Highland Falls
Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study

Final Report
June 1, 2017

The LA GROUP
Landscape Architecture & Engineering P.C.
People. Purpose. Place.
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1.1 Project Introduction

The Village of Highland Falls, the Town of Highland Falls, and the project partners of Orange County, Scenic Hudson, Hudson Highlands Land Trust, the West Point Garrison, and the New York State Hudson River Valley Greenway, have initiated a Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study with The LA Group to improve and provide public access to the Hudson River. The project area consists of the portion of waterfront land between the West Point Museum and the Thayer Hotel at West Point, including Station Hill Road and the intersection with the West Point Highway and Main Street.

As noted within the Village of Highland Falls Comprehensive Plan, “in order to provide additional recreation fields and facilities to serve the Village and balance development and preservation goals, the Village should: 1. Promote public waterfront access through the redevelopment of the marina, the railroad property, and the teardrop parcel...” To that end, the purpose of the Feasibility Study is to assess and determine the viability of redeveloping and reprogramming the existing site to suit public access needs, provide recreational opportunities, and increase local and regional tourism potential.

The goal of the Feasibility Study is to provide improved waterfront access and redevelopment opportunities as part of a wider waterfront and economic development initiative. Potential redevelopment opportunities include a new marina; adaptive reuse of the former train station building; restaurant, retail, and boater support facilities; and new and improved public waterfront access. Complimentary project goals also include shoreline restoration, integration of green infrastructure practices, improved crossing and interface with CSX railway, and storm resiliency improvements. Vehicular access, parking, and universal accessibility are also key features of the plan.
1.2 Project Location and Background

In the fall of 2016, the Village of Highland Falls, partnering with the Town of Highlands, the County of Orange, and Scenic Hudson, contracted the LA Group, P.C., to develop the Highland Falls Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study. Through this study, the project site was analyzed and corresponding opportunities and constraints were identified. Waterfront redevelopment opportunities have been envisioned and designed, with planning level order of magnitude costs provided and grant funding opportunities highlighted. Public input has been paramount throughout the study’s process, with idea generation and program development solicited through two separate public visioning and comment sessions.

The area of study is located within the Village of Highland Falls, bordered on the north by West Point. The project area is located off West Point Highway, due east of the Highland Falls village core. With West Point to the north and the US Military Academy Visitors Center and the West Point Museum bordering the south, a significant tourism presence already exists adjacent to the area of study.

Nestled along the Hudson River waterfront at the base of Station Hill Road, the Highland Falls Railroad Depot and its surrounding site hold a detailed history as rich as its natural resources. Built in the late 19th century for the West Shore Railroad, the depot building has served multiple uses through time. As one of the few remaining depots along the west shore of the Hudson, it has served under different railroad companies for both passenger and freight. Around the mid-20th century, passenger service ended. Toward the end of the 20th century, the site and depot building transitioned to operate as a marina. Ultimately the marina closed, and the depot building was converted into multi-family housing, with its surrounding environs turned into an RV park.

A fine example of Shingle Style architecture, the depot building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. It remains in use and in good condition. A private residence north of the depot site, a small parcel of government-owned land extending out into the river, and a vacant portion of the adjacent McDonald’s property have been included within the area of study.
1.3 Ownership / Easements

The depot building resides on the primary area of study: a parcel privately owned by A & I Builders, LLC. This parcel is bisected by the railway, currently owned by CSX Corporation. The 0.73 acre parcel on the land side holds the historic depot building, a large pole-barn style garage building, and a small restroom outhouse structure. On the river side of the tracks, the 0.51 acre parcel boasts 500-ft. of waterfront consisting of open lawn with a small, thin peninsula extending out into the river nearly on-axis with the depot building. An existing on-grade railroad crossing and easement are in place, and the CSX Corporation has recently upgraded the crossing with enhanced safety features.

Secondary areas of study include the Station Hill Road corridor, winding from the Highland Falls village core and West Point Highway to the depot building parcel. This narrow, steep driveway serves as the only connection between the waterfront site and the greater community. Additionally, a 0.24 acre government-owned parcel has been included in the study area. Located on the river side, this parcel extends into the river corridor, and currently has an paved ramp into the river and naturalized planting areas.

Finally, a long and linear private property, north of the depot parcel and bisected by the railroad corridor, has been included in the area of study. Owned by the families Burns and Burks, this land includes a 0.47 acre parcel land side and a 0.36 parcel river side.

Given the ownership circumstances and the railroad corridor onsite, land purchase and CSX Railroad coordination are fundamental elements to the success of any public waterfront redevelopment efforts moving forward. See section 1.7 for additional information regarding CSX Railroad coordination.
1.4 Project Considerations

The feasibility study consists of three overall components. The first, site analysis, included site reconnaissance by the design team and analysis of existing site features. This process analyzed project boundaries, man-made structures, buildings, facilities, above and below ground infrastructure, adjacent land and water uses, historic and archaeological resources, site topography, hydrology, and natural resources.

The second component of the study was the development of programming and site concept plans, in which three schematic design alternatives were advanced. Each new alternative builds off the previous alternative with expanded opportunities at the project site. These form a development guideline to follow as funding, commitment, and community resources expand and evolve over time.

The last part of the study includes an overview of grant funding opportunities and a planning level order of magnitude cost estimate for the redevelopment of the site. The grant funding opportunities will provide a clear course of recommended action to take in order to begin making the revitalized public access to the Hudson River waterfront a reality.

Each component of the study has been reviewed through the lens of best management practices with criteria established and adopted by the Hudson River Valley Greenway and the Orange County Greenway Compact Plan. Comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, implementation techniques, natural resource inventories and management plans, view shed analysis, and cultural resource inventories have also been taken into account. Finally, potential impacts to any sensitive resources and areas, mitigation options, and avoidance techniques were reviewed.

