

## **SECTION II**

### **Town of Wheatfield Inventory and Analysis**



**SECTION II - Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions**

**2.0 Summary of Issues and Opportunities in the Waterfront Revitalization Area**

**A. Assets and Opportunities**

- The Wheatfield waterfront areas have small town, rural character, making them attractive places for residents and visitors alike.
- River Road, in Sub-Area 1, is a designated segment of the New York Seaway Trail, validating the scenic and cultural importance of this shoreline thoroughfare.
- The LWRA areas are served by public sewers and public water supply, and there is capacity at the Niagara County wastewater treatment plant to accommodate future development.
- The Town owns 4.8 acres of land with shoreline access that offers potential for public access and recreation.
- The waterfront areas are situated immediately adjacent to public parks that offer boat launching and access to the waterfront.
- The Niagara County Sewer District property offers an opportunity for limited waterfront access for viewing and passive recreation along the Niagara River.
- Abandoned railroad corridors in Sub-Area 1 provide opportunities for the development of multi-use trails.

**B. Issues and Concerns**

- The waterfront is primarily residential in nature; there are no water-dependent uses and limited waterfront commercial or recreational activity.
- Public Access is very limited in both areas of the LWRA and there are no public docking facilities in either area.
- There is ample shoreline protection along many riverfront residences, but some of the existing erosion protection structures are in various states of disrepair.
- Water quality issues in the Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek have resulted in fish consumption advisories.
- Properties in Sub-Area 1 are narrow and many residential lots do not conform to current Code requirements.

### 2.1 Region Setting, Historic Context and Community Characteristics

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 (see Map 2). Within the western New York region, Wheatfield is situated approximately 25 miles outside the Buffalo metropolitan area.

The River Road (waterfront) section of the Town became a prosperous farm area in the 1920s and included the showplace "Wheatfield Farms". During the early to mid 1900's, there were vacation cottages, beaches, an amusement park, and nightclubs found along the Niagara River. Permanent housing has replaced many of the cottages and remnants of some bygone structures are still visible along River Road today.

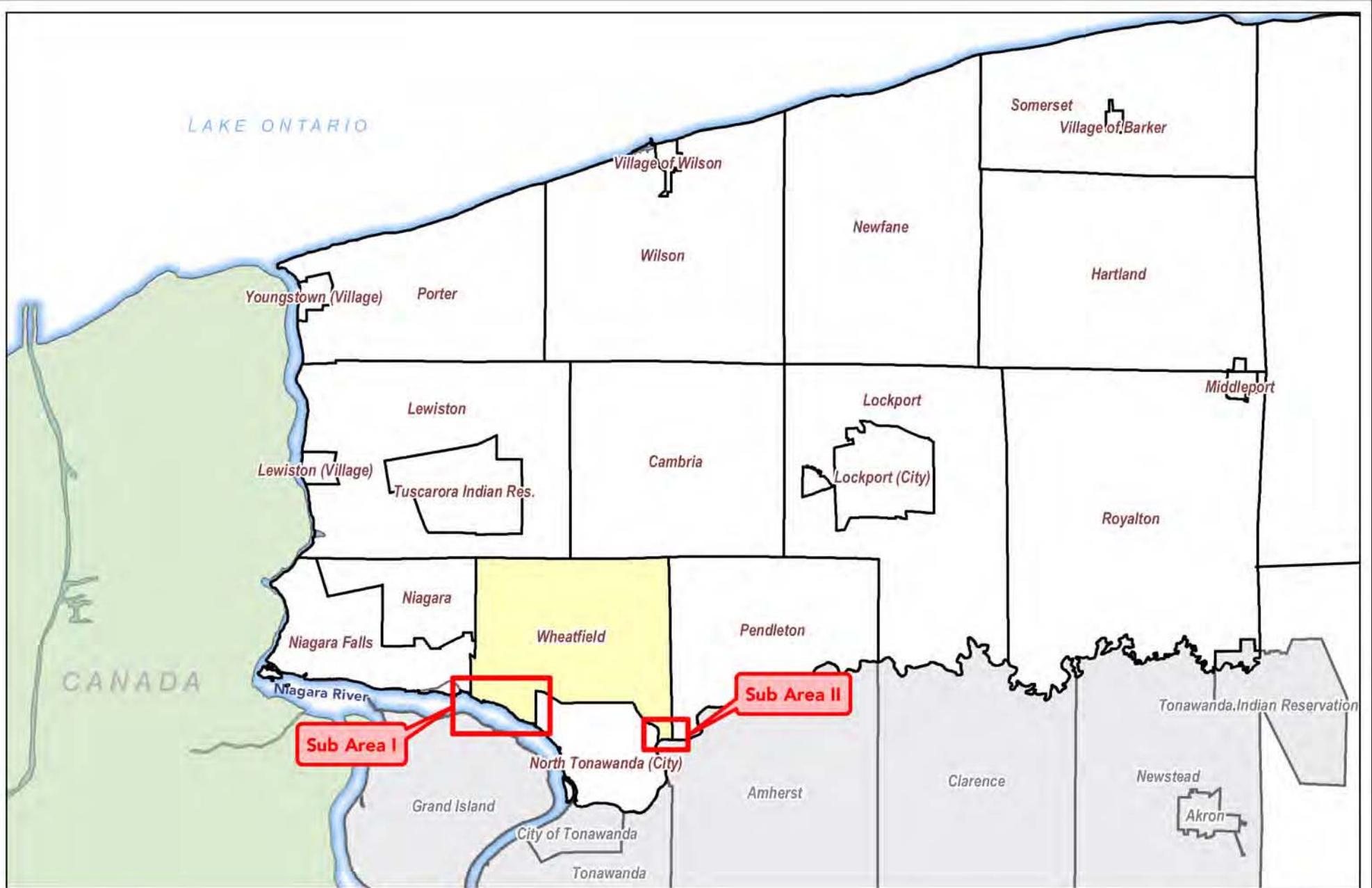
The Town of Wheatfield measures 28.6 square miles in size and has about 3.5 miles of shoreline, including approximately three miles of shoreline along the Niagara River in Sub-Area 1 and approximately one-half mile along the Erie Canal in Sub-Area 2.



