

Chemung River Report to the Community

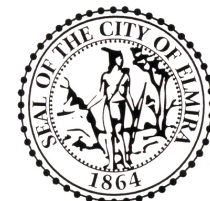
A report prepared by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County with the input and integration of ideas from the community of the City of Elmira and Chemung County.



August 26, 2004

CORNELL Cooperative Extension

www.cce.cornell.edu/~Chemung



www.ci.elmira.ny.us

Chemung River Report to the Community

Forward

So what?

While acknowledging that the scope of the work just completed was to determine a community vision, and not to even suggest how to implement it, a burning question kept coming up in the work. So what do we do to make sure that this report does not join many others on that proverbial shelf? We talked with community members, and leaders on this subject. A few recommendations came through.

Do simple actions now....

The immediate actions listed in the attached report need to receive attention to continue momentum and keep the community involved. Most prominent is boat access on Grove Street in Elmira.

Bundle some of the ideas....

Several projects should be bundled at the design level. Those are the walking trail, the promenade, the pedestrian bridge, access and riverscaping. The execution in the form of engineering, funding or construction may or may not be bundled. But, the execution should be done within the scope of a bundled project--allowing for connections, addressing contiguous points, etc. The power is the alliance of river ideas.

Rank private actions over government consent....

The actions of private citizens, and businesses should drive the process. Without that private energy, funding leadership and commitment any work will surely fail. Government should support, and possibly partially fund some of the work. The ideas have been generated from the community. It makes clear sense that the community be a force in their implementation.

Put someone in charge....

Leadership on River issues needs to be given to a person or small group. The person needs to be able to bring multiple entities together for collective outcomes. The position needs to be outside of the realm of direct governmental reporting. The position needs to be funded by a combination of private (business, individual and fund raising), grant, and local public sources to prosper and to insure buy-in.

Draft out an integrated concept drawing soon....

A community based group should take the integrated concept of a promenade, pedestrian bridge, walking trail and riverscaping to create a draft design which would enable further community feedback and a final design to be developed. The visual output of this process would insure broad communication, clarify government support, and focus grant applications.

Keep the community involved....

Public contributions to all aspects of river projects should be used whenever possible in moving forward especially in the downtown area. Much of the actual work and maintenance of projects will depend on public good will and volunteers. This demands early public involvement to build hope, trust, belief, credibility and willingness to support, long term, and the volunteer efforts that will be needed.

Get local government endorsement....

Local Government must initially support funding for design and preliminary work (engineering) primarily through grants that will require letters of support and/or match. Resolutions should be proposed to accept the plan, express support for the community process, and its resulting ideas. Support for further design work, endorsement of continued community involvement, and commitment to funding considerations (cash or matching) in design, engineering or implementation of the ideas is necessary.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY A RIVER FUTURES PROJECT?

Many organizations and individuals have been thinking, writing, talking and working on projects related to improving the economic and social health of the City of Elmira and Chemung County. Attention to concerns of job creation, an energized, downtown business district, and strategies for enhancing the quality of the resident and visitor experience in this area have been central to discussions by many groups at the city, county and community level. Several well-prepared documents speak to the complex issue of area revitalization. Recent reports available to the public include:

- *Downtown Elmira: A Fresh Vision, A New Foundation*; prepared by the Planning Committee of the Elmira Downtown Development
- *Long Range Plan with Unified Planning Work Program Update*, prepared by the Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council
- *City of Elmira Master Plan and Master Plan Update*, prepared for the City of Elmira
- *Rails to Trails Study*, prepared by the Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council
- *Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Plan*; prepared by Southern Tier Central

Chemung County and the City of Elmira also have available the planning services of various municipal, county and regional groups such as:

- Chemung County Planning Department
- Southern Tier Economic Growth
- Chemung County Industrial Development Agency
- Empire State Development Corporation
- Southern Tier Central
- Elmira Economic Development Zone
- City of Elmira Community Development Office
- City of Elmira Planning Board
- Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council

Not included are the river-specific, environmental, water, zoning and special focus district boards, committees and associations (for example, Solid Waste) that also contribute plans, information and perspectives on the economic, social, and quality of life development efforts in this area.