Above: perspective and aerial views of the depot during the marina operations time period.
1.5 Public Input

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC), a group of interested citizens and local government officials, acted as a steering committee throughout this project’s development process. Their initial ideas and direct feedback proved vital to the successful completion of the feasibility study. In addition to the PAC’s involvement, public input has been equally fundamental throughout the study. Two separate public visioning and comment sessions were held (the first in November 2016, the second in March 2017) to solicit the community for their opinion, gathering ideas for site programming and feedback on the proposed design alternatives.

The following section summarizes the public input from both meetings.

Opportunities

- Depot Building Programming
  - Restaurant / Eatery
  - Museum (Geological, War, Local History, Cultural History, J.P. Morgan) and Visitor Center
  - Outdoor / Aquatic Sport Outfitting
  - Multiple Storefronts

- Regional Thinking and Connectivity
  - Trolley System / Main Street Connection
  - NYC Day Trip Market (Proximity to Bear Mountain and Other Regional Resources)
  - Water Transportation Hub (Local and City Tour Boats; Water Taxi; Sea Street, Newburgh, West Point Docking)

- Marina Feasibility
  - Water Depth Starting at 30’ Deep, Dropping Rapidly to 80’
  - Sizing, Operations, Fiscal Viability
  - Slip Leasing Flexibility: Seasonal vs. Day-Use
  - Potential to Build a Breakwater on Southern End to Protect Dock System
  - Attract High-End Clientele by Incorporating Travel Lifts Capable of Launching Boats up to 50’

- Diversify Features to Attract a Variety of Potential User Groups and to Reach Year-Round Use
  - Provide Universal Access
  - Water Recreation, Fishing, Hiking, Biking, Skating
  - Attract Eagle Migration Enthusiast
  - Attract Train Enthusiasts

- Utilize Natural Visual Resources (Selectively Thin Trees for River Views, Expose Rock Escarpment for Visual Improvements)

- Utilize Adjacent Undeveloped Parcels for Village and Regional Use (Passive Multi-Use Open Space/Festival Grounds/West Point Functions)

- Project Should Follow DEC’s Universal Access Initiative

- All Development and Improvements Should be Hurricane and Flood Resilient
Constraints

- Safety - How to Assist People Over Tracks and Up to Main Street / West Point Highway
- 23’ Vertical Clearance Flyover Requirements May Prohibit Elevated Pedestrian Bridge
- Liabilities
- Spatial Confiness
- CSX Limitations and Regulations
- Future Proofing (Avoid Relying on the Success of a Single Enterprise)
- Take Precaution for Estimated Sea Level Rise Over Time
- Utility Improvements - Natural Gas, Municipal Water, and Sanitary Force Main Will Require Significant Financial Investment
- Unknown Schedule for Trains Hauling Garbage and Refuse
- Train’s Loud Horn Signal Along Property Due to Curve (May be Silenced During Certain Hours)

Scenic Hudson Review Comments

- Supports the Design Concept, Commending the Village for its Commitment to Creating Public Waterfront Access
- Supports the Concept of Adaptive Reuse Via Commercial Use, Recommends Market Study to Ensure Marina Feasibility
- Supports Regional Connectivity Via Pier for Larger Tour Boats and Water Taxis, Cautions the Permitting Associated with Pier and Filling for Sea Wall Expansion
  - Recommends Consultation with Scenic Hudson’s Sea Level Rise Mapper, Columbia University’s Sea Level Rise Risk Assessment Tool, and NYSDEC’s Sustainable Shorelines Program to Ensure Future Development Responds to Sea Level Rise and Flooding while Providing Additional Habitat Value.

- Jeff Anzevino, AICP and Director of Land Use Advocacy
1.6 Case Study: Milton Train Station

The Milton Train Station’s (MTS) ongoing development to become a community center for the Town of Malborough has been reviewed as a case study to help inform the current planning initiative for the Highland Falls Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study. The following summarizes the Milton Train Station’s ongoing development:

- Identified Priority Projects to Complete in Sequential Order
  - Address Safety Issues
    (Railing at Raised Building Thresholds, Decorative Fence Along Rail Corridor)
  - Replace Failing Roof
  - Restore Historic Façade
  - Renovate Interior

- Open Programming
  - Still Not Formally Open to the Public
  - Special Occasion / Community Meetings Held at the Milton Train Station
  - Planned Future Uses of Historic Interpretation, Cultural Events, and Recreation

- Slow Growth: Over a Decade of Continuous Work, Development, and Fundraising / Capital Campaign

- Sought Partnership with CSX Transportation Company to Alleviate Initial Regulatory Burdens

- Formation of Milton Train Station Foundation, Inc. (formerly Friends of the Milton on Hudson Train Station)
  - Nonprofit Organization
  - Leading the Redevelopment Efforts
  - Manage Train Station
  - Upon Development Completion

- Next Steps at Milton Train Station: Future Park
  - Design in Progress
  - Will Need Regulatory Approvals

Above: donations through the MTS Foundation helped make possible the ongoing renovations.
1.7 CSX Transportation Coordination

Coordination with the CSX Railroad will be required for all future project development to ensure all jurisdictional and safety requirements are met for any proposed park, marina, or site feature. Coordination will have to first be initiated with the CSX Transportation Company’s NY Territory Public Project Liaison, and will include the following steps:

- The project will have to incorporate any requirements provided by the CSX Public Projects Manual.

- A letter authorizing CSX to incur cost will need to be provided at the start of the project design, after which CSX will prepare an estimate with the agreement.
  - The authorization to incur cost must be on Agency letterhead for the public agency providing the maintenance responsibilities and authorize CSXT to initiate a project and submit invoices for all costs incurred prior to the full execution of the agreement.
  - The estimated costs (within the agreement) required to complete the project will need to be paid by check in advance.