*Sub-Area 1: Niagara River*

*Sub-Area 2: Erie Canal*

Although both sub-areas are predominantly rural in nature, much of the shoreline has been developed with medium density residential uses. As previously noted, the Wheatfield riverfront in Sub-Area 1, has long been popular as a summer residential area, with numerous cottages and smaller, modest homes. Over the past few decades, the area has become increasingly attractive for residential use, with many cottages (over 90 percent) transitioning to year-round residences. The Sub-Area 1 waterfront includes distinct neighborhoods, which are characterized by narrow roadways lined with small homes and mature trees. These areas include Sunset Drive, Hird Street, York Road and Willow Lane. In addition, the area includes a mix of residential and commercial uses along River Road and a large manufactured/mobile home park. Access to the Niagara River in Sub-Area 1 is gained from private docks situated on residential properties that front along the river. There are no public parks, marinas or other waterfront amenities in this area.



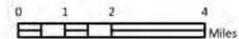
Map # 2



**TOWN OF WHEATFIELD**  
**LWRP: Regional Setting**

LEGEND

-  Niagara County Municipal Boundary
-  Town of Wheatfield
-  Erie County Municipal Boundary



 **WENDEL COMPANIES**  
 WD Project # 295609LWRP  
 Map Created: October, 2009

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The Erie Canal portion of the waterfront (Sub-Area 2) follows properties along Lockport Avenue, which extends below Niagara Falls Blvd., essentially splitting the area into two sections. Both sections are residentially developed. The eastern side, abutting West Canal Marina Park in the Town of Pendleton, has housing along both sides of Lockport Road, whereas the western section, near the City of North Tonawanda only has housing on the upland side of Lockport Road. This area is rural in nature, with limited access to the Canal.

### 2.2 Overview of Coastal Resources Planning Efforts

#### A. Regional Planning

There are a number of regional plans that are available to help guide land use and other activities in the Town of Wheatfield and Niagara County, as a whole.

- **Framework for Regional Growth for Erie and Niagara Counties**

The Framework for Regional Growth for Erie and Niagara Counties, New York is the regional planning document. The Framework was finalized in October of 2006 and establishes basic policies and principles to guide the future growth and development of the region. Specifically, the Framework provides:

- A vision for how the region should grow over the next 15 years.
- Direction regarding growth and redevelopment matters for County decision makers and other regional organizations that are linked to the two counties by way of funding, membership or other relationships.
- Information on the ways local governments, private sector and non-profit actions and initiatives can reinforce the overall regional vision.
- Mechanisms to insure that the goals, concepts and recommendations of the Framework for Regional Growth are implemented in an efficient and accountable manner.

The Framework's recommendations build on the recognition that the Region's communities cannot effectively plan in isolation or independently address important issues, as almost every challenge faced by a locality has a regional dimension. The Framework is not a conventional zoning or land use plan or capital improvement program. It is designed to help County and regional leaders make better policy and investment decisions, more effectively leverage limited resources and provide more consistent direction and useful support to municipalities.

The Framework for Regional Growth establishes planning policy areas that define, in broad terms, where County policies encourage development and public investment, where development and public investment may be appropriate subject to careful evaluation and where conservation strategies generally take precedence over plans for

development and public investment. The planning policy areas include Developed Areas, Developing Areas and Rural Areas. The Town of Wheatfield waterfront area falls into the Developed Areas category because it is situated between the Cities of Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda, and includes suburban development that is served by public sewer, water and transportation infrastructure. The policies and strategies for the Developed Areas include:

- sparking investment, attracting new households and businesses,
- supporting the conservation and stabilization of existing neighborhoods,
- supporting new compact, pedestrian oriented, mixed-use development on vacant and underutilized sites, and
- improving livability and economic vitality.

▪ **Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan**

The Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan (NCCP) is a county-wide planning document that emphasizes a multi-municipal approach for planning and decision making. The NCCP provides a framework for achieving five high priority goals:

- Encouraging desirable and appropriate growth and development,
- Strengthening the local economy,
- Improving the delivery of services,
- Prioritizing and coordinating capital improvements, and
- Improving the quality of life for County residents.

The Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan is intended to unify existing county wide planning efforts, while recognizing the important planning initiatives undertaken at other levels of government, as well as the efforts of community organizations and agencies. The Plan is a guiding document for assisting future decision making by providing direction for ongoing and future planning efforts. The Plan also recommends various strategies and potential projects, and will be helpful for securing funds necessary to undertake these initiatives.

▪ **Niagara River Greenway Plan**

The Niagara River Greenway Plan is a guidance document for creating connections between the various constituents, organizations and municipalities that comprise the Niagara River Greenway. It is an initiative with broad-based support aimed at fostering consensus. Under the umbrella of the Niagara River Greenway, these entities can advance local and regional agendas for community livability, environmental sustainability, tourism and economic revitalization.

The Niagara River Greenway Plan (NRGP) establishes a unified vision and a set of principles for the Niagara River Greenway. It identifies assets and resources that make

up the Greenway. It sets priorities that suggest the types of activities to target in the near-term. It identifies potential funding sources, partnerships and linkages, and, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), addresses key transportation issues that affect the Greenway. The Plan also discusses several high priority Implementation Concepts, which describe system-wide approaches and strategies for Greenway development.

The principles and goals for the NRGF represent the general values for guiding greenway planning toward achievement of the vision. These principles and goals are centered around promoting high-quality, ecologically sensitive and sustainable activities and development.

The central theme is aimed at improving access to the Niagara River, making connections between communities and filling gaps the system, protecting and restoring environmental systems, celebrating the history and heritage of the region, sparking revitalization and renewal, promoting long term sustainability and extending the Frederick Law Olmsted legacy for future generations.

A fundamental goal of the Niagara River Greenway Plan is riverfront preservation and restoration to fulfill the vision for Lake Ontario to Lake Erie access along the shoreline. Recognizing that much of the waterfront is held in private ownership, increasing public access and awareness through trails, conservation easements and other means is important. The recommendations in the Niagara River Greenway Plan identify two projects for the Town of Wheatfield waterfront. These include the development of a proposed multi-use pathway extending along the length of the waterfront connecting the Town with the adjoin communities of Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda, and the development of a waterfront park on a five-acre shoreline parcel owned by the Town.

