheme.



**Watkins Glen NASCAR International.**

Source: <http://www.nascar-europe.net/wp-content/uploads/Watkins-Glen-Race.jpg>

## Implications for Watkins Glen

*If Watkins Glen wants to build on its tourist industry and broaden the shoulders of the tourist season, they must understand the nature of tourists that visit the area. What do they like to do? What do they spend their money? Who are they and from where do they come. There is much that can be done to provide a better tourist friendly environment. These can range from enhanced tourist activities, to essential amenities to basic way finding signage. Linkages between the waterfront, guided tours to wineries and wine tasting opportunities, festivals, parades, fishing derbies, antique markets, gourmet food options, trails and treks, and bike paths are all activities that would need coordination and promotion to attract more tourists.*

### 7. The recreation potential of harbors has dramatic potential in the coming decade.

Harbors are considered to be wonderful recreational amenities for communities. The potentials for boardwalks, marinas and swimming areas are certainly considered to be assets for both the local residents and tourists alike. A recreational harbor also acts as a catalyst for other tourist related activities such as specialty shops, restaurants, hotels, marinas/boat rentals and aquariums. The placing of these activities in ports of transition can be costly, time consuming and risky. However, even in these areas, small city after city is endeavoring to combine these activities within the port. Such has been the case, for example, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Wickford, Rhode Island and Port Jefferson, New York. In all of these instances, there is no one feature that stands out: It is the balanced combination of activities that has led to success.



**Cleveland, Ohio**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

## Implications for Watkins Glen

*Once again, the harbor presents a great opportunity for increased recreational activity on the lake itself. Sail boats, salt boats, local festivals, water-sport competitions, and any other activities, could be organized and promoted by local tourism organizations and chambers of commerce. The notion of combining these activities with NASCAR events appears to have significant merit. In all cases, Watkins Glen must look at these activities with a regional focus, for the typical tourist family of four will look for multiple activities if it is to stay in the area.*

## 8. Careful zoning, historic preservation, and architectural and site planning regulations can add great value to downtown waterfronts.

Zoning regulations, architecture and design controls and site planning regulations are all important to ensure that historical, cultural and aesthetic attributes as well as the optimal juxtaposition of uses at the harbor are maintained.

Design, color, lighting and the festive nature of a place are definite draws. These elements enhance the feeling of security, vitality and bustle. In terms of design, there is a strong case for maintaining a sense of harmony, scale and “cultural feel” with the historic waterfront. While one should not get



**Baltimore, Maryland – Public & Private Waterfront Space.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

carried away and recreate a stage setting (“ye olde port”), it is important to respect the evolutionary character of the harbor. Part of this will relate to the use of color. Harbors tend to have backdrops of dark colors on the land side and shades of blue and white on the seaside. It is the land side that typically needs to be brightened. While color inevitably adds to a positive aesthetic environment it also contributes, along with lightening, to the creation of a strong sense of security. The walking public must feel totally safe when walking through the port. The key word is “feel.” If there are psychological feelings of distress then, regardless of fact, the chances of public use of this space will decline. One of the most important elements of urban revitalization is a total sense of safety and security. Moreover, the transitional areas between harbors and downtown are equally problematic.

Concerning festivals, they attract people: People like to see and be seen. These events ranging from the “taste of downtown” and “chowdah” fests to the blessing of the fleet, the “tall ships” regatta and yacht races can add value. These events must be coordinated with the downtown merchants. We take this last point quite seriously: Too often, festivals result in a loss of revenue or of business opportunities during peak periods. Festival and event planners must work diligently to help merchants to maintain and expand their customer bases during these activities.

The downtown environment at the street level can play a significant role in the successful revitalization of a downtown. Traditional streetscape programs that incorporate overall signage programs, street furniture and unique paving patterns can take on a water characteristic in downtowns with active waterfront communities. Bringing aspects of the water such as color, symbols, and waves can all serve as a reminder to shoppers and visitors that the water and its activities lay just beyond the edge of the downtown. These aspects of the water can be

incorporated in the signs used to identify the downtown district, on signs for individual businesses, in the paving patterns of bricks used in parks and along the sidewalks.