- A CSXT flagman will likely be required (at an approximate cost of $1200 per day) for each day the contractor is on CSXT property or has the potential to foul the tracks.

- The contractor selected to perform the work will be required to obtain insurance in accordance with the CSXT’s insurance requirements.

Above: CSX Railroad coordination will be a fundamental element to future project efforts.
2.0 Site Analysis

2.1 Site Characteristics

Site access is achieved via Station Hill Road, connecting the depot building to West Point Highway. There are no stormwater management features along the road alignment, which traverses roughly 130 vertical feet from West Point Highway down to the waterfront. The drive terminates at the on-grade, signalized railroad crossing.

The former Highland Falls Train Depot is currently a multi-family residence, with its former parking lot now being operated as an RV park. Outbuildings onsite include a large garage and a small restroom building. No public utilities currently exist onsite. Water service to the depot and restroom buildings is provided via well, onsite sanitary service is accomplished via septic system, and the site utilizes propane service as its fuel source.

Land parcels on the river side of the track feature open lawn space, a small peninsula generally on-axis with the depot building, and a larger land mass that extends further out into the river corridor. This larger land mass has an paved ramp / informal boat launch angled to meet the Station Hill Road terminus.

The existing single family residence parcel (land side) is long and linear, with the building located roughly 100-ft. from Station Hill Road.

2.2 Flood, Storm Surge, and Sea Level Rise

The project area’s greatest assets include the sensitive, natural resources of the river and its bank, as well as the historic and architecturally significant depot building. The site’s direct adjacency to the Hudson River will require proposed development to overcome unique flood, storm surge, and sea level rise challenges. The site has experienced flooding and surge issues in the past (most recently during Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy in 2011 and 2012, respectively), and future projections adopted by New York State (see reference table below) indicate that these challenges will increase over the next several decades.

Established Projected Sea Level Rise for the Mid-Hudson Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Interval</th>
<th>Low Projection</th>
<th>Low-Medium Projection</th>
<th>Medium Projection</th>
<th>High-Medium Projection</th>
<th>High Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020s</td>
<td>1 inch</td>
<td>3 inches</td>
<td>5 inches</td>
<td>7 inches</td>
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<td>10 inches</td>
<td>14 inches</td>
<td>25 inches</td>
<td>36 inches</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2100</td>
<td>11 inches</td>
<td>18 inches</td>
<td>32 inches</td>
<td>46 inches</td>
<td>71 inches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factoring flood and storm surge levels, in addition to the rising sea level, will become crucial to planning future development at the project area. Future detailed plan development should employ and emulate the guidelines and recommendations set forth with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s Sustainable Shorelines Program and Scenic Hudson’s Revitalizing Hudson Riverfronts Publication. Maintaining a design team and advisory committee dedicated to engaging the site’s shoreline stabilization through the ecologically sensitive shoreline design and best environmental management practices will secure the Highland Falls waterfront’s success in weathering future storm and flood events, responding to continued sea level rise, and both conserving and creating a healthy and sustainable habitat with the longevity to be enjoyed for future generations to come.

The following flood plain and inundation diagrams were created utilizing Scenic Hudson’s Sea Level Rise Mapper application for the purpose of visualizing potential future flooding and inundation extents at the project site (source: http://scenichudson.org/slr/mapper).
The entirety of the project site remains outside the 100-year floodplain at existing high tide conditions.

At a projected 12" rise in sea level, all areas east of the rail tracks are included within the 100 year floodplain, and fringes of the two peninsulas show small signs of 6" inundation.
At a projected 24" rise in sea level, all waterfront areas at the project site become included within the 100 year floodplain, and half of each peninsula shows 6" to 18" inundation depths.

At a projected 36" rise in sea level, the remaining railroad corridor to the south and east of the project site becomes included within the 100 year floodplain, and the majority of each peninsula shows 6" to 30" inundation depths.

**Flood Plain and Inundation Diagrams**

**LEGEND**
- Current river
- Railroads
- Tidal wetlands and sub-aquatic vegetation
- 100 year floodplains and low-lying areas
- Hard Shoreline
- Natural Shoreline

**INUNDATION DEPTH**
- 6" 12" 18" 24" 30" 36" 42" 48" 54" 60" 66" 72"
- 2020 2050 2080 2100
- Rapid Ice Melt

SOURCE: SCENIC HUDSON
Sea Level Rise Mapper
Above: CSX Railroad coordination will be a fundamental element to future project efforts. At a projected 48" rise in sea level, the project site’s frontage along the river becomes inundated with water, 6” to 42” depths.

At a projected 60" rise in sea level, the portions of the rail tracks along the project site become inundated with water, 6” to 54” depths.

Above: CSX Railroad coo fundamental element to ft.
2.3 Site Analysis

Station Hill Road’s width varies from 20 to 25-ft., and the pavement condition is generally fair to poor. While space along the driveway alignment is constricted, several unique features can be found along the road. A potential prominent viewshed exists at the road’s hairpin turn, presenting an opportunity for a future overlook with interpretive signage. The road also passes by a unique historic cistern, and the road ultimately crosses under a tall rock escarpment / cliff face.

Space at the depot building’s surrounding environs remains constricted, but the visual and natural resources present are unique to the local area. A drainage channel runs along the southern boundary of the site connecting the old cistern to the river. Mountain and river views span 180 degrees along the waterfront, with a fair amount of square footage available for passive recreational use on the river side of the tracks.

The train depot building features a unique Shingle Style architecture, and the exterior remains in good condition. The building presents opportunities for adaptive re-use as either a marina support facility, a restaurant, or multiple storefront units for a more flexible, mixed-use approach.

