

City of Watertown

Resources are located between NYS DOT Start/End Mile Point Jefferson County and Town of Watertown 27.92 through 29.19 & 00.00-4.20

Formed in 1800 as a hamlet centered around what is known today as “Public Square” by New England pioneers, the City of Watertown is centrally located in Jefferson County. The abundant supply of water provided by the Black River served as a power supply to businesses and industries and influenced the patterns for commercial and residential development. Incorporated as a village in 1816 and as a city in 1869, the city grew rapidly during the first 100-years and attracting many prominent investors and visitors due to the commercial success of the area. The architectural design of historic homes, businesses, houses of worship and industry are reflective of days-gone-by.

Today the city offers visitors access to 39 restaurants, overnight accommodations at one of 29 hotels and motels and one bed and breakfast totaling 1182 rooms, recreational activities and events, shopping, medical services, cultural activities and events, 106 gas/service stations, and serves as a regional hub for commercial/industrial development to surrounding communities. The NYS Governor’s Office recently designated the city as one of 12 NYS “Quality Communities” in recognition of its ongoing revitalization efforts. Currently the city is engaged in developing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan to guide future development along the Black River with funding from the New York Department of State.

Complementary preservation and rehabilitation projects have been ongoing through Neighbors of Watertown to restore older homes and businesses throughout the city utilizing public/private funding through the sale of historic tax credits and the NYS Office Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, Housing Urban Development, the Office of Small Cities, as well as funding through the Local Trust Corporation. Neighbors of Watertown is currently implementing a \$6.2 million housing renovation project of the historic Emerson Row Apartment Building and nearby housing along the 700 Block of State Street which will leverage an additional \$4 million through traditional lending institutions. In addition, preliminary planning efforts are underway to develop a \$14 million preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration project targeting key parcels in downtown and build upon a \$260,000 Façade Easement Program.

Just as significant to the overall experience of the visitor is the reflection of architectural design documenting the historic significance of privately owned residences and businesses located within business & residential areas throughout the city yet maintained and enhanced through private funding.

Many privately owned and operated entertainment & recreational facilities serve as points of destination to travelers are located in or near the city include kayaking and whitewater rafting located along the 8-mile stretch of the Black River from May to Columbus Day. Down hill skiing, snowboarding and tubing are offered at the Dry Hill Ski Area during the winter months with 3 lifts to 7 trails ranging from

easy to difficult. The Little Theatre of Watertown is one of the oldest theater groups in New York State and offers visitor's dinner during performances periodically during the year. Quaint gift shops, stores & restaurants located in the downtown business district offer shoppers an opportunity to browse for gifts, souvenirs and/or enjoy a relaxing lunch. Located on the out skirts of the city are one-stop shopping centers, indoor malls, and mini malls that serve as destinations to visitors offering a broad range of fast food eateries, services, entertainment, and product lines shopping areas.

Tourism:

The importance of tourism to local communities in stimulating economic development opportunities along the western segment of the Olympic Byway is documented in the Strategic Plan for Tourism in Jefferson County, Jefferson County Economic Development Strategy, Black River Economic Adjustment Strategy, and A Tourism Plan for the City of Watertown, New York. Absent from the identified plans is a designated regional entity to orchestrate and follow-through on recommendations identified in the plan. Typically, an individual agency/organization/entity requesting the report will advance specific elements or components of the plan. However, the absence of accountability in a regional planning effort short-circuits opportunities to maximize economic benefit.

In January 2003 and following a lengthy discussion by committee members representing the western segment of the Olympic Byway Local Advisory Committee, unanimously agreed the strategic positioning of the Olympic Byway Tourist Information Center was crucial to attracting visitors into local communities with greater opportunities for success based upon the high volumes of visitors accessing services along outer Arsenal Street and traversing Interstate 81. In addition, committee members identified the need to disseminate Olympic Byway information at tourist information centers located in neighboring communities to broaden and expand opportunities for benefit.

In addition, commercial business & property owners significantly impact the overall experience of visitors through the delivery of retail services, accommodations, entertainment and activities, which serve as attractions and destination points along the corridor. While the draft CMP does not list private businesses as a corridor resource it does acknowledge their contribution to the overall effort and emphasizes the importance in maintaining the flow of communication at all levels to ensure success. Identified in the following draft CMP is a list of resources, recommendations, and likely partners in orchestrating the regional effort.