Urban design controls must call for a “stepping down” in the height of buildings. Too frequently, the views of harbors are blocked by high-rise buildings. We urge communities to maintain a low-rise profile along the waterfront and, if necessary, to increase the height as one moves inland. Waterfronts belong to the public. And yet, too often access is denied by private interests or the practical everyday work that takes place. It is important, as a planning principle, that public access be emphasized. We urge walking/biking paths be developed as close as possible to the water. We recognize and respect private property rights. We also consider the waterfront as a people’s place: Integrating these two potentially conflicting issues will be no easy task.



**“Stepping Down” of building heights.**

Source: Mullin Associates

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*A careful assessment of the zoning regulations and design standards around the waterfront is in order. For example, zoning can and should allow water dependent or water related activities close to the waterfront. In our opinion, neither the sewer plant nor the caravan/trailer-park are optimal uses. Parks, public spaces boardwalks, and value added uses such as waterfront dining should be encouraged. In terms of design standard, large parking lots such as the one at the Glen Harbor Hotel, should be better designed or discouraged. Better signage and visual linkages between the downtown area and the waterfront would also be a welcome design element. The degree to which they are applied is dependent upon the values of the citizens of Watkins Glen. We recognize that many controls add costs to development. We also recognize that there is a difference between safety and creating walls around waterfront activities: Does one have to place chain link fencing to protect visitors from harm or can well designed protective devices provide the same sense of security? In all uses, residents and visitors alike, there is a need to insure that the waterfront reflects the fact that it is putting Watkins Glen’s best face forward. It is the most powerful image that they will take with them. Thus, we urge that the community carefully articulate its long term vision in a manner that can be translated into the rules, regulations and guiding principles that will enhance this special place for decades to come.*

---

**9. A physical, social and psychological connectedness must be nurtured or developed between downtown and the waterfront.**

In order for a community to begin capitalizing upon its proximity to a waterfront it must almost literally “turn around” and begin facing the water once again. Downtown districts have typically developed next to the water’s edge with streets radiating out from the port of dock area. Buildings have built up along these streets with their backs to the water. From the water’s edge itself, the downtown and community can appear almost closed off to travelers. From the street level of the downtown area, the water may not even be readily visible. Finding a way to re-connect with the water will be essential for any small town that wants to revitalize its downtown through waterfront development.

In order to maximize the potential of the harbor, there needs to be a well-defined connection between the harbor and the downtown area. As tourist harbors tend to be catalysts for growth in tourism related activities, the community as a whole can benefit through supporting businesses. Downtown stores, hotels and restaurants can be an integral part of the tourist experience. Wide roads or large paved parking areas that disconnect the rest of the community from the waterfront will be less likely to attract tourists inward from the harbor. The issue of wide roads is particularly problematic. Throughout the 1950’s and 1960’s a period of great highway building, highway engineers typically chose flat areas that were less than vibrant as sites for their roads. Too frequently, they are located along the water’s edge.

When direct connections are not possible due to the historic layout of the harbor and the community, good signage and design elements (such as period streetlights or walkways and bridges) could offer direction and draw people from one area to another. This “connectedness” can be clearly noted throughout New Bedford’s Historic Whaling District and Portsmouth’s Strawberry Banke. In fact, the scale of these cities is such that there is little separation between the ports and the historic parts of downtown. Furthermore, there are constant efforts to expand the connections to other surrounding areas: One does not feel that the port and downtown are two distinct areas.