The RV park recently saw the installation of sanitary pump-outs for each RV site. The conditions of the depot’s outbuildings vary from poor (garage) to good (restroom). Due to its poor condition, it is recommended that the garage be razed. With its good condition, the restroom building can be renovated and improved for public use and accessibility.

The following diagrams summarize the existing conditions of the site - both in the context of the surrounding community and as an analysis of the existing conditions and site features.
Highland Falls
Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study

Existing Conditions / Site Analysis Plan

June 1, 2017
3.0 Alternative 1

3.1 Program Development

Alternative 1 focuses on upgrading and improving existing infrastructure and developing new programmatic elements. These include waterfront sitting areas, destination playground and live play systems, interpretive signage, parking areas with green infrastructure, site access, and the gateway to downtown Highland Falls. The following photographs serve as Alternative 1 inspirational images.

Above: an example of site access improvements.

Above: an example of a destination playground.

Above: an example of a parking lot utilizing green infrastructure.

Above: an example of a passive waterfront sitting area.

Above: an example of an interpretive signage at a waterfront park.
3.2 Program Summary and Concept Plan

1A: West Point Highway / Main Street Gateway and Streetscape Enhancements
- Enhance the streetscape to recognize the importance of Station Hill Road as the gateway to the village core and Waterfront (decorative crosswalks, decorative dark sky compliant lighting, paving enhancements, street trees, wayfinding, and interpretive signage).
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian connectivity

1B: Waterfront Linkage Trail and Overlook
- Provide a dedicated pedestrian access route from the village core to the Waterfront.
- Provide decorative dark sky compliant lighting for security and safety.
- Improve Hudson River views through selective tree pruning.
- Provide an overlook viewing area at the existing Station Hill Road ‘Hair-Pin’ turn.
- Investigate opportunities for wayfinding and interpretive signage at key locations.

1C: Waterfront Parking Area and Drop-Off Improvements
- Formalize the existing parking area and provide opportunity for continuous drive-through circulation.
- Provide pedestrian drop-off plazas adjacent to the Train Depot and Waterfront.
- Provide pedestrian linkages to the Train Depot and Waterfront.
- Investigate technologies for ‘green’ and sustainable construction and stormwater practices.
- Provide improved lighting for security and safety.
- Investigate opportunities for wayfinding and interpretive signage at key locations.

1D: Waterfront Park - Train Depot: Picnic Area and Recreational Destination
- Expand recreational opportunities for area adjacent to the existing Train Depot.
- Program area for picnic opportunities, viewing, and seating areas.
- Include destination amenities, including a natural playground or destination play structure, customized for the Hudson River setting.
- Consider full season opportunities, including an area for ice skating in the winter season.
- Rehabilitate existing restroom building for public use.

1E: Waterfront Park - Promenade: Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements and River Walkway
- Improve the pedestrian and vehicular access at the existing CSX railroad crossing.
- Provide a decorative fence barrier adjacent to the CSX railroad corridor for safety and security.
- Enhance the existing Waterfront open space to provide a fully accessible river walkway with seating and viewing areas.

1F: Waterfront Park - Peninsula: River Walkway Extension
- Expand river walkway to the existing natural peninsula.
- Enhance the existing Waterfront open space to provide a fully accessible river walkway with seating and viewing areas.
- Investigate opportunities for fishing access sites.

1G: Hudson River Access: Kayak and Canoe Launch
- Provide dedicated area for a kayak and canoe launch adjacent to the existing informal boat launch.
- Consider future car-top support amenities, including kayak/canoe lockers, stands, and storage structures.

1H: Existing Highland Falls Train Depot
- Look for project partners to transition Train Depot from residential to full commercial use.
- Investigate interest and opportunities for the development of a first-class waterfront restaurant.
- Solicit input and interest with West Point as a partner in the redevelopment proposal.
Alternative 1

- West Point Highway / Main Street Gateway and Streetscape Enhancements
- Waterfront Linkage Trail and Overlook
- Waterfront Parking Area and Drop-Off Improvements
- Waterfront Park - Train Depot; Picnic Area and Recreational Destination
- Waterfront Park - Promenade; Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements and River Walkway
- Waterfront Park - Peninsula; River Walkway Extension
- Hudson River Access; Kayak and Canoe Launch
- Existing Highland Falls Train Depot
4.0 Alternative 2

4.1 Program Development

Alternative 2 builds upon Alternative 1, focusing on expanding the waterfront park area to include a formalized promenade, viewing areas, and fishing / water access. It incorporates picnic areas and a covered shelter, and the depot building’s full potential as a thriving destination is realized. Development of Alternative 2 can be achieved via two distinct routes: either through public ownership with contracted concessionaire(s) to operate and manage the facilities, or through a private investor with prerequisite public access and easements in place. The following photographs serve as Alternative 2 inspirational images.

Above: an example of a utilizing a gazebo structure to create a focal point for a picnic area.

Above: an example of improved fishing access.

Above: an example of a formalized seating / viewing area.

Above: an example of an developed waterfront promenade with covered shelter and marina.

Above: an example of a fully programmed, multi-use public building.
4.2 Program Summary and Concept Plan

2A: Highland Falls Marina
- Enhance the facility to recognize the importance of the Train Depot as the gateway to the village core and Waterfront.
- Adaptive reuse of Highland Falls Train Depot into full-service marina support facility, including office space for management and staff; first-class restaurant; bait shop; and boat sales, rentals, and service.
- Foster public / private partnership, and provide dedicated area for community use (historical society, visitor center, etc.).

2B: Marina Support Facility
- Look for opportunities to expand marina operation to adjacent developable parcels.
- Provide area for boat storage and service.