- **2008 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for Erie and Niagara Counties**

The 2008 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan sets forth the vision for making bicycling and walking an integral part of daily life in the Buffalo and Erie/Niagara region. This plan recommends projects, programs and policies for the next ten years to encourage use of these practical, non-polluting and affordable modes of transportation. The plan looks at streets for cycling and walking, parking, transit connections, education and marketing (health promotion), law enforcement and implementation. The plan contains goals and objectives, with over 100 suggested actions that detail how to implement the objectives in realistic, meaningful and cost effective ways.

The express purpose of the Master Plan is to provide coordinated guidance for the implementation of a safe, efficient and accessible transportation system designed for walking and bicycling. By reassessing previous goals and objectives, the intent is to

adjust and reaffirm a regional vision regarding bicycling and pedestrian activities, including the establishment of interconnected bicycle and pedestrian networks for transportation. Such networks provide for focused treatments and sometimes separate facilities to promote walking and bicycling, and add a critical multi-modal element to a transportation system often geared toward motor vehicle travel. It furthermore reflects current federal goals to increase the amount of local bicycling and walking, and to increase safety by reducing the number of accidents. The Master Plan serves as a framework for facility investments and assists in promoting mobility options, healthier lifestyles, reducing air pollutants, and decreasing traffic congestion.

The goals of the 2008 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan align with the Town's goal to construct a multi-use pathway along the abandoned railway corridor, situated north of River Road. The plan outlines objectives that support the Town's vision for the waterfront pathway, including the adaptation of existing roadways to allow for safe and convenient bicycle travel, the incorporation of innovative designs to expand and enhance the regional bikeway network, making intersections bicycle and pedestrian friendly, and identifying and eliminating hazards to pedestrian and bicycle movement.

- **2030 Long Range Transportation Plan for the Erie and Niagara Counties Region**  
This plan acts as the multimodal blueprint for transportation systems and services and is aimed at meeting the transportation demands of existing and future development in Erie and Niagara County. The plan provides forecasts for the year 2030 for both population and employment. The plan devotes 70 percent of funding to maintaining the existing transportation infrastructure system.
- **Transportation Improvement Program, 2008-2012**  
The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the capital programming component of the Long Range Transportation Plan consisting of all federally funded roadway, transit, and major transportation projects being considered within the region through 2012. The TIP also includes those regionally significant transportation projects being advanced by state and local entities with non-federal funding.
- **Niagara County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)**  
This plan was developed to enhance Niagara County's ability to manage emergency situations, with the focus on rapidly and adequately responding in order to minimize injury and speed recovery. It consists of three components: disaster prevention and mitigation, disaster response, and disaster recovery. The CEMP defines roles and responsibilities in prevention, response, and recovery, including a detailed chain of command during an emergency. The plan places an emphasis on the role of local jurisdictions as first-line responders, but identifies the key role that County departments play in the process. The CEMP points out the importance of land use

controls and development regulations in hazard-prone areas (e.g., floodplain development) for disaster avoidance and minimization.

### B. Local Planning

- **Town of Wheatfield Comprehensive Plan**

Local planning plays a big part in how the waterfront in the Town is used and developed. The Town has been pro-active in planning for growth in the Town and adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2004. Although the Town acknowledges that some of the information in this plan is falling out of date, the Plan still provides guidance for managing land use along the waterfront. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the waterfront areas are largely developed, and no major changes are expected in the area south of River Road or along Lockport Avenue. As public access is lacking in the area, the plan suggests recreational uses, such as trails to tie into the waterfront.

- **Town of Wheatfield Stormwater Management Plan**

The Town of Wheatfield is a member of the Western New York Stormwater Coalition. The Coalition developed a Stormwater Management Plan as a shared resource to help local municipalities comply with the NYSDEC General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. This Plan, which was adapted for the Town of Wheatfield, provides policy and management guidance, including minimum control measures and best management practices for Public Education and Outreach, Public Involvement and Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site Runoff Control, Post-Construction Stormwater management, and Pollution Prevention / Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. In support of this Plan, the Town adopted a local law for stormwater management and erosion and sediment control and a local law for prohibiting illicit discharges, activities and connections to separate storm sewer systems. The town also appointed a designated Stormwater Management Officer.

- **Town of Wheatfield Greenspace Master Plan**

The Wheatfield Greenspace Master Plan was developed to help the Town preserve and incorporate greenspace into future development to maintain the ambiance and character of the community. The Plan includes an inventory of all parklands and greenspace for public access; identifies future greenspace areas for public access, emphasizes passive and active recreational needs and defines the quality of life in Wheatfield. This Plan, which is currently being updated, recommends capitalizing on the abandoned railway corridor to create a trail connection between Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda (at the east and west ends of Sub-Area #1) and other areas of the Town. It also recognizes the undeveloped Town-owned property located on the Niagara River shoreline, which proposed for use as public parkland.

**2.3 Demographics and Economic Considerations**

**A. Population and Household Characteristics**

The waterfront areas in the Town of Wheatfield cannot be captured easily by Census geography. Accordingly, the following discussion is based on Town-wide data, and is intended to provide the general context of the Town and how it may affect waterfront planning.

The Town of Wheatfield has an estimated population of 17,130 persons for 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau, July 2010). The Town is the fastest growing town in Western New York, with very strong growth in population over the past decades. Since 1990, the population has increased by nearly 6,000 residents, an increase of 54 percent. This strong growth suggests growing development pressure throughout the Town, including the waterfront areas. It also suggests increasing demand for recreational assets in the Town.

**Town of Wheatfield Population 1990 - 2009**

	Population	Change	
		Number	Percent
<b>1990</b>	11,125	n/a	n/a
<b>2000</b>	14,086	+2,961	+26.6%
<b>2009 (estimated)</b>	17,130	+3,044	+21.6%