The question might reasonably be asked, given the list of organizations, boards, and documents, **why this latest process and report on the Chemung River from yet one more organization, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE/Chemung) of Chemung County?**

At the time CCE/Chemung proposed a River Futures project, local City officials and staff were already speaking in public meetings about some possible ideas for reinvigorating downtown Elmira through increased use of the Chemung River. An inflatable dam was one possible venture being discussed. Senior staff of

CCE/Chemung suggested to Elmira and County representatives that garnering community support for any large or small project involving public dollars would be enhanced by soliciting community ideas and participation while still in the early stages of the venture. CCE/Chemung is focused on civic revitalization and civic participation as a means of social and economic revival in communities. In early March, CCE/Chemung offered a proposal to City officials to undertake a broad scale, community-based approach for gathering ideas from county and city residents on the future role of the river in supporting efforts to reinvigorate the area. CCE was well suited to coordinate this project because:

- CCE/Chemung believes, based on experience, the more voices and bodies actively engaged in shaping the future of a community, the greater likelihood any given project will succeed thanks to widespread support
- CCE/Chemung staff works in a variety of citizen engagement activities with a broad array of individuals and groups that are under-represented in planning endeavors.
- CCE/Chemung is directly affiliated with Cornell University and the staff of the University's Community and Rural Development Institute (CARDI), offering access to resources that enhance a community-based effort.

HOW WAS THIS PROJECT DEVELOPED?

CCE/Chemung development staff determined that citizen participation from the very beginning would be key to building support for this work. With that in mind, CCE/Chemung convened a planning committee comprised of individuals known to have an interest in the river or community revitalization through:

- Business ownership in a downtown location
- Sports or environmental activities, leadership
- Government or professional activities associated with the river
- Homeowner or resident in a location near to river
- Youth activism

Planning committee members were specifically invited to participate in three sessions of roughly 1 ¼ -hour-long sessions. The charge of the committee was:

- Develop a question for the broader community to answer relative to the Chemung River and the future
- Test a design for use in town hall-style meetings that would generate answers to the question
- Suggest what groups and or individuals should definitely be included, if at all possible, in the community meetings

At the end of the planning meetings, the committee had formulated the following question for community members to answer:

How do we make the river attractive, accessible and appealing for residents and visitors?

Additionally, the planning committee agreed that a series of community or stakeholder meetings should be completed to gather as much information from the

community as possible. The design of the meetings was roughly the same for all groups convened or attended:

- Brief review of the history of the project
- Map activity that asked participants to note differences, similarities, evolutionary trends, etc. along the Chemung River over a 110-year span.
- Small group work with participants answering the question what appeal features, attraction features and accessibility features are needed on the Chemung River
- Individuals rotated among different stations and contributed to each list.
- Top three ideas in each category were selected by participants using a ranking process

This same information and question was also available on the City of Elmira website allowing individuals to provide comment in that manner as well.

WHERE WERE PROJECT ACTIVITIES HELD?

A series of 17 meetings were convened around the county with most of the meetings taking place in the City of Elmira. The complete list of meeting sites and dates can be found in the attachment section of this report.

WHEN WERE PROJECT ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED?

Project planning meetings began first week of April, 2004 and concluded June 22, 2004

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PROJECT?

Participants ranged in age from 16 to 80+ and included members of the business, banking, environmental, student, resident, elected and clergy. Over 300 individuals were involved.

WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES?

After all stakeholder comments were tallied, the community was invited to a final evening meeting to explore more in-depth the six highest-ranking suggestions. The evening meeting is the focal point of this report.

Additional background information on this project can be found at <<http://www.ci.elmira.ny.us/about/riverfront.html>>.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Over the years, many plans with excellent ideas have been put forward for public consideration. The comments documented in this report represent the brainstorming of a group of citizens, building on the work of ideas gathered from over 300 residents of Chemung County. It is important to emphasize that this report contains no weighting rankings on project ideas, no consensus, and no general agreements about the priorities with which these projects should be approached. Many of the concepts highlighted in this report will require a more quantitative analysis and thoroughly researched design plan before being initiated.

There was a wide diversity of ideas all targeted towards reconnecting residents and visitors with the Chemung River. Generally, there seemed to be a recognition by all participants that:

- The Chemung River has attractive potential as a focal point for positive change that would encourage economic, social and cultural growth in this area.
- Safety of all, who use the river, including those with disabilities, and children, must always be the primary consideration in any development project that includes the river.
- Flood control remains a constant challenge that must be taken into account when river projects are designed and developed.