**Portsmouth, New Hampshire.**

Source: <http://activerain.com/blogsviw/137467/portsmouth-nh-summer-seacoast-scene-in-july>

There is also a need to define the nature of the local market. Allowed uses at the harbor could be of concern to downtown businesses. This would certainly depend on the physical layout of the harbor in relationship to downtown. When the downtown area or retail business center is adjacent to the harbor, there is little distinction between harbor and downtown. However, when the harbor is separated from the downtown there is the potential for competition. This must be carefully watched.

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*Watkins Glen will have to work extensively with state, regional and local transportation facilities to ensure that its road system does not become a barrier. Through traffic calming, increased pedestrian-crossings, lighting, signage and pavement design (cobblestones?), it can help to mitigate the long term negative impacts of auto and truck movement through the area.*

*It must similarly work with the owners of the railroad line. It is a tremendous asset with possible long term benefits to the community. Nonetheless, because it runs parallel to the harbor, there is the potential that it could become a barrier to the harbor and thus preventing its optimal use. Long term planning is in order!*

### 10. Downtown waterfronts benefit significantly from open spaces such as parks, plazas and trails: They add economic value.

There are a wide range of options from bike and pedestrian trails to river and boardwalks to plazas, docks, piers and market places. The scale and size of a waterfront open space project will be determined by many factors including available funding and the needs of the community. Before selecting a specific tool, a community should assess the specific needs of their downtown and identify the unique characteristics of their waterfront and downtown district. Does the downtown need a better mix of businesses, or do the buildings themselves need rehabilitated? Do people still use the downtown as a place for their primary shopping needs, or is it an area that is struggling to compete with a strip commercial center on the edge of town? Does the community want to promote a downtown that is used daily by its citizens, or is it a district that attracts tourists by providing specialized goods and services?



**Providence, Rhode Island.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

Finding answers to these and other questions can help determine the type of downtown and waterfront area desired by the citizens of a community. This information then can be coupled with the unique physical characteristics and natural beauty of the waterfront to select the best projects for the community.

Trails can be situated along a water's edge and extend into the downtown area and beyond. This type of systems links the

water's edge, the shopping district, and nearby residential areas in a way that opens up the waterfront and downtown to children, parents, and tourists. We have noted them, for example, in Skinneatlis, New York, and Peabody and Ipswich, Massachusetts. The City of Portland, Michigan, a small town situated at the merging of the Looking Glass River with the Grand River in lower Michigan has created approximately 4 miles of river trails that provide year round entertainment for all members of the family. These trails provide spaces for roller-skating, biking, walking, cross-country skiing, and take advantage of historical bridges crossing the two rivers. These paths wind along the river, through an existing city park at the water's edge, and pass through the downtown.



**Chicago, Illinois.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

children, parents, and tourists. We have noted them, for



**Rochester, New York.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

City parks provide a space near the water's edge that also allows a community to come together. These parks provide a reason for people to come down to the waterfront. While there, they are able to take advantage of nearby shopping and dining establishments. These city parks can provide outdoor spaces for recreational activities that involve water such as boat rides, or they can be an area for families to gather.

Port Clinton, Ohio, located on Lake Erie, has developed small city parks along the two streets running parallel to the main street of the downtown. These parks feature historic statues as well as a gazebo and gathering spaces for downtown shoppers and employees. Adjacent to the water, the

community has situated sports athletic fields that draw kids during the day for informal sports and families during the evening for organized games during the summer months.

Boardwalks and river-walks provide citizens of the communities as well as tourists a way to interact directly with the water. These walkways put a person directly on the water's edge and give the water prominence in the community. Today, these walks provide access to docks used for recreational fishing and sporting as well as larger boats and yachts. For shoppers to a downtown district they can showcase the downtown as well as the area's history.