U.S. Census Bureau

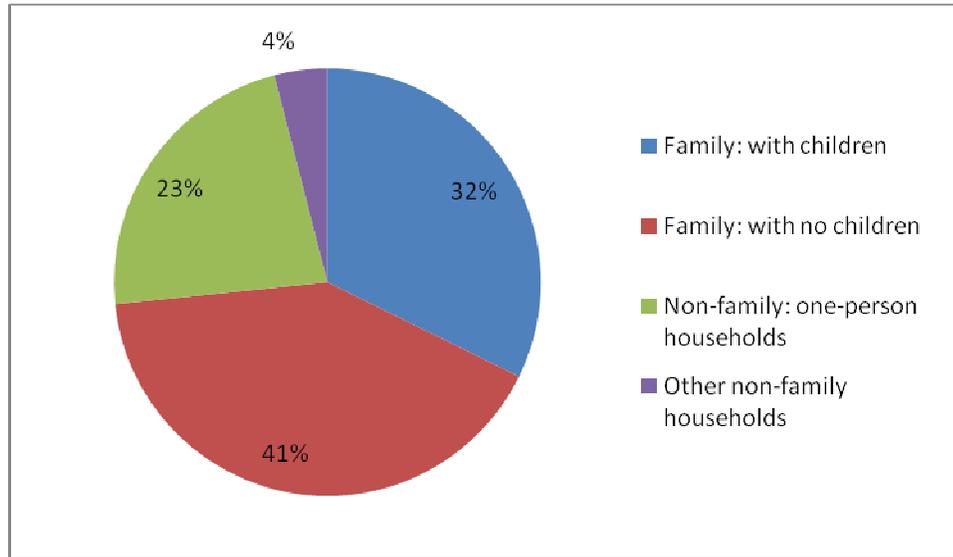
Median age of Wheatfield’s residents in 2000 was 40.1 years, which is slightly older than Niagara County, where the average age was 38.2 years. Age distribution is similar for the Town and the County. Wheatfield has a slightly higher proportion of older residents (age 65 or older) than the County, and fewer very young residents (under age 5). Correspondingly, the Town has more residents in the middle age ranges, both minors age 5 to 17, and adults aged 18 to 64. The following table shows the comparison of the Town and the County.

**Age Distribution - Wheatfield and Niagara County, 2000**

	Wheatfield		Niagara County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 5 years	741	5.3%	13,165	6.0%
5 to 17	2,575	18.3%	41,072	18.7%
18 to 64	8,548	60.7%	131,725	59.9%
65 or older	2,222	15.8%	33,884	15.4%

U.S. Census Bureau

There were a total of 5,305 households in the Town of Wheatfield in 2000. The average household size was 2.58 persons. The majority of households were family households (related persons), which made up 73.4 percent of all households. Single person households comprised 22.6 percent of households.



**B. Housing**

Most housing in Wheatfield consists primarily of single-family dwellings. U.S. Census data from 2000 indicates a total of 5,555 housing units in the Town. Nearly three-quarters (76.5 percent) of the housing stock is single-unit structures. Another 3.4 percent is mobile homes, which generally accommodate a single-unit. Housing along the waterfront is generally one-family homes. There is also a mobile home park located on the Niagara River in the Town of Wheatfield. Nearly all homes in Wheatfield are occupied on a year-round basis; according to Census data, seasonal units comprised only 0.5 percent of the housing stock (28 units).

Compared to many Western New York municipalities, the housing stock in Wheatfield is relatively new, reflecting the strong growth trends in the Town. Only about 31.4 percent of houses in the Town were built prior to 1940, compared to 60.4 percent of housing structures in Niagara County. According to 2000 Census figures (most recent available) approximately 29 percent of residential structures in Wheatfield were built after 1990; only 9.5 percent of residential buildings across the County were built over the same time frame. Most new residential construction in Wheatfield has occurred in areas outside the LWRA. While there has been some new construction along the waterfront, it has generally been replacement housing, not net new units.

Wheatfield has a high home-ownership rate. Of the total occupied housing units in the Town, 79.3 percent are owner occupied and 20.7 percent renter occupied. In comparison, only 69.9 percent of units in Niagara County are owner-occupied. In 2000, the Census reported an overall vacancy rate of 4.5 percent for the Town. The County’s vacancy rate was nearly twice that, at 8.2 percent. In 2000, the median value of a home in Wheatfield was relatively high, at \$116,800, compared to the County’s median home value of \$82,700. Again, this figure reflects the fact that a significant proportion of the housing stock in Wheatfield consists of new construction.

These strong housing trends in the Town suggest there will be increasing demand for waterfront properties in the Town. There have been some conversions taking place on the waterfront in Wheatfield, where older units are extensively renovated or replaced with newer units. This trend is likely to continue. In particular, it is anticipated that the mobile home park located off River Road on the Niagara River will eventually convert to either higher value residential or other uses over time as waterfront land values increase.

**C. Income and Employment**

Historically, the Wheatfield waterfront has been a residential area, with a few scattered businesses, with limited opportunities for employment. There are employment centers in the Town in relatively close proximity to the waterfront, including the Niagara Falls Boulevard corridor, which has a range of commercial and retail uses; the industrial park along Liberty Drive north of River Road; and the western portion of Town, where the Niagara Falls airport and other major employment centers are located, as well as Vantage Point and the Woodlands Corporate Center. Waterfront-related uses have not been strong employers in the Town,

**Income Distribution, 1999 - Town of Wheatfield**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than \$10,000	293	5.5%
\$10,000-14,999	277	5.2%
\$15,000-24,999	561	10.6%
\$25,000-34,999	537	10.1%
\$35,000-49,999	840	15.8%
\$50,000-74,999	1,394	26.3%
\$75,000-99,999	828	15.6%
\$100,000-149,999	475	9.0%
\$150,000-199,999	55	1.0%
\$200,000 or more	43	0.8%

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

although the Town’s Comprehensive Plan supports economic development activities associated with waterfront, recreational and tourism uses. There have been various plans to redevelop vacant lands north of River Road in the Town for recreational/tourism uses, although there are no active proposals for this land at this time.

Based on available Census data for the Town, 67.2% of Town residents age 16 or older participated in the labor force in 2000. Median household income was \$51,700, which compares very favorably to the County, which has a median household income of \$38,136.

**D. School Enrollment and Education Levels**

Most of the Town of Wheatfield is within the Niagara-Wheatfield School District. The eastern portion of Wheatfield is in the Starpoint Central School District. No schools are located in or near either waterfront area in the Town of Wheatfield.

Based on available Census data (2000), 86.6 percent of residents of the Town of Wheatfield were high school graduates, and 21.4 percent had achieved a bachelor’s degree or higher. In 2000, there were 3,416 residents aged 3 years or older who were enrolled in school.