SPECIFIC RIVER PROJECTS

WALKING/HIKING/BIKING TRAIL

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- Literally would draw residents and certain tourist segment to the river.
- Better trails near the river for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles allow for more controlled access to the river
- Local community could use these trails year-round for recreation, walking their pets, fitness activities, and special sports events such as bike-a-thons and walk-a-thons enhancing quality of life for residents
- Formal school field trips, as well as non-formal nature connection and appreciation activities such as bird watching and painting, could also occur from the trails.
- Trails would provide tourists with a unique view of the river, and help in establishing Elmira as a regional tourism destination.
- Secondary benefits of a well-developed, maintained trail system could include: interpretive programming relating to local cultural history—such as the French and Indian War, the Underground Railroad, Mark Twain, and Native Americans in the region— and natural history—notably photography, native plant study and birding—associated with the trails
- Trails support growth of economic and recreational activities by connecting to shopping/eating/small business areas at locations along trail

Recommended Immediate Actions-“Lead Organization-Eco-Projects”

1. Develop collaborative, working group focused on trail development including river trail design and funding possibilities
2. Complete assessment of the riverfront in consideration of a trail system noting particular areas that will need to be cleaned up or significantly altered.
3. Secure a small amount of funding to systematically organize, publicize, coordinate, and implement an “Adopt-the-Riverfront” clean-up campaign.
4. In collaboration with existing sports clubs, river associations and special interest groups such as the Chemung Valley Audubon Society develop a comprehensive list of fish, bird, wildlife and plant species found along the river suitable for marketing publication.

Considerations-Recommendation #1

- Trail designers will need to work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to develop trail inside and/or around the floodwall, which

currently precludes access to much of the riverfront.

- College students and community groups can be tapped for planning, design, and communication assistance
- Through the school systems, youth could also be involved in the design and development of the trail system, and then use the trails as part of their outdoor classrooms
- Comfort issues associated with a public trail system need to be addressed in a detailed design plan including handicapped-accessible, clean, public restrooms and well-placed parking areas.
- Interests of boaters, snow-shoers, exercise enthusiasts, birders, and those seeing more contemplative recreation such as meditation and yoga should be considered.

Considerations-Recommendation #2

Work with appropriate local high school/college faculty to use trained, student volunteers to assist with assessment

Considerations-Recommendation #3

Volunteer organization, support and scheduling are crucial to the suggested campaign. This takes time, attention and some financial support but the overall cost could prove to be modest given the benefits of focused attention that could lead to formation of a Trails Association sometime in the future. Youth involvement in the river trail system maintenance should be encouraged through the schools.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

A detailed design plan will be completed within two years for trail development over the five years. At least one leg of the trail will be constructed and in use by summer 2007. Other recommended actions will be completed by summer 2006.

SUMMARY

The idea of developing walking/hiking/biking trails weaves in well to a much broader community focus on health issues. This type of recreational trail or byway is a cornerstone project when looking at ways to enhance the appeal, access and attractiveness of the river. Community engagement and service vital to revitalization efforts certainly could take place through trail maintenance landscaping and beautification.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- There is currently strong public interest in the development of a bridge allocated exclusively for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians.
- A pedestrian bridge could serve as the site for events and activities with a river focus thus drawing residents and visitors to the river.
- Business development ideas included potential for small shops and eateries perhaps through a vendor “cart” or “kiosk” scheme
- This type of site would lend to supporting downtown events such as concerts, fireworks, light shows and possibly even private affairs such as weddings and parties
- Addresses potential use of Lake Street or another bridge when structure is no longer suitable to carry traffic without major, capital investment
- A project of this magnitude, if carried-out well, has potential to galvanize public interest and enthusiasm
- This project could very well be done to capitalize on concept of a “signature” location in the City drawing residents and visitors

Recommended Immediate Actions- "Lead Organization-Riverfront District"

1. Work with festival-sponsoring groups to incorporate use of a bridge in any upcoming, community event to get a short-term sense of how such a bridge might be used in this context
2. Work with Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council to expand promenade project design work to include connection path to potential pedestrian bridge site at Lake Street
3. Work with appropriate state and city officials to make a final determination of structure that could be converted to this type of use
4. Upon designation of a structure, institute a “pedestrian bridge” advisory team of community/professional people to develop a community bridge design competition

Considerations-Recommendation #1

Developing downtown, outdoor events that make use of a bridge should also be encouraged by the City whenever possible.