2C: Marina Dock Access
- Provide leasable and transient boat slips.
- Provide support amenities, including fuel and pump-out stations.
- Improve the existing boat launch for support facility and emergency use only.

2D: Waterfront Park - Promenade: Expansion and Pavilion
- Expand the Waterfront footprint and provide a formalized promenade with seating areas, viewing areas, and decorative dark sky compliant lighting.
- Investigate opportunities for wayfinding and interpretive signage at key locations.
- Provide covered shelter at the water’s edge to take advantage of Hudson River views.
- Provide sustainable, bio-engineered and vegetative shoreline mitigation for any expansion development (including, but not limited to, vegetated geogrids, live crib walls, joint planting, brush mattresses, vegetated rock gabion walls); improvements should follow NYSDEC’s Sustainable Shorelines Program and Scenic Hudson’s Revitalizing Hudson Riverfronts Publication guidelines.

2E: Waterfront Park - Peninsula: Promenade Extension and Fishing Dock
- Extend Waterfront Park promenade and connect to the existing peninsula.
- Expand peninsula footprint and provide a formalized seawall and promenade extension with seating areas, viewing areas, and decorative dark sky compliant lighting.

2F: Gateway Parking Facility
- Look for opportunities to expand parking facilities.
- Develop Gateway Parking Facility near village core.
- Provide pedestrian linkages to the village core and Waterfront.
- Investigate technologies for ‘green’ and sustainable construction and stormwater practices.
- Provide improved lighting for security and safety.
- Investigate opportunities for wayfinding and interpretive signage at key locations.
Alternative 2

- Highland Falls Marina
- Marina Support Facility
- Marina Dock Access
- Waterfront Park - Promenade: Expansion and Pavilion
- Waterfront Park - Peninsula: Promenade Extension and Fishing Dock
- Gateway Parking Facility

Highland Falls Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study
Alternative 2 Overall Schematic Design
June 1, 2017
Alternative 2

- Highland Falls Marina
- Marina Support Facility
- Marina Dock Access
- Waterfront Park - Promenade: Expansion and Pavilion
- Waterfront Park - Peninsula: Promenade Extension and Fishing Dock
- Gateway Parking Facility

Highland Falls
Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study

Alternative 2
Schematic Design Enlargement (1 of 2)

June 1, 2017
Alternative 2

- Highland Falls Marina
- Marina Support Facility
- Marina Dock Access
- Waterfront Park - Promenade: Expansion and Pavilion
- Waterfront Park - Peninsula: Promenade Extension and Fishing Dock
- Gateway Parking Facility
5.0 Alternative 3

5.1 Program Development

Alternative 3 builds upon Alternatives 1 and 2, expanding the scale and waterfront presence of the marina by adding a large scale boat landing, pier, and additional boat slips. This expanded infrastructure will allow for increased tourism opportunities to benefit the greater Highland Falls community. The following photographs serve as Alternative 3 inspirational images.

Above: expanding the marina infrastructure will allow for large vessel docking.

Above: a large scale boat landing will allow city tour / cruise boats to directly access Highland Falls.

Above: an example of a large scale boat landing in Bolton, New York.
5.2 Program Summary and Concept Plan

3A: Highland Falls Hudson River Gateway

- Expand the waterfront peninsula and promenade to include a new pier capable of servicing large vessel docking (i.e. cruise boats, charter ships, etc.).
- Provide expanded dock access adjacent to the new pier.
- Encourage cross-municipal collaboration with cross-river taxis to leverage neighboring traffic and infrastructure, encourage tourism expansion, and manage visitor flow.
6.0 Next Steps

6.1 Planning Level
Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate

The primary goal of the current study is to assess the feasibility of improved public waterfront access and redevelopment opportunities within the project area. Given the project is in the initial planning phase, the development of detailed construction cost estimates is not possible, as the level of detail in the potential design alternatives has not been developed. As such, planning level order of magnitude cost estimates are presented for information only, based on general project examples and construction knowledge of projects with similar scope of work.

See has the Schematic Design Alternative Summary, page 6-5 for project component references. Each planning level order of magnitude cost estimate listed below includes general conditions, site preparation, demolition, earthwork, and soft costs. Land purchase costs are not included within the estimate below.

Alternative 1

Connect Downtown to the Waterfront

This project component consists of the gateway and streetscape enhancements, Station Hill Road improvements, the waterfront linkage trail along Station Hill Road, and overlook improvements at the hairpin turn.

Depending on pavement material selection, the extent of decorative lighting, and stormwater management improvements, the order of magnitude construction costs for pedestrian and vehicular streetscape improvements to connect downtown to the waterfront can range from $250,000 to $500,000 for projects of similar length and scope.

Waterfront Park Development (Initial)

Initial short-term development of this project component can occur in order to quickly establish and provide public access to the waterfront.

The order of magnitude construction costs for minor walkway installations and circulation improvements, new benches, and site clean-up can range from $90,000 to $110,000 for projects of similar size and scope.
Alternative 1 (Continued)

Waterfront Park Development (Full)

The full waterfront park development project component consists of parking area and drop-off improvements, a picnic area and recreational destination at the train depot, railroad crossing safety improvements, promenade and peninsula river walkway improvements, and a kayak / canoe launch.

Depending on pavement material selection, the extent of green infrastructure/stormwater management improvements, and furnishing selection, the order of magnitude construction costs for the full build-out of Alternate 2’s waterfront park development can range from $500,000 to $750,000 for projects of similar size and scope.

Alternative 2

Highland Falls Marina Development

This project component consists of the adaptive reuse of the historic train depot, marina and dock access improvements, support facility and infrastructure development, promenade and peninsula improvements, pavilion development, a fishing dock, and sustainable shoreline waterfront expansion.

