

acre property that is owned by the Town of Wheatfield. The second site is the 15-acre Brzezinski property, which is located at 2040 River Road, immediately to the east. Both properties lie vacant and undeveloped.

The Brzezinski property was initially listed as an inactive hazardous waste site. Various investigations on the site identified industrial fill containing Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) and metals in the fill materials. However, according to the NYSDEC Division of Environmental Remediation (G. Sutton, January 2013), the site was delisted because the materials found there were either not significant enough to qualify the site as hazardous or there was not enough contamination found to represent a significant problem or threat to the public. The site does, however, contain industrial wastes that would need to be cleaned up and could restrict future use of the site (or portions of the site) for residential purposes.

The 4.2 -acre Town-owned site is listed as an inactive hazardous waste site (No. E932135) and was found to contain contamination from volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in soils that were above established standards. Historic filling of the property in the late 1970's and early 1980's occurred in various phases, raising the elevation of the site up to 10.5 feet in some places. The fill material consists of industrial wastes such as ash, cinders, firebrick, coal, foundry sand and slag. In addition, unknown slag-like material and an oily sheen on the groundwater surface and within the fill have been found, but not identified through laboratory analysis. It is also reported that the southern portion of the property was filled in with grinding wheel sand, extending the land approximately 100 feet to the south.

This property has been identified by the Town for remediation to enable the development of portions of the site for passive recreation and public access (much of the area would remain in its natural, wooded state). The Town applied to the NYSDEC for funding under the Environmental Restoration Program but there were no monies available and their application was terminated. The Town is currently working with Niagara County Office of Economic Development, who secured a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is conducting a second Phase II environmental audit as a part of the overall effort to investigate and remediate the site, as necessary. The Town is looking to redevelop this property for public access and limited passive recreation.

2.8 Historic, Cultural and Scenic Resources

2.8.1 Historic Sites and Structures

The Town of Wheatfield was formed in 1836 from the Town of Niagara. It is situated in the southwest part of Niagara County, surrounded by the Town of Lewiston and Town of Cambria to the north, Town of Pendleton to the east, City of North Tonawanda and Niagara River to the south, and the City of Niagara Falls and Town of Niagara to the west.

Prior to the formation of the Town, the first settlements in the area were made on the Niagara River, on and near the site of the City of North Tonawanda. Even in that vicinity, progress was slow, except for improving farm lands, until after the completion of the Erie Canal. There were few settlers within the limits of the Town prior to the war of 1812.

The first town meeting was held on June 6, 1836, in the schoolhouse of District No. 7, on the north line of the Town. The soil in the Town was generally clay loam and somewhat difficult to cultivate, but heavy crops of wheat could be grown on the land, thus giving the Town its name - Wheatfield.