Considerations-Recommendation #2

This project work is already underway. Whenever possible, tying other development projects to the riverfront should be considered as a means of continually coordinating revitalization efforts.

Considerations-Recommendation #3

Although there has been discussion of Lake Street bridge eventually being “red flagged” by NY State Department of Transportation, that has not yet occurred.

Considerations-Recommendation #4

- This project idea seemed to captivate the imagination of meeting participants and would likely be equally interesting for the broader community
- A competition is an excellent way to build interest, enthusiasm and public support
- Incorporate a method for larger public to view, comment and help determine competition “winner”

- Design elements noted for a pedestrian bridge include: room for small business ventures; attractive, well-designed lighting that focuses attention on bridge and river; possible visitor center

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Within five years, first phase of a design plan for a pedestrian bridge will have been completed on bridge site. Bridge will be in routine use for outdoor, downtown events.

SUMMARY

A pedestrian bridge in and of itself probably does not have the potential to be a major destination spot for tourists. However, in the context of a revitalized waterfront in the city, this project clearly speaks in support of how to make the river more attractive, appealing and accessible to all that live and visit here.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- Vibrant downtown requires businesses. A riverfront business district was once a thriving neighborhood in Elmira.
- Riverfront views offer attractive possibilities for the development of certain types of entrepreneurial ventures such as outdoor cafés, second floor apartments and art studios as well as seasonal, outdoor vendor operations.
- Developed, mixed-use waterfront areas in other municipalities are a draw for residents and tourists. Some of the larger, better known waterfronts have become major tourist destinations.
- Development of a riverfront business district offers the potential for long-term, positive economic benefits to the community.

Recommended Immediate Actions-“Lead Organization-Riverfront Business District”

Develop a “commission” or “blue ribbon” committee structure, of public and private individuals to assist in developing a comprehensive strategic plan for creation of a riverfront business district.

Considerations-Recommendation

- Ideas for business recruitment may already be outlined in existing master plan for the City. This needs to be explored.
- In the absence of a strong leadership group that commands authority and credibility to make projects happen, a riverfront business district may never be realized.
- Several creative ideas were suggested in this River Futures process relative to a riverfront business district. These ideas need to be gathered, sifted, refined and woven together into a strategy that can be implemented in some cohesive manner.
- Generally, an entrepreneurial spirit needs to be fostered in the community combined with a greater sense of Elmira as a “can-do” city. Building this capacity might be fostered more productively through this recommended structure.
- A list of business ideas accompanies this report and includes ideas for boosting tourism to the area.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

A designated organization secures the funding to dedicate a significant portion of professional time to implementing a riverfront business district “association, commission or panel”. Within 3 years, a vision/design plan for the district will have been completed and at least 2 new business ventures, based on plan, will be established in the riverfront district.

SUMMARY

There were many comments and questions regarding how to best undertake a business development strategy for the City of Elmira. Leadership of such a process was a recurring question. Participants also spoke to the issue of cooperation and collaboration by City and County officials to make meaningful and sustained development

of this type work. There were also many ideas and comments on where a riverfront district might best be located, design features and concern that there be some careful consideration given to the aesthetics of a district such as this.

DOCKS, PIERS, AND RIVER ACCESS

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- Strong interest by nature enthusiasts, anglers, boaters and other river sports adherents to encourage river use
- Other organized groups around region are also working on access
- Greater river “traffic” offers encouragement for recreational and sports related business development
- With improved access, other ‘Eco-projects’ can be explored

Recommended Immediate Actions-“ Lead Organization-Eco-projects”

1. Publicize and widely distribute map of river launch sites developed by Southern Tier Central and the Chemung River Basin Trail Partnership.
2. Focus efforts on developing the necessary portage routes

Considerations-Recommendation #1

- Lighting and signage are key elements at access points
- Consider working with area restaurants and other less conventional establishments to publicize the river access sites and places to rent canoes, kayaks, etc.
- Note “folk names” of places along the River on future publications featuring the river access sites.