Transportation:

The automobile is the primary mode of transportation for visitors arriving in Watertown. The major transportation route is Interstate 81, traversing North into Canada and South into the Southern United States, and provides three exit points into the city. In addition, US Route 11, NYS Routes 3, 12, 12E, 12F, and 283 converge at the downtown Public-Square.

Cooperative efforts between the city and state transportation department's are engaged in the preliminary phase of developing a \$9 million reconstruction plan to redesign portions of Route 3 along State Street to accommodate turning lanes, streetscape improvements, and replace century old water/sewer lines in 2005-06. In addition, the NYS Department of Transportation has drafted a design report and environmental assessment of Route 3 over Interstate 81 in preparation to reconstruct the Arsenal Street Bridge and surrounding area with a proposed project start date of 2005-06, based upon available funding (Draft Design Report/Environmental Assessment; PIN 701504 State Route 3 Town of Hounsfield to Stateway Plaza BIN 1000490 – Route 3 Over Interstate 81 Interchange #45- Jefferson County August 2002). Ornamental lighting, a new Gazebo bandstand, brick paved crosswalks/sidewalk areas, and tree plantings are some of the \$1.2 million streetscape enhancements scheduled for the 2003 construction season in downtown public-square by city and state transportation departments with TEA-21 funding (Downtown Watertown: Comprehensive Traffic Study).

Bicycle:

Heavily congested vehicular traffic areas and confusing traffic patterns throughout the city challenge and discourage bicyclists from traversing the corridor. City planners are working to design a plan that will route bicycle traffic along secondary routes adjacent to the Black River as opportunities and funding become available. Currently, the designated bicycle route is directed along the Seaway Trail and into the city along Route 12 from Dexter onto the newly reconstructed Coffeen Street to the intersection of City Center Drive. Bicyclists are then left to identify the preferred route on their own and traverse heavy traffic through the city to link with the designated byway along the Route 3 corridor on State Street.

Pedestrian Use:

Pedestrian travel throughout the city is readily available to visitors with an extensive network of sidewalks to traverse. Currently, the city is undergoing a 5-year implementation initiative to maintain and reconstruct existing sidewalks throughout the city. Interpretive and directional signage strategically located along the route and at eye level would facilitate greater pedestrian use.

Airport:

Airline service to the region is available at the Dexter International Airport provided by U.S. Airway. Discussions between the city and the Jefferson County Legislature recently opened to probe interest in a regional approach to funding and managing the airport as well as exploring opportunities to connect flights to major cities and routes.

Taxi and car rental:

5 privately owned taxicab companies currently offer services to visitors. In addition, 9 rental car companies currently exist in Watertown.

City Bus Service:

The Citibus Public Transit Service has a fleet of 3 buses providing limited bus routes to points of interest, which include the Salmon Run Mall and Seaway Plaza (Citibus Public Transit – Map & Schedule). Currently, city buses do not offer visitor routes to tourist attractions throughout the city. The city recently received 5 new buses to update its service and plans to add an additional bus to expand existing routes within 1-2 years.

Signage:

Signage is located at points of entrance to the city informing visitors of their arrival to the City of Watertown. However, signage is functional, unattractive and inconsistent with any theme. Identified in the Draft “Tourism Plan for the City of Watertown” and the LAC is the need for interpretive and directional signage located at strategic points of interest and intersections to facilitate pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular flows of traffic. Identified throughout the plan are strategic locations for interpretive signage –i.e. Historic structures along the Public-Square & industrial sites (Sewalls Island, Veterans Memorial Walkway) to inform visitors of their significance, City Rotary Fishing Access & Car-top Launch Site, Black River-Huntington Bike/Hike Trail, Route 3 Wave, Waterworks Park, Thompson Park, NY State Living Museum, Veterans Memorial Riverwalk: Picnic Area & Pavilion, Flower Memorial Library, Jefferson County Historical Society, DEC Fishing Access Point on Vanduzee Street, Alex T. Duffey Fairgrounds: Picnic Area & Fishing Access, Rafting Companies, and a visitor Center & Community Directories strategically placed throughout the city. .

Directional signage to assist bicyclers traveling the bike path into the city along Coffeen Street is clearly marked on the designated roadway. However, once bicyclers intersect Coffeen Street & City center Drive bicycle signage is no where to be found and bicyclers are left to find their own way through heavily congested and confused areas of traffic to navigate up Massey Street to the intersection of Arsenal Street and onto Public Square and up State Street. The most skilled local bicycler will be challenged through the maze of traffic let alone a visitor unfamiliar with the terrain.