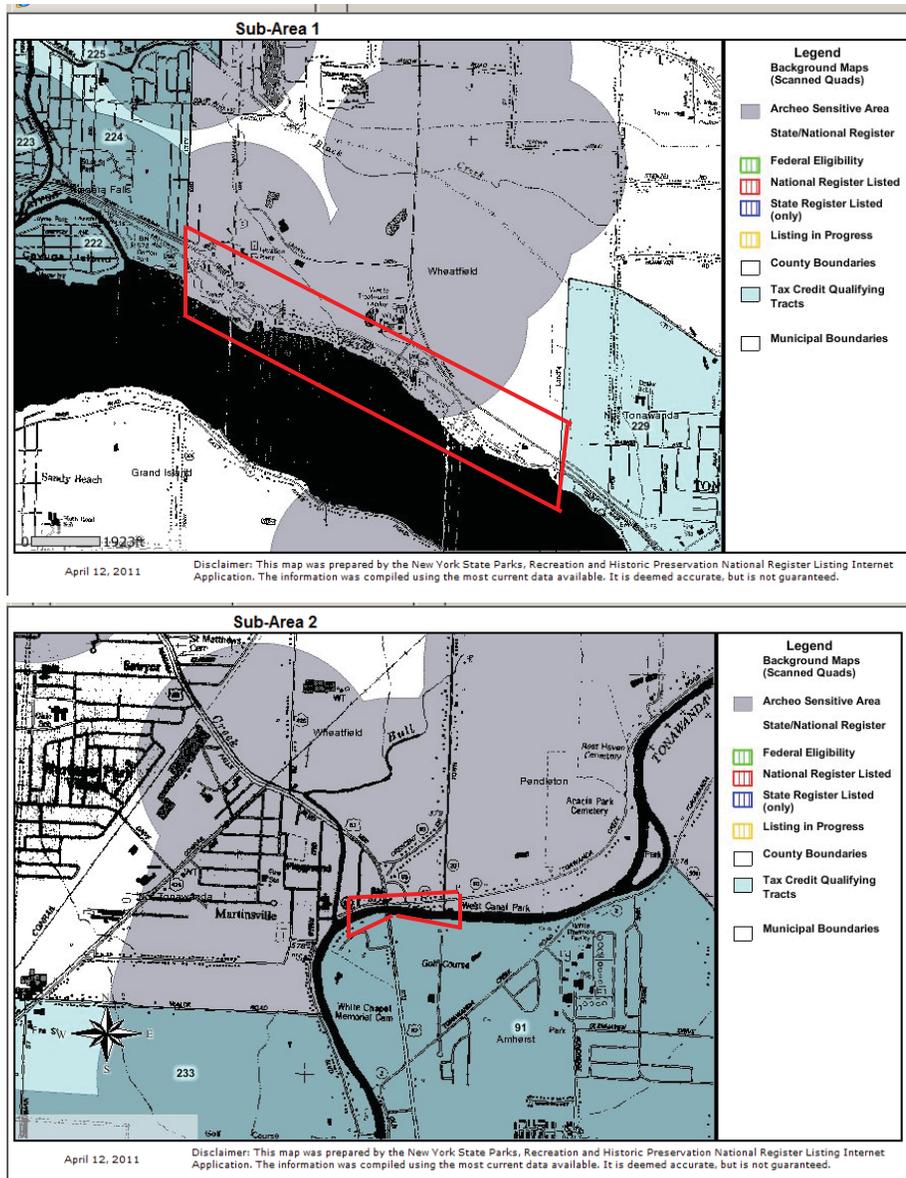
Within Wheatfield, starting in 1843, German immigrants established the communities of Bergholz, St. Johnsburg, Walmore, Martinsville, and Gratwick. The latter two communities are now part of North Tonawanda.

Later other communities were formed at railroad stops and along some well traveled highways. The River Road section of the Town, along the Niagara River, became a prosperous farm section in the 1920s that included the showplace "Wheatfield Farms". Along the river, there were vacation cottages, beaches, an amusement park, and nightclubs. Permanent housing has replaced many of the cottages and remnants of some bygone structures are still visible along River Road today.

Although this waterfront area in Sub-Area 1 enjoyed a rich past, there are no historic structures located within this area. There are also no historic sites in Sub-Area 2, which has been developed with residential uses in the mid to late 20th century.

2.8.2 Archaeological Resources

The location of the Wheatfield waterfront along the calmer reaches of the Niagara River and on Tonawanda Creek indicates that these areas may have been attractive for Native American settlement. No known sites of archaeological significance have been identified or are known to exist in either area, and both sub-areas have been considerably disturbed by clearing and development over the years. However, the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation archaeological sensitivity mapping indicates that much of the Sub-Area 1 waterfront and all of Sub-Area 2 waterfront is designated as archaeologically sensitive. Therefore, this office should be contacted when considering development projects within these areas or in other undisturbed areas along these waterfronts.