Considerations-Recommendation #2

- Current portage requirements on the river, especially in City limits are difficult
- Well-designed portage will encourage more boaters, all ages, to use river developing an affinity for the benefits and beauty the river provides.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

With the addition of the Grove Street launch, there will be 8 access points in Chemung County to the river. Groundbreaking for the launch site ideally will be within next 6 months with completion by spring 2005. Next steps seem to be more in area of signage, maintenance, portaging routes, and marketing of launch sites. Increased boat traffic as measured by increased sales and rentals of canoes, kayaks, etc. will be one clear indicator of success in this area.

SUMMARY

Developing launch sites along the river has been a major focal point of the Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership, a collaborative group working with Southern Tier Central. Success of the boat launch initiatives is evident given the number of sites that have been opened. This group has also been instrumental in providing informational kiosks, maps and other relevant publications on the Chemung River. Portage and signage remain areas that need work. The existence of the Chemung

Basin River Trail remains relatively “hidden” in the Elmira area. Greater marketing and outreach efforts to make the existence of the launch sites well known are needed. Visible advertising that targets the location of rental businesses for canoeing, kayaking and guided river trips is also needed. It’s important to create greater public interest in how the launch sites contribute to the tourist business as well as offer new possibilities for residents to insure the sites are well used and maintained.

BEAUTIFICATION

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- Clean, well-maintained and visually appealing areas along the river encourage residents and visitors to spend time enjoying this beautiful feature of our community.
- The river offers some wonderful vistas that are obscured presently diminishing the value of this natural asset.
- Given the necessity of the dykes and walls for protection, better integration through landscaping and beautification would go a long way toward integrating the river into the community rather than blocking the river and contributing to the “segmentation” and fear effect the river seems to presently symbolize.

Recommended Immediate Actions “Lead Organization-Eco-projects”

1. Seek a modest amount of funding to organize, promote and coordinate an “adopt-the-river” approach to clean-up

Recommended Immediate Actions “Lead Organization-Riverfront Business District”

2. Convene a meeting with representatives of various arts funding groups and interested local artists as well as area art teachers/instructors, to discuss ideas, concepts, and possibility for mural projects along the dyke wall and on sides of various buildings that abut the river.
3. Garden ideas, including use of statuary and natural fountains, bayscaping concepts and pathways abound in the community. The State EPA offers grants for revitalization efforts in waterfront communities. Support of city officials to secure such grants is vital. A grant application for immediate support of developing design plans, using a public process, should be submitted in the next EPA funding cycle.

Considerations-Recommendation #1

- While there were many suggestions for using volunteers of one type or another, the fact remains that a successful volunteer program requires some individual, or group of individuals, taking the responsibility to recruit, organize, train, schedule, and develop the work plans, secure the required permissions, assemble the needed equipment and myriad other administrative tasks for a sustained effort.
- River clean-up work has many potential challenges, some small and some larger and of a more serious nature. An individual managing this type of project on a regular basis is clearly needed to keep the effort intact. This takes some money. While periodic clean-up attempts have occurred, systematic and reliable efforts, especially along the riverbanks, have not been in place for several years.

Considerations-Recommendation #2

- There were many creative suggestions on beautification efforts. Again, this is an area of concern that captures the attention and imagination of community members. The lack of any one organization having river projects as a long-term priority has hampered efforts to do more with beautification.

Considerations-Recommendation #3

- Given the breadth of ideas and the level of enthusiasm observed in the public meetings for thinking about how the riverfront might be enhanced, a public process resulting in an actual set of drawings would go a long way toward generating excitement and enthusiasm by community members. This is a necessary ingredient in the recruitment of volunteers and attracting more funding for river projects.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Having a publicly approved design plan for beautification with discrete projects completed by winter 2006 would be a true accomplishment. Completion of one, modest beautification project, based on the design, by fall 2006 would mark early success in this area. A formally developed, marketed and coordinated Adopt project in place by summer or fall 2005 should be attainable.

SUMMARY

The creative possibilities for beautification work along the river are endless. Basic clean up and mowing would go a long way toward making the river area more attractive. A list of the ideas offered in the meeting of June 22 is included at the end of this report. Almost without fail, individuals that participated in this process spoke eagerly about the need to improve the visual aesthetics along the river. Visual improvement in this regard, would go a long way toward providing a tangible sign that the community is a vibrant, interesting and innovative place to visit or live.