**School Enrollment, 2000  
Town of Wheatfield**

	Number	Percent
Nursery school, Preschool	181	5.3%
Kindergarten	254	7.4%
Elementary School (grades 1-8)	1,623	47.5%
High School (grades 9-12)	753	22.0%
College or graduate school	605	17.7%

U.S. Census Bureau

**2.4 Existing Land and Water Uses**

**A. Existing Land Use**

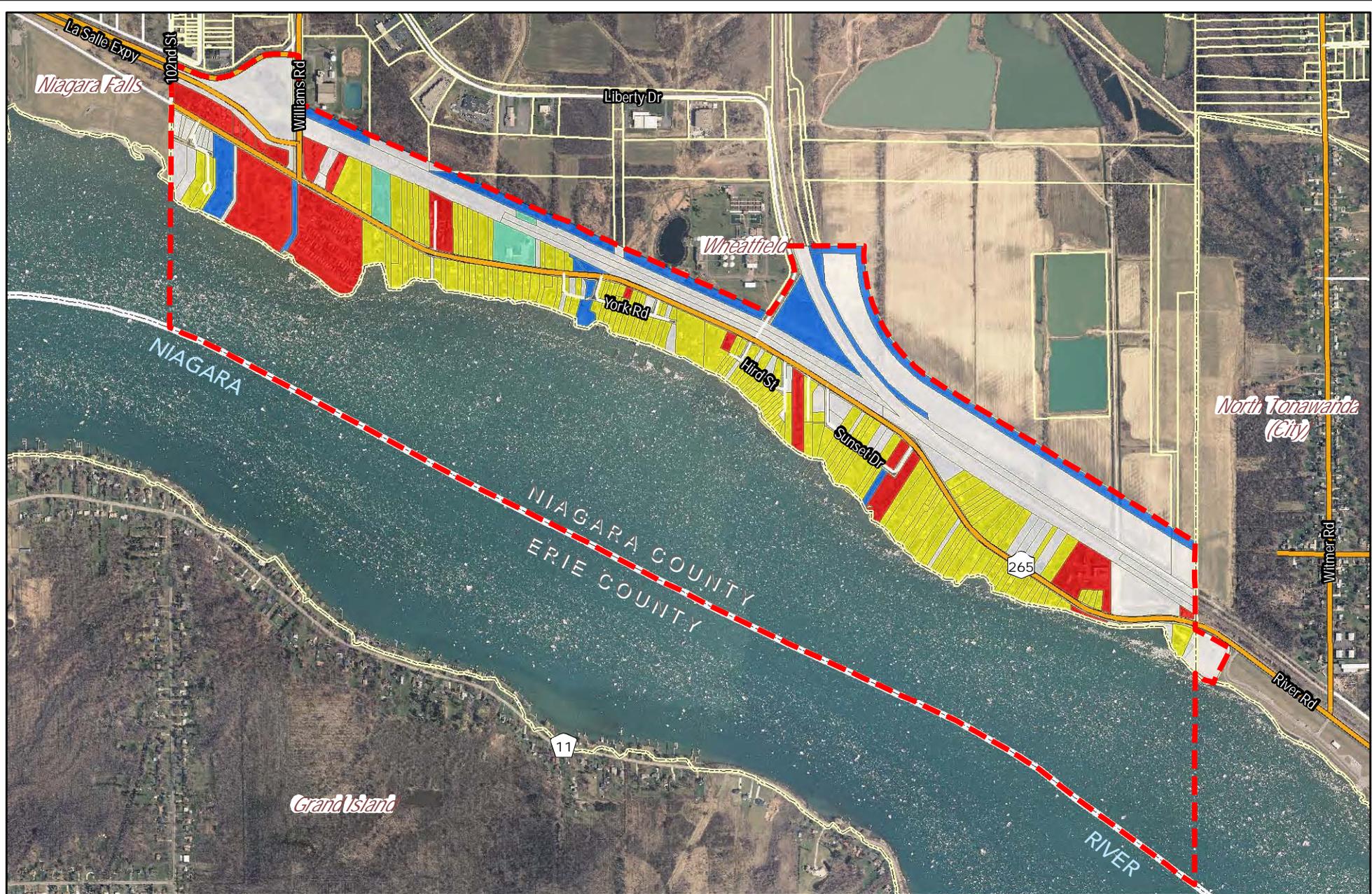
Land use along the waterfront in the Town of Wheatfield is primarily residential in nature, with some commercial uses found along River Road in Sub-Area 1. There are no agricultural or industrial uses in either sub-area. Parkland is also very limited, with only one park found in Sub-Area 2 and one Town-owned parcel that is destined for future parkland development in Sub-Area 1. Sub-Area 1 has some areas of vacant land and open space, while Sub-Area 2 is well built out, with very little land available for further development. The land uses found in the LWRA are shown on Maps 3a and 3b and described as follows:

### Sub-Area 1

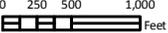
- *Residential* - There are approximately 178 residential parcels, accounting for 129 acres of land in Sub-Area 1. This includes three larger parcels that contain mobile home parks, which encompass approximately 28 acres. Housing lines the majority of the river shoreline and extends through upland areas along River Road (see Map 3a). The smallest residential properties occur in riverfront residential enclaves along Hird and York Roads, where property frontages range between 30 and 60 feet wide. The area also includes a small number of larger estate-sized properties.
- *Commercial* - There are a limited number of commercial properties in Sub-Area 1, including approximately 12 parcels that comprise approximately 23 acres of land. These properties are located along River Road, mostly at the western end of the area, near the Niagara Falls City boundary. Commercial uses include motels and small shops.
- *Industrial* - There are no industrial land uses in Sub-Area 1.



- *Vacant* - Approximately 520 acres or 65 percent of Sub-Area 1 is vacant lands, including a combination of wooded lots and abandoned properties. The Town owns a 4.8 -acre brownfield site with access to the Niagara River, and is working with the County to secure funding for site remediation/redevelopment for passive recreation.