Depending on pavement material selection, the extent of internal remodelling and new architectural development, stormwater management improvements, and furnishing provisions, the order of magnitude construction costs for marina development can range from $2,000,000 to $3,000,000 for projects of similar size and scope.
Alternative 2 (Continued)

Satellite Parking Extension

This project component consists of the development of a satellite parking facility near the gateway entrance into the project area.

Depending on pavement material selection, the extent of decorative lighting, and stormwater management improvements, the order of magnitude construction costs for a satellite parking extension can range from $100,000 to $150,000 for projects of similar size and scope.

Alternative 3

Hudson River Gateway

This project component consists of the port extension, the dock expansion, and the development of a large scale boat landing.

Depending on pavement material selection, stormwater management improvements, and furnishing provisions, the order of magnitude construction costs for pedestrian and vehicular streetscape improvements to connect downtown to the waterfront can range from $1,000,000 to $1,500,000 for projects of similar length and scope.
### 6.2 Grant Funding Opportunity Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Potential Funding Source</th>
<th>What It Will Fund</th>
<th>Date Grant Due, Funding / Match Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing Study:</strong></td>
<td>Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Grant Program</td>
<td>Community/Regional Planning: Comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, site plans</td>
<td>February 3, May 5, September 8 $10,000 max / 50% match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This grant could assist in the</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Development: Tourism, agriculture protection plans and techniques, main street and waterfront revitalization plans and implementation techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>funding of a study to determine</td>
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<td>Natural Resource Protection: Natural resource inventories and management plans, critical environmental area designations, natural resource protection ordinances</td>
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<tr>
<td>how the waterfront site</td>
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<td>Cultural Resource Protection: Cultural resource inventories, historic preservation plans/ordinances</td>
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<tr>
<td>should be best marketed</td>
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<td>Scenic Resource Protection: Viewshed analysis, scenic impact review guidelines, scenic road protection, development of scenic easement programs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Open Space Protection: Open space inventories, comprehensive open space, recreation and trails plans, development of conservation easement programs, transfer of development rights ordinances</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Park and Trail Development:</strong></td>
<td>NYS DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) -or- Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (LWRS)</td>
<td>A LWRP consists of a planning document prepared by a community, and the program established to implement the plan. An LWRP may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect a community’s entire waterfront, or it may address the most critical issues facing a significant portion of its waterfront. A shorter less complicated process known as a LWRS could be substituted if the Village wanted to concentrate primarily on the waterfront parcel.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No min or max / 25% Match</td>
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<td>This grant could fund the</td>
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<td>planning, design, and</td>
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<td>construction after completion of</td>
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<td>a comprehensive plan for the</td>
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<tr>
<td>whole waterfront</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Site Development:</strong></td>
<td>Grant Program for Parks, Preservation and Heritage</td>
<td>For the acquisition, development and planning of parks and recreational facilities to preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures for park, recreation or conservation purposes and for structural assessments and/or planning for such projects. This includes acquisition of a permanent easement or fee title to lands, waters or structures for use by all segments of the population for park, recreation, conservation or preservation purposes. To be used for all three program areas where acquisition is of more importance than development.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) $500,000 max / 50% Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This grant could be a whole site</td>
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<tr>
<td>planning and construction</td>
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<td>project including acquisition of</td>
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<td>land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoreline Trail</td>
<td>NYS OPRHP Recreational Trails Program</td>
<td>The is a State-administered, Federal assistance program to provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No limit / 50% match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoreline Trail</td>
<td>Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Grant Program</td>
<td>This annual grant program is dedicated to funding recreational trail projects. Special consideration is given to projects that seek to implement the goals of the Greenway Trail Program. Eligible project categories include: Trail Construction; Trail Planning and Design; Trail Rehabilitation or Improvement; Trail Education or Interpretation.</td>
<td>September $10,000 max / 50% Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Development (Private)</td>
<td>Empire State Development</td>
<td>Funding is for economic development initiatives and projects that create or retain jobs, generate increased economic activity and improve the economic and social viability and vitality of local communities. Includes: Acquisition of existing business and/or assets; Demolition and environmental remediation; New construction, renovation or leasehold improvements; Acquisition of furniture and fixtures; Planning and feasibility studies; Site and infrastructure development; Inventory; Training; Soft costs; Working capital; Marketing and advertising.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No limit / 50% Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Development (Town-Owned)</td>
<td>NYS DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program</td>
<td>A LWRP consists of a planning document prepared by a community, and the program established to implement the plan. An LWRP may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect a community’s entire waterfront, or it may address the most critical issues facing a significant portion of its waterfront. A shorter less complicated process known as a LWRS could be substituted if the Village wanted to concentrate primarily on the waterfront parcel.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No limit / 25% Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Cleanup</td>
<td>NYSDEC Environmental Restoration Grants</td>
<td>The Department of Environmental Conservation provides grants that are meant for environmental improvement and protection. The grants specifically focus on areas that include, water protection, environmental cleanup, land and forest protection, environmental justice, and solid waste.</td>
<td>Rolling 10% match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Potential Funding Source</td>
<td>What It Will Fund</td>
<td>Date Grant Due, Funding / Match Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access Road and Parking Lot Improvements</td>
<td>NYS Environmental Facilities Corps Green Innovation Grant Program</td>
<td>Corporation (EFC) distributes grants to assist environmental initiatives. The EFC deals with issues pertaining to water reuse and conservation, energy efficiency, and environmental innovation. The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) supports projects across New York State that utilize unique stormwater infrastructure design and create cutting-edge green technologies. GIGP provides funding for highly-visible projects which: Protect and improve water quality; Spur innovation in stormwater management; Build capacity locally and beyond by inspiring others to build and maintain green infrastructure; Facilitate the transfer of new technologies and practices to other areas of the State.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No limit / 50% match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation of Depot</td>
<td>NYS OPRHP Historic Preservation Program</td>
<td>Improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties on the State or National Register.</td>
<td>July 28 (4 pm) No limit / 50% Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation of Depot</td>
<td>Preservation NY</td>
<td>A signature grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the Preservation League of New York State. The applicant group may apply for short-term, discrete projects that advance the preservation of historic sites, museums, arts facilities including opera houses and theaters, and other culturally important institutions that are located in historic buildings and structures that are open to the public. These professional studies include: 1. Building Condition Surveys 2. Engineering/Structural Analyses 3. Feasibility/Reuse Studies 4. Specialized Conservation Studies.</td>
<td>March 27 $3,000 / $500 Match</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The summarized funding opportunities within the overview chart occurred in 2016, all potential funding sources are subject to change for the calendar year 2017 and beyond.
6.3 Recommended Next Steps