FESTIVALS

NOTED BENEFITS-APPEAL/ACCESS/ATTRACTIVENESS

- Festivals, concerts, events have drawn residents to the downtown area on a regular basis. Signature events have proven to be a boon in many communities, for attracting visitors.
- The more individuals that visit downtown locations, for any reason, the greater the possibility for the community to support downtown ventures of all types.
- The river has the potential to provide added beauty and drama to any venue.

Recommended Immediate Actions Elmira Downtown Development

1. Work with all event sponsoring organizations to weave some portion of event around or near river whenever possible.
2. Consider some method for incorporating an aspect of the Wisner Market experience to have a river' edge location. For example, an expansion of the market concept to occur in Riverside Park on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon.
3. Using public suggestions, develop and implement at least one signature event that features the river, a river theme or uses the river. (See ideas for festivals at end of this report)

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Initiation of a process to gather and prioritize a festival or event idea that is directly river-related in some fashion through winter of 2005. Secure funding, sponsors, partner groups and organize the top priority with event to occur by spring 2006.

SUMMARY

Development of downtown events was clearly seen by the majority of participants in this process to be one of the primary responsibilities of Elmira Downtown Development. If that organization does not see this as a priority, perhaps they could identify another group and assist with securing funding and technical assistance, to mount a major river event. Clearly, many people liked the idea of more festivals or concerts in the downtown area and believed this was one way to get residents from around the county more familiar and comfortable with being in the city.

APPENDIX 1

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Downtown Clergy.....	April 29	Wellsburg Fire Department Lunch Group.....	June 7
Brand Park Committee.....	May 3	Appalachian Regional Commission.....	June 8
Planning Committee.....	May 4	Trinity Church Wed. Lunch Group.....	June 8
EFA Students One.....	May 11	Centenary Church Government Leaders.....	June 10
EFA Students Two.....	May 13	Human Resources Center.....	June 10
Southside Community Center.....	May 17	Big Flats Lions Club.....	June 14
West Elmira Fire Department.....	May 19	Chem. Co. Chamber of Commerce.....	June 15
Faith Temple Church.....	May 20	Elmira Downtown Development "Downtown Conversations.....	June 16
EFA Community Meeting.....	May 24	Economic Opportunity Program One.....	June 17
Southside Senior Dance.....	May 25	Phone Calls to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung Co..	Ongoing
Centenary Church Community Members to Cornell.....	May 27	City of Elmira Website Inquiries.....	Ongoing
Economic Opportunity Program Two...	June 1		

APPENDIX 2

IDEAS FOR THE CHEMUNG RIVER-ALL GROUPS REPORTING

Attractive

Landscape Urban Areas
Wildlife Viewing Areas
Bait Shop
Crew to keep Clean
Foot Bridge/Lake Street
Concerts/Fireworks/Tournaments
Adopt the River
Trail Development
Overlooks-Views
Address Eyesore of Flood Wall
Open approach from Rt. 17 going East
To provide a river vantage point
Boardwalk
Signage
I-86 may disrupt river - needs protection
Clean Up
Beautify
Benches on Dikes
Picnic Area
Bird Sanctuary (feeders)
Trails
Mark Twain Festival
Historic Weekend
Canoe Race
Murals on Dike
Swimming Areas
Water Show
Landscaping
Clear-Westerly view from Rt. 17 at exits
Newtown to Water Street
Improve beauty of dike with flowers
Walk Above Dike-elevated
Build Masonry-Miniature Lighthouse
on Seagull Island
Directional signs to attractions
Dining spots with decks/cafés

Lights on bridges and grassy slopes
Avenue of American Flags along dike
White picket fence on top of concrete dams
Flags on the bridges
Trip weeds along bank
Elevated walkway on both sides
Colored foliage along river
Riverboat Restaurant
History Awareness Events
Bandstand-Brand Park
Art Along River
Camping
River Race
Biking Path/Race
Amphitheatre
Gift Shops
Community Food Garden
Water Café
Landscaping
Clean Up River
Sandy Beachfront
Lighthouse (Seagull Island)
Benches
Flags on Bridge
Centerway (Corning, NY)
Boat Races (cardboard)
Pier
Paint Historical Pictures on dike
Piers/Docks
Crew to Clean
Concerts/Fireworks/Tournaments
Camp Grounds
Walking Bridge
Wildlife Viewing Area
Parking
Paved Trails