Map #3A

 <p><b>TOWN OF WHEATFIELD</b> LWRP: Land Use Sub Area I</p>	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Sub Area I</li> <li> County Boundary</li> <li> Niagara County Municipal Boundary</li> </ul>	<p><b>Major Roadway</b></p> <p><b>Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Vacant</li> <li> Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Commercial</li> <li> Community Services</li> <li> Public Services</li> <li> Conservation Lands / Public Parks</li> </ul>	<p></p> <p></p>	<p> WENDEL COMPANIES</p> <p>WD Project # 295609LWRP Map Created: November, 2010</p>

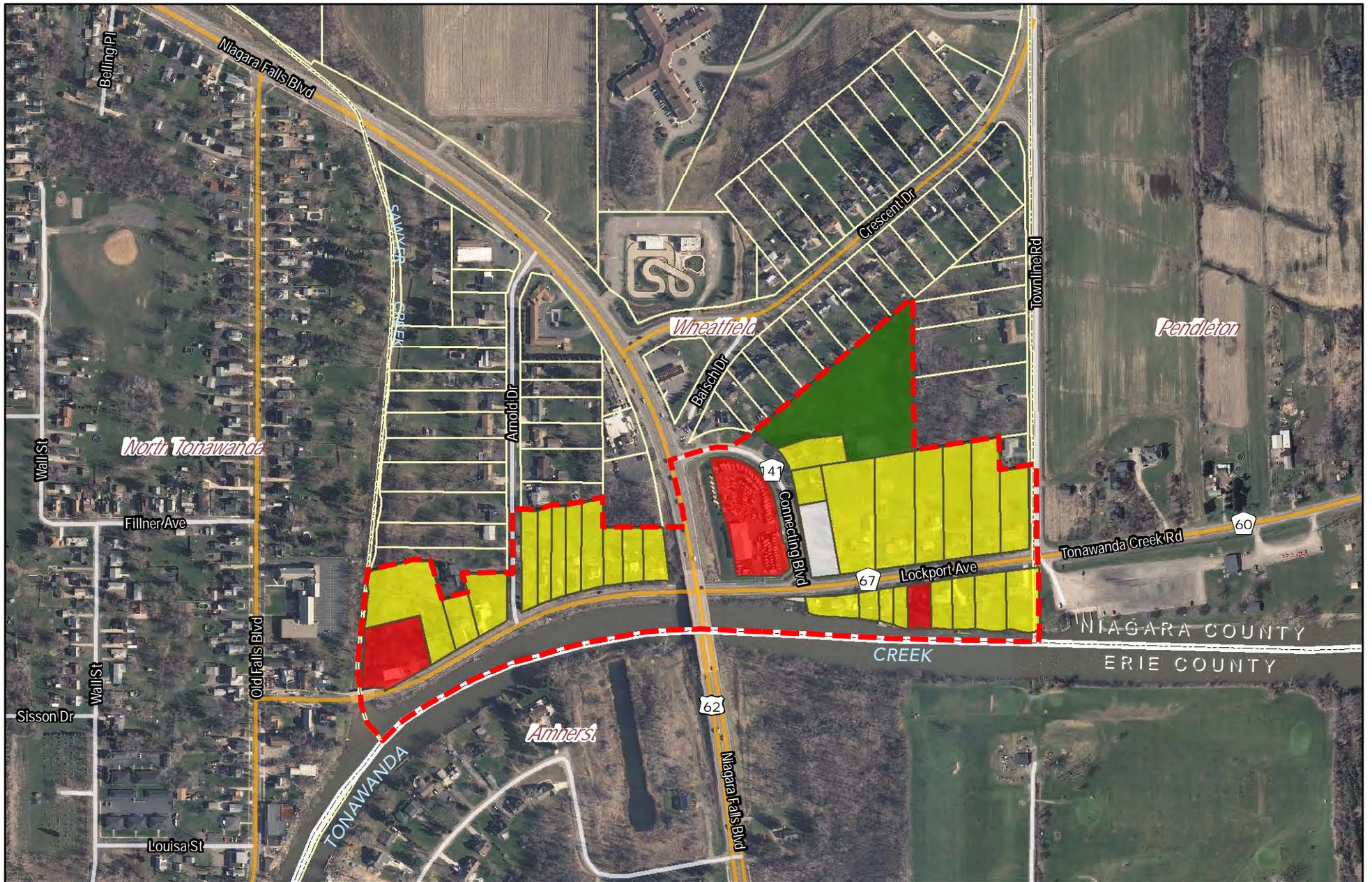
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- *Parkland* - There are no public parks in Sub-Area 1. The Town owns a 4.8-acre property at the western end of the area that is proposed for future parkland development. The Frontier Fire Company owns and operates R.B. U-Ren Park, which is located on the north site of River Road on the fire company property. This park is open for use by the general public. Sub-Area 1 is also directly contiguous with Gratwick Park, which is located along the eastern boundary in the City of North Tonawanda. In addition, River Road is a designated segment of the New York State Seaway Trail system.

### Sub-Area 2

- *Residential* - There are approximately 30 residential parcels, accounting for 16 acres of land area in this portion of the LWRA. The area east of Niagara Falls Blvd., which bisects the area, has housing on both sides of Lockport Avenue (see Map 3b), while the area west of Niagara Falls Blvd. has a very narrow area of shoreline, with housing situated on the upland side of Lockport Avenue. Housing in this area consists of single-family dwellings that are suburban in nature.
- *Commercial* - There is one commercial property located in Sub-Area 2. There is one property that was formerly a hotel that is converting to residential use. There are also one or two properties that conduct home occupations in this area.





Map #3B

 <p><b>TOWN OF WHEATFIELD</b> LWRP: Land Use Sub Area II</p>	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Sub Area II</li> <li> County</li> <li> Niagara County Municipal Boundary</li> </ul>	<p><b>Major Roadway</b></p> <p><b>Land Use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Vacant</li> <li> Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Commercial</li> <li> Conservation Lands Public Parks</li> </ul>	 	 <p>WENDEL COMPANIES WD Project # 295609LWRP Map Created: November, 2009</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Major Roadway</li> </ul>		

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- *Industrial* - There are no industrial land uses in Sub-Area 2.
- *Parkland* - There is one park found in Sub-Area 2. Herman Baisch Park is a 3.7-acre parcel that is used solely for passive recreation. Sub-Area 2 is located immediately west of the West Canal Marina and Park facility in the Town of Pendleton.

### **B. Water Dependent and Water-Enhanced Uses**

There are no water-dependent uses in the Wheatfield LWRA. The only water-enhanced uses are residential dwellings located along the waterfront. There are no parks or other facilities for public access located along the waterfront in either sub-area. Baisch Park, in Sub-Area 1, is located inland, away from the shoreline. Waterfowl hunting is conducted from shoreline docks and properties along the Niagara River during the fall hunting season.