The town of Grand Haven, Michigan, has been particularly successful in using this tool to revitalize their downtown area. The main street through the downtown, Washington Street, radiates out from the water's edge. The street culminates in a plaza area that allows visitors to access the boardwalk. The 2 1/2 miles of boardwalk was funded through an investment of over \$30 million through grants and public funding. The boardwalk features access to shops, eateries, charter fishing boats, a miniature golf course, and scenic parks. As well, the boardwalk takes visitors past several prominent features of the downtown. Future plans will enable tourists to visit the Tri-Cities Historical Museum housed in the original railroad depot; the Waterfront Stadium, which seats 2,400 people and was built for viewing the "World's Largest Musical Fountain that plays nightly during the summer months and William Ferry Landing, a plaza area that provides a brass replica of the Grand River done to scale and imbedded in the cement walk area of the boardwalk.

Plazas can provide a focal point for the waterfront and downtown areas of a community as well as provide a place for festivals, recreational activities, and informal social gatherings. These plazas can function independent of a boardwalk area or as part of a greater scheme. The most important aspect of the plaza for the downtown is physical and visual access to the space. If visitors and shoppers to the community cannot easily access the waterfront, the downtown will not benefit as greatly.

Petoskey, Michigan is a small community that has gone to great lengths to develop a waterfront park area, Bayfront Park, that features the "Midway" promenade in addition to other smaller recreational uses. The Bayfront Park is physically accessible to the nearby downtown district known as the "Gaslight District" by means of a pedestrian tunnel passing under a busy thoroughfare. The Gaslight District is approximately a six-block area that is filled with small, independent shops that offer a unique shopping experience.



**Petoskey Gaslight District, Michigan.**

Source: [http://www.expresspetoskey.com/image\\_03.jpg](http://www.expresspetoskey.com/image_03.jpg)

Petoskey is situated off Lake Michigan in the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan at the intersection of two busy highways. The annual tourists industry brings thousands of additional visitors to the town each year to visit the historic downtown district as well as the waterfront areas. One of these busy highways lies between the water's edge and the downtown district. To assist the tourists and citizens of Petoskey in accessing the waterfront a tunnel has been created that allow people to pass under Highway 31. From the water's edge the tunnel is clearly marked to show that the downtown lies just beyond view. From the downtown, the water is clearly visible from several vantage points and the path to the tunnel is marked as well. The waterfront plaza development, is a bright, colorful place that provides access to fishing, baseball fields, playground equipment, a museum, and gathering spaces. The area is used by young and old alike, pedestrian, bicyclers, and roller bladers.

While one can argue that these amenities are expensive, there is a significant amount of evidence that they encourage investment and reinvestment and add value to neighboring properties. Once the link is accomplished there is inevitably great community pride. This is particularly valid in areas that celebrate local culture.

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*The Waterfront Park is a great asset that can be expanded and enhanced. Connecting the park with lands across the highway would add continuity and offer greater opportunity for enhanced activities. Open spaces complete with parks, trails, and recreation facilities will enable the rich, built environment of Watkins Glen to stand out. They provide settings that are unique and which typically draw shoppers, tourists, and recreationalists to the area. It is essential that both horizontal development (i.e.: parks and trails) be carefully tied to vertical, structural development.*

### 11. Harbors must be comprehensively linked to key transportation systems and adopt traffic management policies.

Traffic management is necessary regardless of the use at the harbor. This becomes more imperative if there are mixed uses. Adequate parking, well-defined walkways, (bike paths) and jogging trails need to be established. The need for managed circulation is a requirement not only for both the aesthetics and functionality of the harbor but also for safety reasons. Once again, if it is not possible to entirely separate vehicle traffic from pedestrians, strategies such as traffic calming or



**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.**

Source: <http://www.gcbl.org/planning/lakefront>

specific time limits for service vehicles would be beneficial.