2.8.3 Scenic Resources

There are no Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS) within the Wheatfield LWRA, as designated by the Secretary of State (SASS's are currently limited to 6 areas in the Hudson River Valley and on Long Island). Although not formally designated, the scenic resources along the waterfront areas in the Town of Wheatfield are locally important. These scenic resources consist primarily of the dramatic vistas of the Niagara River and its shoreline, as well as the Erie Canal. River Road (State Route 384/265) is a segment of the NYS Great Lakes Seaway Trail and a designated National and State Scenic By-Way. Efforts should be made to enhance and improve this corridor in recognition of this designation. Efforts should also be taken to protect, and where possible, improve the visual quality and visual accessibility of the waterfront areas in the LWRA. Improved signage and the enhancement of gateway features should be considered. Furthermore, in accordance with federal regulations, the erection of new off-premise signs along State and

National Scenic By-Ways is prohibited. The Town of Wheatfield sign regulations currently restrict off premises signs to directional signage for local businesses that cannot exceed three sq. ft. in size; billboards and other such off premises signage is prohibited. The Town should work to phase out any existing billboard signage along the River Road thoroughfare in Sub-Area 1 to improve visual quality. Scenic views of the river should also be protected and improved wherever possible through the Site Plan review process.

Within Sub-Area 1, views of the Niagara River are available from private residences along the shoreline. Many of the properties in the small residential enclaves in this area are narrow, with lot widths that do not meet Code requirements. In some instances, property owners have combined parcels to enable the construction of a new and larger structure. Although this is not discouraged, there is concern that new home construction should be consistent with the size and scale of homes in the immediate area. Furthermore, new homes should not adversely impact existing views of the river. The same concern extends to private docks constructed along the Niagara River shoreline.

Sub-Area 2 is also entirely residentially developed. Views are available from dwellings. West of Niagara Falls Blvd. the homes are situated north of Lockport Road. Here a narrow shoulder provides opportunities for scenic viewing for occasional pedestrians, but there are no places for parking cars and no formal sidewalk or trail in this area.

2.9 Public Infrastructure

2.9.1 Water Supply

The entire Town of Wheatfield is served by public water provided from the Niagara County Water District. Sub-Areas 1 and 2 are both located in the County's western service district. The source of water is the Niagara River. The Niagara County Water Treatment Plant is located on Williams Road, just north of River Road, outside of the LWRA boundary (see [Map 7A](#)). Intake pipes for the treatment plant extend through a narrow parcel owned by the Water District, which is situated along the west side of the large trailer park facility, at the western end of Sub-Area 1.

2.9.2 Wastewater Management

The Niagara County Sewer District provides wastewater collection and treatment service to the entire Town. The wastewater treatment plant is located on Liberty Drive, just outside the Sub-Area 1 boundary. The treatment plant discharges directly into the Niagara River via an outfall pipe that extends approximately 1,500 feet from the plant. The outfall is routed through property that is owned by the district and situated at the western end of the York Road residential enclave.

Niagara County operates an activated sludge treatment plant with tertiary filtration facilities. Built in 1978, the wastewater treatment plant was designed to accommodate an average daily flow rate of 14 million gallons per day (mgd). The plant currently treats approximately 50 percent of its

design flow on an annual average, but experiences significant storm-related peak flows up to approximately 32 mgd. The Sewer District decided to initiate an upgrade of its existing gravity sand filters in 1998. The district replaced its existing mixed-media sand filters with deep bed, mono-media sand filters. Under this demonstration project, which was co-sponsored by NYSERDA, the district proceeded to install bypass piping to allow for the filtration of primary and combined sewer overflow/sanitary sewer overflow wastewater during wet weather storm events. This project was a success and provided an opportunity for a full-scale pilot study to address treatment issues, minimize capital investment, save energy and improve the environment. The project also received statewide recognition through a design excellence award.

2.9.3 Stormwater Management

Stormwater is conveyed in the Town of Wheatfield through a combination of closed pipes and open ditches. As drainage has been a major issue in the Town, the Wheatfield Highway Department and Drainage Committee have been systematically and aggressively addressing all major drainage channels in the Town. Existing creeks and ditches have been cleared of debris and new drainage systems have been constructed, where required. The Town received grant funding from NYSDEC to clean out Bergholz and Sawyer Creek to improve drainage in those areas. Because of these improvements and an annual program to maintain and clean ditches, storm water runoff and drainage problems have been improved. Efforts must be continued to keep roadside ditches and culverts open and free from growth and debris. Furthermore, drainage considerations must be included in all development proposals. At present, there are no areas of significant flooding or with significant drainage concerns in the LWRA.