There are a few properties that contain pipelines and outfall facilities for local utility companies. The Niagara County wastewater treatment plant and the water treatment plant each own narrow parcels where they have located their outfall system and water intake piping, respectively. There are also two locations where National Fuel Gas has routed pipelines for natural gas, which extend along the bottom of the Niagara River, from the upland areas of the Town of Wheatfield over to Grand Island, on the opposite side of the Niagara River.

### **C. Abandoned, Underutilized and Deteriorated Sites and Structures**

The Wheatfield waterfront in Sub-Area 1 has a history of use for summer recreation. The shoreline once contained dance halls, cottages and lodging that supported tourism trade. Over the years, these cottages converted to year-round residential use and other uses were replaced with additional housing. Today the waterfront contains a few vacant areas that have potential for reuse. There are two large properties at the western end of the sub-area, near the Niagara Falls City line; one is owned by the Town of Wheatfield and the other is in private ownership. The Town-owned site is a property that is in the process of being remediated to remove minor metals contamination. Thereafter, the Town is proposing to utilize the shoreline portion of the property for passive recreation and public access. Much of the site will remain wooded and undeveloped. The privately owned parcel, which is approximately 11.0 acres in size, is expected to be developed at some point in the future, although no concrete plans are proposed. Whatever happens on this site, future use must include provisions for public access.

There are three abandoned railroad corridors that extend along the north side of River Road, from Williams Road to the Town boundary with the City of North Tonawanda. This corridor is proposed for redevelopment as a multi-use trail. This trail would represent a connecting segment in the trail system that is proposed to extend from Old Fort Niagara (to the north), to the Erie County system of waterfront trails (all part of the overall Niagara

River Greenway system). Portions of the waterfront trails system in Niagara County currently exist, but there are gaps, such as this area in Wheatfield. Completion of the Wheatfield section would link with trails in the adjoining Cities of Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda.

There are a few other properties in Sub-Area 1 that are underutilized. These primarily consist of large parcels that have potential for redevelopment. There are no abandoned, underutilized or deteriorated properties in Sub-Area 2.

### **D. Public Access and Recreation**

Public parkland and waterfront access is limited to a few facilities within the Town of Wheatfield LWRA. While no formal public park facilities exist in Sub-Area 1, the Town holds ownership to a 4.8-acre vacant waterfront parcel that is proposed for future public access and limited recreational use. The Frontier Fire Company owns and operates R.B. U-Ren Park on their property, which is located on the north side of River Road. The Town is also proposing the development of a multi-use trail that will provide linkages to Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda, enabling safe public access to nearby recreational facilities in those locations.

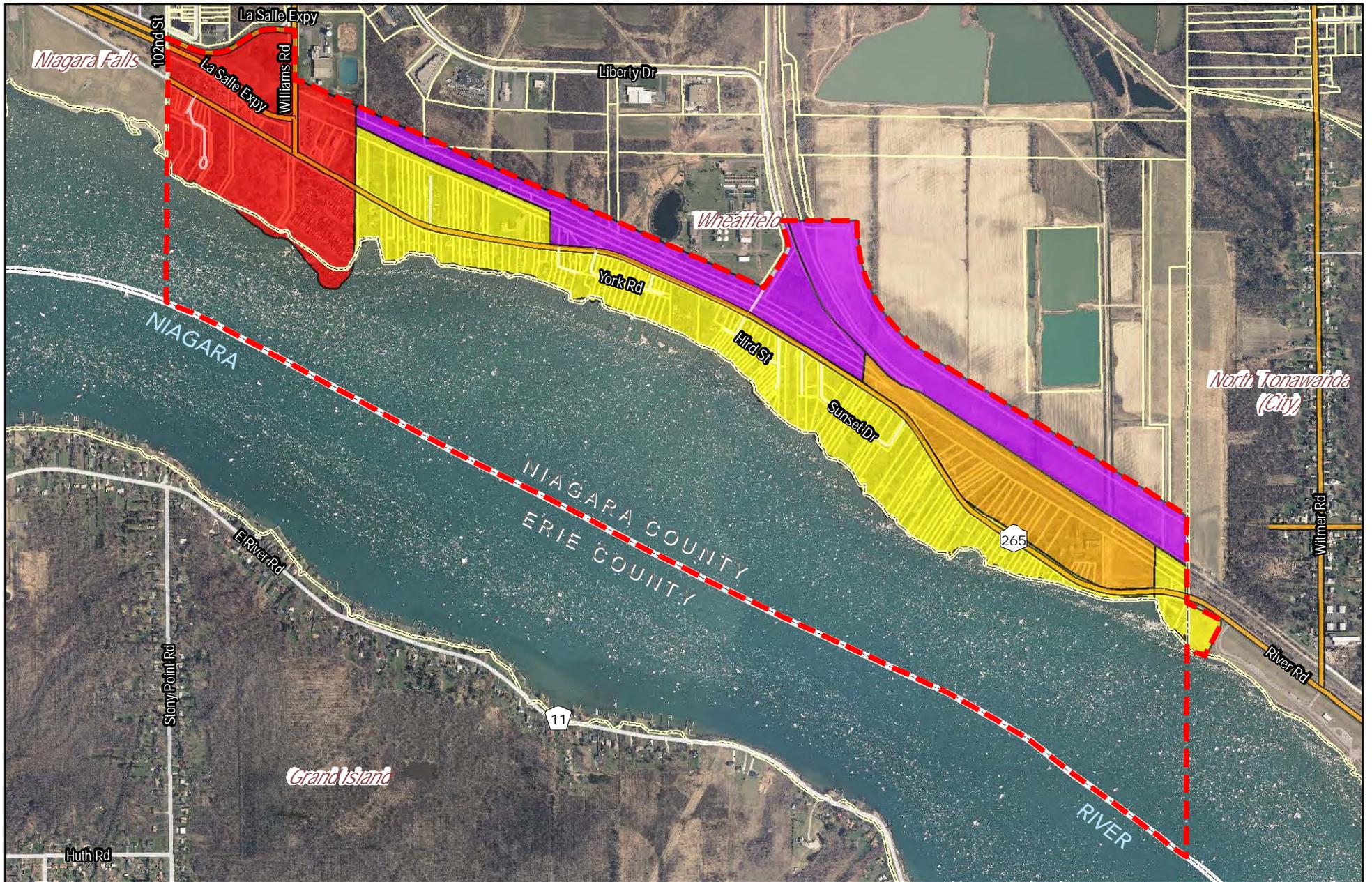
Herman Baisch Park is the only public park in Sub-Area 2. This 3.7 - acre recreation facility is utilized for picnicking and similar passive uses.