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*Watkins Glen is already experiencing this with truck traffic in and out of the salt factories. The railroad along the water can be an opportunity as well as a threat. Careful monitoring of these networks is in order. Traffic management is full of potential pitfalls as the need to have free flowing movement often interferes with pedestrian access. Moreover, the desires of merchants (i.e.: free parking) are often at odds with municipal officials who wish to recover costs (i.e.: meters). In all cases, there is need for extensive debate with stakeholders before implementation begins.*

## 12. Make the waterfront an essential part of the downtown.

Downtowns in small towns throughout America are struggling to maintain viability and compete with suburban commercial centers. As communities seek to revitalize their downtowns, towns with waterfronts find themselves in a unique position to offer something special to citizens and visitors. Finding ways to make the waterfront an essential part of the downtown is a challenge to small communities, but also a great opportunity to build upon their unique culture and history. There are many examples of small towns that have each found a special way to meet the needs of their downtown by providing amenities at the water's edge. These waterfront developments have been successful in bringing more people of all ages to the community and to the downtown. They are special places.



**Baltimore, Maryland.**

Source: <http://www.gcb.org/planning/lakefront>

### Implications for Watkins Glen

*Watkins Glen is fortunate to be on the water. It differentiates it from numerous small upstate communities, trying to enhance and regenerate their economic base. Watkins Glen is starting from strength, has done an enormous amount of work, and is well poised to reach greater potential. The fact that both the downtown area and the waterfront are being studied at the same time is testimony to good planning.*

## ***Waterfront Management Strategy***

Given the complexity of governmental institutions involved in downtown waterfronts, a management strategy is essential but difficult and time consuming: Who is in charge?

The optimal management of the waterfront reflects the proverbial three-legged stool, where the legs create a firm base for the area. The first leg is the municipality. One of the strategic steps to having a successful harbor is to have a long-range harbor plan and comprehensive zoning regulations to reflect and enforce it. Local government, whose responsibilities typically center on the basic day to day functions such as providing the infrastructure (roads and utilities) and planning and zoning functions, is also the key player in obtaining grants for waterfront improvements. However, the municipality needs to work closely with private and not-for-profit sectors to ensure coordinated and collaborative efforts. The Chamber of Commerce and/or the Tourism Boards will play a role in the recreational and tourist aspects of the harbor management. Other public service divisions such as police, fire protection, and parking authorities will play important roles. Coordination and communication among all these various functions will be crucial to the management and success of the harbor and the community as a whole.



The second leg would consist of the Business/Waterfront Improvements District (B/WID) that would include all properties along the waterfront area including some inland areas that depend on waterfront uses. The purpose of the BID would be to self fund functions that typically cannot be funded out of local tax revenues. For example, the BID may provide funds to remove garbage more frequently, fund festivals, provide greater security and or undertake joint marketing of the area. The critical benefit of the BID is that it brings all the property owners together in a common purpose – the betterment of the district. Moreover, the BID can be a powerful voice through which all property owners, as a collective, can bring before the Village Board.



**Kingston, New York - Farmers Market.**

Source: <http://www.cityparksalliance.org>

One of the critical functions of the BID would be the marketing and promotion of the downtown and waterfront area. Not unlike any other amenity, the harbor needs to be marketed and promoted. Promotion and marketing can go a long way in achieving desired results, attracting the right clientele and managing activities in both downtown

and the waterfront. It is most critical, however, for Watkins Glen to have extensive data on tourism and expenditures. This data needs to be compared with the experiences of other similar communities, and the region. Moreover, it needs to attract information on long term trends and prospects related to expenditures for the Finger Lakes Region.

The third leg of the stool would be creating a harbor management position in local government that is systems trained and understands the need to protect, administer, promote and stimulate growth in the harbor district. This position will require someone who is safety conscious and an entrepreneur. Harbor “authorities” work well when there are extensive day to day management issues concerning activities on the waterfront and when there are expensive projects of a large scale nature that would require sophisticated management, planning, funding and strategic intervention to bring change over a long period of time. This is not necessarily the case in Watkins Glen. The only large projects that would require such intervention are the demolition/revitalization of the salt works and the sewer plant which could be handled by the municipality directly working with the owners. On the other hand, the future use of the piers, wharfs, beachfront, boat servicing and parking and tourist functions would be best served by a Harbor Master. Typically the Harbor Master is a municipal employee who oversees safe and efficient, administration and management of the area from the water’s edge outward. At the most basic level he/she would develop safe and healthy environmental procedures that govern how people and watercraft interact. Beyond this he/she will be responsible for ensuring that the movement and parking of watercraft is carried out swiftly and safely and at no cost to the municipality. The Harbor Master is often funded by fees paid by water users in part or whole thus minimizing expenses to the municipality. Above all, the Harbor Master acts as the eyes and ears of the community along its water’s edge.