In November 2009, the Town prepared a Stormwater Management Plan. The Town is a partner in the Western New York Stormwater Coalition and developed this plan to comply with the NYSDEC General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. This is a shared Plan that provides policy and management guidance for members of the coalition, as well as regulated municipalities and agencies. The Plan addresses public education and outreach, public participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, control of runoff at construction sites, post-construction stormwater management and pollution prevention and best management practices. The Town will ensure that this plan is updated on an annual basis to take into consideration the latest technologies and other information to comply with the requirements of the General Permit.

2.9.4 Solid Waste Management

The Town of Wheatfield Highway Department oversees the collection of municipal solid waste. The Town contracts with Modern Disposal for waste collection and disposal. The Town has an annual tire drop off day, which is usually held in the spring. The Town also requires that residents recycle as a part of the municipal waste collection arrangement with Modern. Accepted materials include paper (newsprint and office paper, junk mail, magazines/catalogs, cardboard, paperboard), metal cans and kitchen cookware, plastic (bags, containers, bottles), and clear glass.

The Niagara County landfill has a recycling center where Town residents can also dispose of certain waste materials, including electronics, appliances and certain household hazardous wastes.

2.9.5 Other Utilities

Other utility services available in the waterfront area include electric, telephone and natural gas. Cable and satellite television service is also provided by private carriers.

2.9.6 Transportation Systems

River Road (NYS Route 384 and 265) is principal arterial that extends in a north-south direction, from the City of Buffalo in Erie County to the City of Niagara Falls in Niagara County (in Wheatfield it actually runs in an east-west direction). It is one of several routes directly connecting the two cities. The southern terminus of Route 384 is at NYS Route 5 in downtown Buffalo (Route 384 is known as Delaware Avenue in Erie County), and the northern terminus is at the Rainbow Bridge in downtown Niagara Falls. Route 265 is also known as Military Road, which branches off to the north, just west of Sub-Area 1.

River Road, from the North Tonawanda border to Williams Road, has a pavement width measuring 42 feet wide, with 12-foot travel lanes and a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. From Williams Road to the Niagara Falls border the pavement measures 36 feet wide, with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. GBNRTC data from 2010 reports the average annual daily traffic volume is 11,500 vehicles (4,400 for the stretch of River road, west of Williams road.) It should be noted that the pavement width through North Tonawanda, east of Sub-Area 1, measures 54 feet wide (accommodating four travel lanes).

As noted, River Road supports a significant amount of commuter traffic, which creates perceptions of safety hazards for neighborhood traffic and pedestrians on the part of local residents. The shoulders along this roadway are not perceived to be designed appropriately for pedestrian travel and roadway ditches further complicate conditions. Traffic calming through this area should be investigated as a means to address public safety concerns. The Town is also proposing the construction of a multi-use pathway that would separate bicycle and pedestrian traffic and provide a safer environment for such use.

There is one active railroad line that extends through eastern side of Sub-Area 1. This line is owned and operated by CSX. It supports approximately nine trains per day. It is also used by Amtrak for passenger service to Niagara Falls and Canada.

2.9.7 Emergency Services

The Niagara County Sheriff's Department provides police patrols in the waterfront areas and

responds to emergencies. Back up support is provided by New York State Police or the Cities of Tonawanda or Niagara Falls, as required.

Niagara River waters are patrolled and protected by the U.S. Coast Guard, NYSDEC Marine Enforcement Unit and City of Tonawanda Police Marine Division. The Coast Guard and the County inspect vessels, conduct searches, assist stranded boaters, investigate accidents, and answer navigation complaint issues, among other duties. They also provide boater safety and education. The U.S. Border Patrol also cruises the Niagara River and patrol the upland in the vicinity of the railroad corridor that runs through North Tonawanda and the eastern portion of Sub-Area 1 in pursuit of illegal aliens.

Fire protection along the waterfront is provided by local volunteer fire companies. The Frontier Volunteer Fire Company services Sub-Area 1 ([Map 7A](#)). Sub-Area 2 receives service from the Adams Volunteer Fire Company. These fire companies provide fire protection and emergency medical services to their respective service areas.