Create "natural" areas
Signature Bridge
Landscape Urban Areas
Pedestrian Bridge
More Accessible
Open Grove Street
Picnic Area
Bait Shop
Boat, Canoe, Kayak Rentals
Paddle Boats
Nature Plantings/Trees
Maintain the River
Activities
Fair
Museums
Planting
Canoe Rental
Gaslights
Gardens
Carriage Rides
Refurbish Bridges
Attractive Signage
Huck Finn Steam Boat
Fishing and Dog Areas
Entrance to River
Amusement Park Attraction
Cobblestones
Tours to Quarry Farm
Remove or refurbish buildings
Cleaning it up (including
empty storefronts)
Lighting
Landscaping
Fountains
Walking/Bike Paths
Viewing Areas

Boutiques
Enhance Cliff Areas
Info Kiosks

Planting/Painting Wall
Lighted Walkways (solar)
Walking Paths/Biking Trails

Fish Cleaning Stations

Accessible

Open Grove St. to River
Picnic Area
Handicap Access
Parking
Public Transit/Pickup Service
Downtown Access
Bike Paths (non motorized)
Walking Trails
Boat Launch
Walkway/Bike path
Footpath to Cross River
Floating Docks
Stairs/Ramps/Elevators
Boat Launches
Trail/Paths/Foot Bridges
Parking Lots
Parking
Good Signs
Fishing
Event Programs
Paved/Gravel Access Roads
Exits from River
Secure place to leave boats
Easy Parking
Hiking
Boat Launch
Amusement Park
Fishing Dock
Restroom/Public
Grove Street Launch
River Trail/Walking/Hiking/Biking
Portage by the Dam
Boat Launch Timberlain St.
Gate on Concrete Dike Portable Access
Connections
Clean Up Banks
Steps/Ramps

Signage
Walkway and Benches
Hudson St. Launch
Services/Garbage-Toilets
Public Relations Education
Boardwalk with ramps to River
Walking Bridge
Restaurants along with View
Walkways
Floating Docks
Biking Trails
Visible Access
Road (paths, entrances, exits)
Parking
More boat launches
Paths to River
Parking Areas
Comfort Stations
Boardwalk
Footpath to Cross River
Docks
More Bridges
Walkways
Trails/Food Path
Grove St. Site
Boat Launches
Picnic Area
Hiking Trails
Bicycle Paths
Portage Area
Elevated Viewing Platform
Parking
Handicap Accessible
Public Transit/Pickup Service
Downtown Access
Knock down old Buildings
Ways to Get to the River

Build Condos
Downtown Housing with shops
Trolley
Boat Rides
Calendar of Events with Elmira Focus
Funding for small businesses
Mini outlets downtown
Tour Train/Buses
Entrance to River
Restaurants on River
Entertainment Peer
Elmira Day
Handicap Accessible
Children's Museum (hands on, historical)
Bike Paths
Build Platforms
Bring Land up to Barriers
Upgrade River Accesses
Upgrade existing trails connecting
trails/Elmira/Corning
Signage
Bring Streets up to River Level
Walking Bridges
Free Parking at River
Shops-Retail space higher levels
Build Walkways on dikes
Canoe/Kayak launch sites
Recreational
River Related Festivals
Safe Water/Crime Prevention
Paths along River
Paths on the Levee
Parking Areas
Facilities—Restaurants
Picnic Areas
Fishing Contests

Appealing

Rest Stop/Porta John
Canoes/Paddle Boats
Fishing Tournaments
Canoe/Raft/Kayak
Competitions
Walkways/Bike Paths/Overlooks
Ecology Center/Educational
(Interact with Tanglewood)
Water Park—Summer & Winter Recreation
Docks for Boat Owners
Fishing Docks
Sports Facilities
Restaurants on the
Water
Boating
Restaurants
Concerts
Wildlife Observation/Guides/Tours
Duck Tour
Outfitters—Along River
River Recreation
Canoes/Kayaks
Arts
Wildlife Info Signs
Handicap Access
Huck Finn Raft Trip brought back
Canoe Races
Frog Jumping Contests
Canoe Races
River Boat Gambling
Dunn Field as Amusement Park
Camping
Water Park
Riverwalk/Boardwalk
Fireworks
Boat Livery/Rent Boats
Fishing Supplies
Fishing Contests
Circus
Skiing/Snow Shoe
Theatre on the River
Inflatable Dam
Concentrate on West of Dam