### **E. Zoning**

Within the Town of Wheatfield, land use is regulated by the Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 200 of the Wheatfield Town Code - Zoning) and by Subdivision Regulations (Chapter 169 - Subdivision of Land). Zoning in the waterfront area includes four classifications (R-2 Residential-2 District, R-3 Residential-3 District, C-1 Commercial District and M-1 Light Industrial District). Existing zoning along the waterfront is depicted on Maps 4A and 4B. Zoning regulations include provisions for site plan review, home occupations, cluster and planned unit development and signage. The zoning code establishes height and bulk regulations, site plan specifications, development standards, required improvements, and penalties. A summary of the zoning districts that occur within the LWRA is as follows:

*Sub-Area 1:* The majority of the waterfront, seaward of River Road is zoned R-2; a section at the eastern end of the sub-area, along the north side of River Road, is zoned R-3. A small area at the east end, and the western end of the sub-area are zoned C-1. The remainder of the area, north of River Road, is zoned M-1.

*Sub-Area 2:* The east and west sections of this sub-area are zoned R-2. The area surrounding Niagara Falls Blvd. is zoned C-1. The central section of Sub-Area 2 is also



Map # 4A



**TOWN OF WHEATFIELD**  
**LWRP: Zoning**  
**Sub Area I**

LEGEND

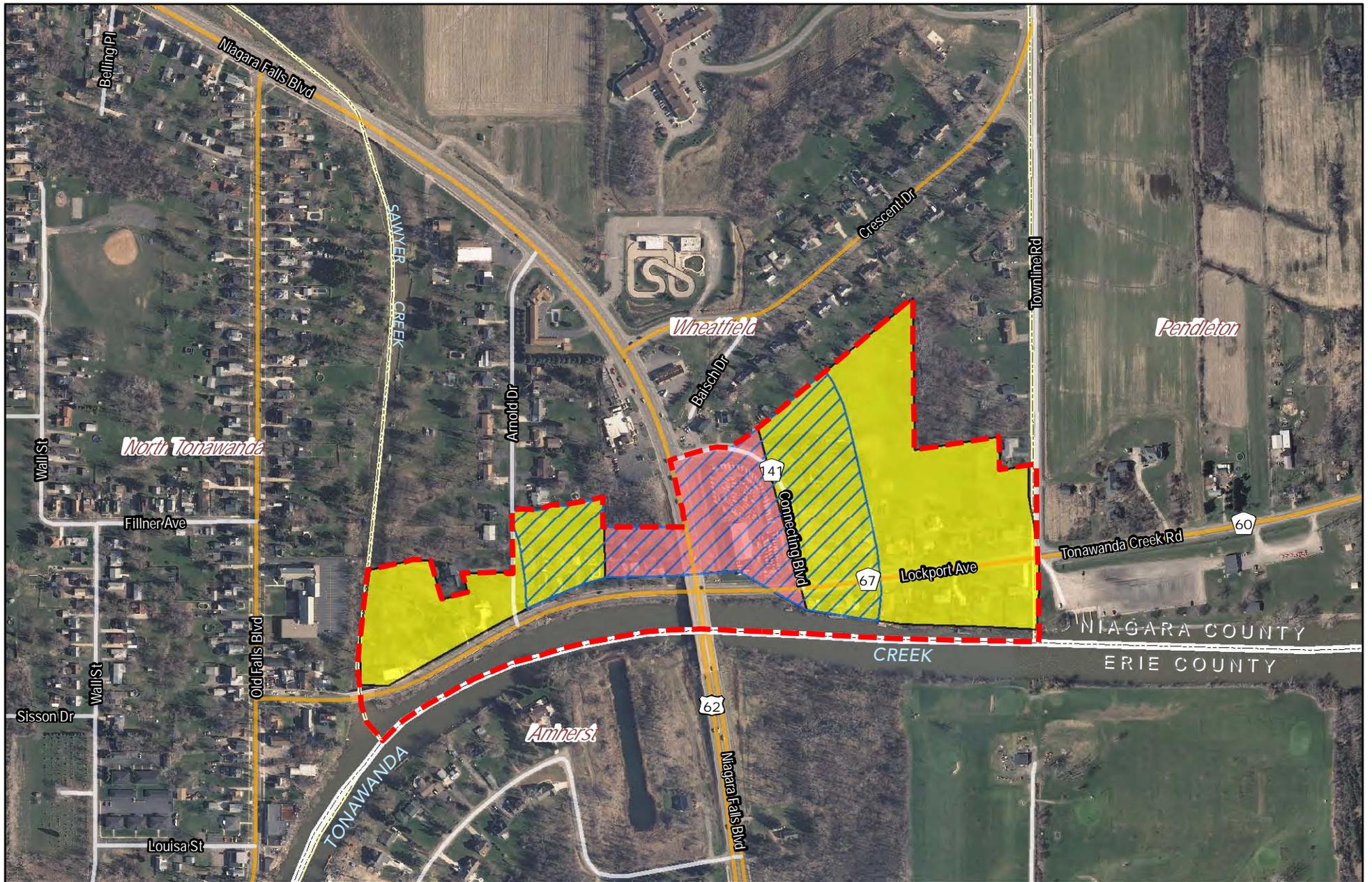
- Sub Area I
- County Boundary
- Niagara County
- Municipal Boundary

- Major Roadway
- Zoning**
- C-1
- R-2
- M-1
- R-3



**WENDEL COMPANIES**  
 WD Project # 295609LWRP  
 Map Created: November, 2010

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Map #4B

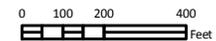


**TOWN OF WHEATFIELD**  
**LWRP: Zoning**  
**Sub Area II**

LEGEND

- Sub Area II
- County
- Niagara County Municipal Boundary

- Major Roadway
- Zoning
  - C-1
  - R-2
  - NFBO



**WENDEL COMPANIES**  
 WD Project # 295609LWRP  
 Map Created: August, 2010

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