In addition, directional signage along pedestrian routes and positioned at eye level would facilitate pedestrian traffic, enhancing the overall experience of visitors. Identified in the Tourism Plan for the City of Watertown, New York are suggested locations such as at intersection points entering and exiting Public-Square.

The NYS Living Museum is the second largest attraction next to the 1000 Islands and Boldt Castle and has formed an informal ad hoc sub-committee involving representatives from the NYS Living Museum, Seaway Trail, Tug Hill Commission, and Watertown City Planning Department to identify opportunities to build upon area resources. Committee recommendations include the design and construction of a kiosk located at the NYS Living Museum. The proposed kiosk is designed with four sides to include a locator map and area attractions, brochures, and information regarding the NYS Living Museum and Map of the Seaway Trail. Preliminary design and construction costs during the 2003 fiscal year are \$5,000, plus/minus, with an additional \$3,000 to add 2 panels in 2004, plus/minus.

Implementation:

Members of the LAC/LSC assume the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) will provide a regional perspective to communities implementing projects along the corridor and partnering with the identified stakeholders.

In addition, members of the LAC/LSC suggested the committees continue to meet on a quarterly basis to maintain the flow of communication, build upon the momentum of the committee's efforts to enhance, attract, promote, and market byway resources. The Draft CMP also identifies likely partners associated with the resources to implement the recommendations and serves as a reference list to track progress.

<i>Resources and Special Sites & Attractions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Likely Partners or Stakeholders</i>
<i>Natural & Recreational</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans’ Memorial Riverwalk –is handicapped accessible and houses public restrooms, located along the river off Newell Street off Route 11. A small pavilion, limited car parking, and 10 picnic tables provide visitors an opportunity to pause and eat lunch while enjoying the scenic beauty of the river and/or enjoy an outdoor concert. Park benches, ornamental lighting & fencing and brick paved sidewalk invite visitors to stroll along the banks to observe kayak and/or white water enthusiasts as they traverse the Black River. In addition, visitors can fish or overlook the river from the observation deck. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to interconnect trail systems linking trails throughout the city creating walking/biking trail as funding becomes available; • Ongoing maintenance and enhancements to attract visitors; • Interpretive signage resistant to vandals to inform visitors of the significance as funding opportunities are presented; • Develop a citywide plan to promote and market the area; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Watertown Planning Department, Watertown Planning & Zoning Boards, Chamber of Commerce; • City DPW Crews;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black River – traverses through the center of Watertown between Coffeen & West Main Streets and along Newell Street, Factory & Huntington Streets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to complete a Phase I portion of developing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) incorporating public involvement and interpretation and utilizing an approved \$15,000 NYS DOS grant funding; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Watertown Planning Department, Jefferson County Planning;

<p>Visitors are attracted by the rush of water and rapids while admiring the natural rock formations and beauty along the waterfront.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to advance the preliminary design & modeling for the Rt. 3 Wave International competition events in 2005; • Ongoing efforts to identify areas of the river suitable for beginning and intermediate training Phase II of the LWRP. • Ongoing efforts to develop white water events. • Ongoing efforts develop a Black River exhibit at the zoo to inform visitors of the geology and habitats with the use of a lair map; • Implement LWRP recommendations based upon opportunities and funding availability; • Identify and enhance scenic vistas along the river; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City & County Planning Departments; • NYS-DOT, Jefferson County Highway Dept. & DPW crews as funding opportunities are presented.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterworks Park – adjacent to the Black River along outer Huntington Street the park offers free parking to accommodate 30 cars and a few picnic tables are provides to visitors as well as river access for canoe/kayaking, fishing and a short hiking trail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and general enhancements to picnic area; • Expand parking & picnic area as opportunities and funding is available; • Develop a plan to construct public restroom facilities as opportunities and funding is available; • Develop a cooperative plan to promote and market the area; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City DPW crews; • City and Planning Boards, Chamber of Commerce, Jefferson County Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watertown Rotary Fishing Access and Car-top Launch is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and general enhancements to the area to attract visitors; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watertown Rotary Club, NYS DEC, Chamber of