In gauging public interest in redeveloping the waterfront and gaining public access to the river, the Feasibility Study found interest levels high and in strong support of further development. One of the most popular programming features from the public’s perspective is the redevelopment of the marina. The recommended first step moving forward with the marina is to complete a thorough marketing study and development strategy to ensure that a marina would be economically feasible and fiscally responsive to market conditions. This would provide the information necessary to both ensure the commercial viability of a marina, as well as to determine the appropriate scale of operations. Given the spatial constraints of the site, future development must take the necessary precautions to ensure that the marina operations, vehicular traffic, and boat storage and service does not interfere with, infringe upon, or prohibit the public’s use and enjoyment of the parkland and other programmed site elements, features, and modes of transportation.

Due to the project area’s waterfront location, extensive permitting can be expected for all future proposed development. Multiple jurisdictional agencies will require applications and review, including (but not limited to) the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Additionally, the completion of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) or Strategy (LWRS) will be necessary for obtaining funding assistance for the recommendations that will be included within the program or strategy. Supplemental information on the LWRP grant process can be found in this study’s appendix.
Highland Falls Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study

Schematic Design

Alternative Summary

June 1, 2017

Alternative 1
- Connect Downtown to the Waterfront
  - Gateway and Streetscape Enhancements
  - Station Hill Road Waterfront Linkage Trail and Overlook
- Waterfront Park Development
  - Parking Area and Drop-Off
  - Picnic Area and Recreational Destination at the Train Depot
  - Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements
  - Promenade and Peninsula River Walkway
  - Kayak and Canoe Launch

Alternative 2
- Highland Falls Marina Development
  - Train Depot Adaptive Reuse
  - Marina and Dock Access
  - Support Facility
  - Promenade and Peninsula Improvements and Expansion
  - Pavilion
  - Fishing Dock
- Satellite Parking Extension
  - Gateway Parking Facility

Alternative 3
- Hudson River Gateway
  - Port Extension
  - Dock Expansion
  - Large Scale Boat Landing

Next Steps
Supplemental Information on Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Grants

The proceeding information is furnished by the New York State Department of State Office of Planning and Development. Additional information can be found at the NYS OPRHP website http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/ or by direct contact:

Ken Smith at the New York State Department of State
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12231
Phone: (518) 474-6000
Email: kenneth.smith@dos.state.ny.us,
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND  
Title 11: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Grants

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program provides 50/50 matching grants to eligible municipalities on a competitive basis to revitalize communities and waterfronts. Currently no solicitations are open.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

Eligible applicants are municipalities (villages, towns, cities, and counties) located within the State Coastal Area or along a major inland waterway designated pursuant to Executive Law, Article 42.

For general program planning to advance any of the eligible activities listed below:

- Any municipality located on the State's coastal waters or on a designated inland waterway, or a county that encompasses an eligible waterbody/waterway and is working in partnership with one or more eligible municipalities.

For planning, feasibility, design, or marketing of specific projects to advance eligible activities:

- Any municipality, or a county working in partnership with a municipality, currently preparing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, or with an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

For construction projects needed to advance eligible activities:

- Any municipality, or a county working in partnership with a municipality, with an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Program or with the relevant Local Waterfront Revitalization Program component substantially completed.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

We anticipate funding will be available for the following grant categories:

- Preparing Regional Strategies for Community and Waterfront Revitalization
- Completing or Implementing a Local or Regional Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Redeveloping Urban Waterfronts
- Revitalizing Downtowns and Hamlets
- Planning or Constructing Water Trails
- Improving Water Quality

Preparing Regional Strategies for Community and Waterfront Revitalization

Traditionally focused at the municipal level, waterfront revitalization programs are evolving to provide a regional framework for communities to cooperatively address waterfront revitalization issues and to advance ongoing and emerging state initiatives, including community sustainability, smart growth, environmental justice, climate-smart communities and ecosystem-based management. Regional strategies for community and waterfront revitalization bring to bear the resources and authorities of multiple levels of government to address all relevant issues for a given region, and engage the public in the management of coastal, waterfront, and related resources and their use. They will focus on economic development and revitalization, capitalize on
regional assets, and result in sustainable communities and regions. Applicants may apply for funding to start new regional strategies, or to complete and promote existing regional strategies.

**Completing or Implementing a Local or Regional Waterfront Revitalization Program**

A waterfront revitalization program is a comprehensive land and water use program that expresses a vision for the waterfront and refines state policy to reflect local or regional needs. It can also be prepared as a series of components, advancing completion of a program in stages by addressing the highest priority issues first. Completing a program follows a step-by-step process that advances from a vision to implementation, and is associated with numerous benefits including: the ability to attract appropriate development that will respect unique cultural and natural characteristics; technical assistance as part of a long-term partnership among local government, community-based organizations, and the State; the ability to ensure that state and federal permitting, funding, and direct actions are consistent with the approved program; and increased ability to obtain public and private funding for identified projects. View the Making the Most of Your Waterfront guidebook at [http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/WFRevitalization/LWRP.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/WFRevitalization/LWRP.html)

Waterfront revitalization programs are evolving to provide a framework for local communities to address ongoing and emerging state initiatives including smart growth and ecosystem-based management. Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs can play a significant role in addressing all relevant issues for a given place, bringing to bear the resources and authorities of local government, and engaging the public in the management of coastal and waterfront resources and their use.