### **Conclusion**

---

All aspects of the harbor need attention. The working harbor needs to be marketed toward water related industries and support services. The education aspects need to be marketed toward professional and trade associations as well as universities and other educational institutions and the recreational aspects need to be marketed and promoted toward residents and tourists alike. The harbor, along with all its functions, and the community itself needs to market and promote itself as a tourist destination. Depending on the nature of activities, it could market itself to different target audiences such as family tourists, the young college/university students, business travelers, the sports minded tourists, seniors or people looking for a relaxing hide away. Above all, the marketing must be balanced. We know of no downtown waterfront success story that has narrowly defined its orientation: Balance leads to success. We also know of few successful downtowns that survive by orienting them to a short season (e.g. the summer months). It is very important that marketing specialists orient themselves to a multi-seasonal approach. This has worked quite well in the downtown harbor areas of Martha’s Vineyard (Edgartown, Vineyard Haven, Oak Bluffs) where the marketing specialists have successfully expanded the “shoulders of the season” from

April to December: Each year more and more businesses are expanding the length of time that they are in operation. Similar approaches are being undertaken in the ski areas of Vermont.

In order to maximize the potentials for the harbor, it is important to determine the use and character that the harbor will serve. Harbors must be planned with the water as a unifying element. In fact, we urge harbor communities to first emphasize water dependent and water related uses. Once these are satisfied then other uses could be considered. It is equally important to coordinate planning efforts. Management issues are crucial to the well being and success of the harbor. Given its varied functions and clientele, public/private partnerships are in order. Watkins Glen is already partnering with both public private and not for profit agencies and these partnerships can only be enhanced.

## VII. Strategies & Implementation Plan

---

*Vision Statement*

*To transform Watkins Glen and the Seneca lakefront into a place to live, work and play.*

### *Development of Strategies*

---

The great waterfronts of the world share a stubborn insistence on quality design, a vision for grand public spaces and are often attached to neighborhoods that act as an intimate place to escape the crowds. Watkins Glen hopes to capture “the magic” of waterfronts and to pave the way for a new vision that builds on the Village’s history and unique character. What lessons can Watkins Glen embrace as it begins to redesign where the Village meets the lake? Don’t settle... and don’t go the easy route. Waterfronts like Pittsburgh or Baltimore’s Inner Harbor were not successful because of their marina, boardwalk, or big destination; it’s in “the magic” of regenerating and celebrating the history of an older community while projecting an exciting vision of the future.

Implementation of these strategies will allow the Village to not only imagine itself as a place where living, working and playing are linked to the unique natural resource of Seneca Lake; or to consider the possibility that this resource can be experienced as a continuous waterfront system, from vibrant public spaces, fresh-water beaches or from tree-lined, pedestrian scaled trails; but will be able to achieve, through collective public and private partnerships, a future waterfront that is a priceless asset and capable of generating an immeasurable return for generations to come.