<p>handicapped accessible and located along the Black River on Rt. 3 just inside the City boundary line opposite Huntington Street has adequate parking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to promote and market the resource as part of a city-wide tourism campaign; 	<p>Commerce</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orion Power Sewalls Island Car-top Launch – is located off Huntington Street offers limited parking and provides visitors with opportunities for shoreline fishing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand parking area as opportunities and funding are available; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orion Power, NYS DEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce –located just off the Coffeen Street exit along Route 81 at 1241 Coffeen Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p><i>Cultural and Historical</i></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex T. Duffy Fairgrounds – located in the city off Coffeen Street, the fairgrounds date back to the mid-late 1800’s. A large picnic area with adjacent fishing, playground and RV sites and multi-use sports fields invite visitors to access services. In 1983 a multi-use facility was added to serve as a stadium providing a seating capacity of 3,500. The facility is used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Ongoing maintenance and general enhancements to the facility; • Ongoing promotion and marketing campaign to attract visitors; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Alex T. Duffy Fairgrounds Board of Directors, City & Planning Boards, Special Interest Groups

<p>to host special events and activities throughout the year. Special events include but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. July Fair 2. Ice Skating 3. Skate Park 4. Sporting matches 5. Concerts 6. Craft Show 7. RV/Car Shows Conventions 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jefferson County Historical Society – Housed in the Paddock Mansion at 228 Washington Street and constructed in 1876, the accredited American Association of Museums offers visitors exhibit rooms of period furnishings, regional history displays and changing exhibits and gift shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to construct the new \$50,000 handicap accessible elevator in the main museum building (projected completion date within 1-yr.); • Ongoing promotion and marketing campaign to attract visitors; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYS Capital Aid Grant Funding; • Historical Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sci-Tech Center – located at 154 Stone Street the center is handicapped accessible and provides visitors with a hands-on scientific and technology museum with a variety of exhibits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to promote and market the facility to visitors; • Ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the facility; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sci-Tech Center Board of Directors;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library – located at 229 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing preservation efforts of the interior/exterior architectural features of the building as funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.P. Flower Memorial Library Board of Trustees

<p>Washington Street, the marble Grecian style edifice was constructed in the early 20th century and is handicapped accessible. Unique in its design, features, and artwork, the rotunda is central to the building and showcases the building with materials of marble, gold, and bronze. The reading rooms are large and inviting and boast incredible artwork as well as the architectural detail. A pictorial history of Watertown and Jefferson County is displayed on the mezzanine level. Visitors are attracted by the beautiful marble edifice and historical mural paintings.</p>	<p>opportunities are presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to promote and market library resources; 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thompson Park Conservancy & Zoo: NYS Living Museum - is handicapped accessible and located off State Street on Park Drive. Recently completed a \$500,000 construction project housing the visitors center and gift shop, the park and conservancy features a 355- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to expand exhibits at the NYS Living Museum as opportunities and funding are available; • Ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the facility; • Ongoing efforts to promote and market the facility to attract visitors; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Thomson Park Conservancy, Inc., City of Watertown, Jefferson County Legislature, & available funding opportunities through NYS. • NYSLM, Chamber of Commerce, 100 Island Tourism Council

<p>acre open space area encompassing the park, Children’s Playground, Tennis Courts, Fitness Course, 18-hole golf Course, Swimming Pool, Cross Country Ski & Walking Trails, Scenic Overlooks, Snow Sledding, Soccer Goals, Gift Shop 8-reserved picnic sites providing an estimated 50 tables and a Pavilion. In addition, the newly accredited American Zoo and Aquarium Association Zoo as housed on the 32-acre NYS Living Museum and features northeastern North American wildlife species in their native habitat and serves as an education center to school children. Several special events & activities are also hosted throughout the year ,</p>	<p>(Supported by NYSLM Strategic Plan, 2000 Jefferson County Strategic Plan for Tourism and 2003 Tourism Plan for the City of Watertown)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional churches-constructed in the early 1900’s and are located throughout the city reflect the cultural & historical significance in shaping patterns of development in the city and character of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and general enhancements to the buildings and grounds; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denominational groups and respective boards;

<p>people visible through the architectural design and artifacts.</p>		
<p><i>Historic Downtown Business District</i> – is located on Public Square along Route 3, at the crossroads of Arsenal Street and State Street. A destination point, visitors are attracted and intrigued by the historic architectural structural designs associated with the early settlement of Watertown, independently owned and operated stores/shops, cultural institutions, government services, and seasonal events and attractions – i.e. the annual NYS Pageant, Farm and Craft Market, and festivals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing efforts to restore, rehabilitate, preserve and adaptive reuse of historic structures as funding is available; • Ongoing efforts to promote and market the historic downtown business district; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watertown Local Development, Downtown Business Association, • Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Business Association