Building on a vision and revitalization strategy, eligible applicants may apply for grant funding:

- to complete the preparation of a local or regional waterfront revitalization program
- to incorporate smart growth and ecosystem-based management tools and principles in Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs
- to complete general planning related to the completion, revision or implementation of a local or regional waterfront revitalization program
- for project or site-specific planning, feasibility, design, or marketing needed to implement an approved waterfront revitalization program, or to implement or advance approved plans or strategies developed as part of local or regional waterfront revitalization program planning
- for the construction of projects necessary to implement an approved waterfront revitalization program, or a substantially-completed component of a waterfront revitalization program in preparation
- to develop systems for defining and measuring progress and success in community and waterfront revitalization
- for the development of local or intermunicipal Geographic Information Systems to improve management of coastal areas and resources

**Redeveloping Urban Waterfronts**

Redevelopment of waterfronts is essential for many urban neighborhoods. The Department of State, working with other state agencies, provides both financial and technical assistance to prepare and implement redevelopment strategies for urban waterfront areas.

Eligible applicants may apply for grant funding to advance the preparation or implementation of site-specific urban waterfront redevelopment projects.
Revitalizing Downtowns and Hamlets
Downtown and hamlet revitalization includes activities designed to create a positive image of a municipality’s downtown commercial district or hamlet center(s), to encourage consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the downtown or hamlet, and to improve their physical and economic characteristics. Eligible applicants are encouraged to undertake coordinated activities to lay the foundation for a comprehensive downtown or hamlet revitalization program based on the approach used throughout the country by the National Main Street Center.

A comprehensive downtown or hamlet revitalization program includes development of a downtown revitalization vision, identification of the economic and market niche of the downtown or hamlet, preparation of a revitalization program and implementation strategy consistent with the vision and niche, establishment of a sustainable organizational capacity for implementation of the strategy, and the implementation of the vision and strategy. Eligible applicants may apply for grant funding for planning and implementation activities.

Planning or Constructing Water Trails
Blueways are small boat and paddling routes that combine water-based recreation and environmental awareness and allow users to travel between designated stops that link New York’s heritage sites, trails, greenways, historic resources, scenic byways, and revitalized community centers. Blueway trails contribute to regional economies, and individual blueway projects can be catalysts for local economic development and promote environmental preservation and stewardship by connecting communities to nearby waterways.

Applicants may apply for grant funding to undertake the planning and design of regional blueway trails. Applicants should demonstrate how their proposal complements, builds on, or fills gaps in existing corridor or regional plans, or how their proposal creates a regionally-integrated land and water-based revitalization and development strategy.

Improving Water Quality
Regions are dependent on high-quality surface and ground water resources for water supply, recreation, tourism, and to support agriculture, local businesses, industry, and economic development. Improving water quality requires constructing capital projects and the management of land use to reduce point and nonpoint source pollution.

Significant contributing areas surrounding and draining into a waterbody often lie within more than one municipal jurisdiction. Consequently, advancing on-the-ground projects and preparing watershed management plans on a cooperative regional basis has been shown to be an effective way to achieve local, regional and statewide goals for the high quality water needed to sustain natural resources and economic development. Preparing a watershed management plan involves significant public engagement and an arrangement for long-term involvement, often through an intermunicipal watershed organization. Networking with other communities, agencies and organizations with experience in the successful preparation and implementation of watershed management plans can lead to efficiencies that minimize costs.

A watershed management plan is comprehensive in its description of existing water quality and watershed conditions, including assets, impairments and threats, as well as in its identification and prioritization of actions needed to protect and restore water resources. A watershed management plan also contains implementation strategies that identify stakeholder roles and the financial and institutional resources needed to undertake these priorities. To advance priority actions, plans contain the means to measure success, track implementation, and monitor performance.
Applicants may apply for grant funding to prepare, complete, update, or implement a comprehensive watershed management plan. View Watershed Plans: Protecting and Restoring Water Quality, a guidebook prepared by the Department of State in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation at http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/waterResourcesMgmt/progsummary.html

AWARD CONDITIONS & REQUIREMENTS:

Awards are for a maximum term of five years. The initial contract term can be up to three years, with the possibility of two one year extensions, provided satisfactory progress is being made. There is no maximum or minimum grant award amount. State assistance payments are made to grant recipients on a reimbursement basis, based on actual expenditures for eligible costs up to the amount of the grant awarded. The completion of periodic progress reports is required.

LOCAL MATCH

Grants will be available for up to 50% of the total eligible project costs set forth in the application and as approved by the Department. Local match can include in-kind services, donated professional services, and volunteer services. Local match cannot include other Environmental Protection Fund grants or federal grants. Additionally, Title 11 EPF cannot be used for land acquisition. Land acquisition may be used as local match in conjunction with eligible construction projects.

CONTACT/ADDITIONAL PROGRAM INFORMATION:

The Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Request for Applications including scoring criteria, the list of Coastal Waterbodies and Designated Inland Waterways used in determining applicant eligibility and workshop schedule will be available at http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/grantOpportunities/epf_lwrpGrants.html

For more information visit our website http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/ or contact Ken Smith at the New York State Department of State, 99 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12231, call (518) 474-6000, email kenneth.smith@dos.state.ny.us,