These strategies were crafted through the efforts of plan consultants working with the Planning Advisory Committee and from the results of the public participation process. These strategies will provide local government, businesses, and citizens with a guide for future decisions and will have a positive impact on the local economy. Furthermore, these strategies once implemented, are intended to guide the future growth, development, and economic revitalization efforts of the Village. As a result, five focused elements with specific goals and strategies were created for the Village. These five focused elements included:

- **Physical Improvements** (Seneca Lakefront Improvements, Clute Park/Tank Beach Improvements, and Seneca Canal Improvements)
- **Access & Connections** (Regional Access, Local Access & Improvements, and Water Transportation Improvements)

- **Signage & Streetscape** (Signage, Streetscape, and Design Guidelines, Site Planning & Land Use Regulations)
- **Economic Development** (Tourism, Recreational & Cultural Activities, Economic Development Opportunities, and Land Use Recommendations)
- **Sustainability & Environmental Quality** (Reduce, Reuse & Recycle, Natural Resources, and Education & Policy)

## Implementation

The adoption of the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* is only the beginning. The mere statements of goals and strategies included in this Plan will not produce the desired results unless the Village and its project partners implement the concepts through land use regulations, public investment and cooperation, and the formation of partnerships.

**Implement It:**

*“Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.”*

*William Jennings Bryan*

Once the *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* is adopted, the Village Board should designate an Implementation Committee to review the plan’s strategies and recommend actions the Village should pursue. The Committee should include representatives of the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Village Board, SCOPED and the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency. The Committee should continue to prioritize and work on each strategy, recognizing that priorities may change with the availability of funding sources for particular projects.

Though some segments of the waterfront may be built and/or maintained by private owners, much of the waterfront design and construction may be carried out by one or more public agencies. Even with a single agency identified as the leading public partner, other agencies will have significant roles in the implementation of the waterfront. Additional agencies that have interests or authority over segments of the waterfront, such as NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, will also need to be involved in the implementation process. It is for this reason that the creation of a harbor management position is essential to help coordinate all of the development and improvement activities.

At the Federal and State levels, there are opportunities to apply directly for funds under established programs, as well as to seek allocations from federal funding pots that are distributed to states and municipalities. Each individual project will need to be scoped, budgeted, and moved forward by an identified public agency or private landowner. These will include projects that can be incorporated into pending or future street or infrastructure reconstructions, as well as private development of waterfront sites.

## **Funding Sources**

Meeting the goals of a *Lakefront Management & Development Strategy* will require careful investment of public resources, whether implementation requires further planning and analysis, construction, expansion of services, or facility maintenance and improvements. To ensure the Plan's success, the Village of Glens Falls should identify and capitalize on available local funding sources and work closely with its project partners to coordinate the implementation of the strategies. In many communities, waterfront projects are typically funded through private donations, bonding and/or in-lieu-of fees, as well as grants from state, county, and federal programs.

State and federal agencies are significant potential sources of funding for local waterfront projects. Funding programs support a range of actions including land acquisition, planning and design, construction, and maintenance. State grants are administered through various funding agencies including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS), and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP). Most State funding programs stem from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), which was established to provide a dedicated source of funding for vital environmental programs, particularly those along New York's waterfronts. It should be noted that as opportunities arise to expand waterfront opportunities, the Village Board should weigh public interest for a project against immediate costs. The overall value of the improvements may be priceless when compared with the overall quality of life and economic generators associated with such improvements.

## **Implementation Timeline**

The strategies that follow identify the approximate timeframe the action should be accomplished; however these timelines are approximate and are intended to be used as guide as funding becomes available. The recommended timeframes are identified as follows:

Short-Term or Mid-Term - Next 12 months to 3 Years (Beginning 2011 - 2013)

Long-Term: Three to Five years (2014-2016)

On-going. To be accomplished any time over the next five to ten years.

***Physical Improvements***

---

---

(place holder)

**Map 9: Seneca Lakefront Improvement Plan**

(Place Holder)

**Map 10: Clute Park/Tank Beach Improvement Plan**

(Place Holder)

**Map 11: Seneca Canal Improvement Plan**

(Place Holder)

***Access & Awareness***

---

---

(place holder)

***Signage & Streetscape***

---

---

(place holder)

***Economic Development***

---

---

(place holder)

***Sustainability & Environmental Quality***

---

---

(place holder)