Designate a River Programming Person
Canoe and Boat Rentals
Canoe/Raft Races
Bird watching
Pier/Platform to fish Safety

Clean up debris
Alternate vegetation along dike
for aesthetic purposes
Wine tasting on River
Floating Casino
(NYS Sponsored)
Canoe and Boat Rental
Stock River with Game Fish
Water Fountains
Lighting for Evenings
Wildflowers/Gardens
Lighting for Evenings
Benches
Restrooms
Arboretum
Boating
Retail/Restaurants
Clean-Up River/Maintain
Educate on River
Night Lighting
Outdoor Free Entertainment
Food Vendors
Drinking Fountains
Picnic Area
Holiday Decorations
Music
Mark Twain Theme
Pavilions
Riverboat rides and/or casino
River rides, kayaking & canoes, tubing
Recreation of Civil War Prison Camp
Shops & Restaurants—use river as theme
Picnic areas on islands
Community Activities - e.g., films, fireworks
Saturday Farmer's Market
Mark Twain Theme tie-in
Docks for Boat Owners

Restaurants in Water
Fishing Docks
Swimming Docks
Fun Parks/Activities
Sports Facility
Swimming Areas
Kayaks
Info Center
Rest-Stop/Porta John
Camping/Trails
General Supply Store
Events/Concerts
Boardwalk
Viewing Area
Fishing Museum
Riverboat Casino
Public Restrooms
Canoes, Paddle Boats to rent
Fishing Tournaments
Canoe/Raft/Kayak Competitions
Picnic Area
Well Used
Food/Fishing
Well Kept
Locals
Businesses
Walking/Bicycle Paths
Boat Trips
Boats to Rent
Visible (River's Edge)
Beaches and Boat Launches
Park Setting (Picnic Areas)
Landscaping
Path/Trails (interconnected)
Concerts and Events
Bridge Beautification
Recreational Use of the River
Low Flow Channel
Floating Restaurant
Pavilions
Shops—Back to old world Charm
Vendors/Craftsmen with River Theme
Boat Launch

Outdoor Restaurant
Mark Twain Riverboat
with Trolley connected to Corning Glass
Gas lamps/Colored
Reception Hall
Outdoor festivals i.e. Arts in the Park
Music Festival (Diverse)
Boat Rental
Bicycles
Fishing Program
Horse and Buggy Rides
Famous People from Elmira Display

APPENDIX 3

RIVER REFERENCES

River Walks

Cayuga Waterfront Trail <http://www.cayugawaterfronttrail.com/>

Curb Your Car Coalition <http://owasco.co.tompkins.ny.us/itctc/cyc/index.html>

iHi - Initiative for Healthy Infrastructure www.albany.edu/gp/iHi/iHi_index.htm

Project for Public Spaces www.pps.org

Walkable Communities www.walkable.org

America Walks www.americawalks.org

Congress for New Urbanism www.cnu.org

Business Development

Lake Austin Riverboats <http://www.austinriverboats.com/index.htm>

San Antonio B&B on Riverwalk <http://www.riverwalkinn.com>

Canal Corridor Initiative <http://www.hud.gov/canlinit.cfm>

NYS Tourism Waterways http://www.iloveny.state.ny.us/travel_ideas/water_index.asp

Omaha Riverfront Development http://www.ci.omaha.ne.us/departments/mayor/EconDev/economic_dev.htm

Seaway Trail www.seawaytrail.com

Erie Canal Business and Development <http://www.canals.state.ny.us/busdevel/canaldev.html>

River Festivals: Weekend/Weeklong Events

Smokey Hill River Festival, Salina, KS – Four days. Dance, music, “art cars,” poetry, theater, parade, sculpture, maze, children’s activities, fitness activities. Admission to events by festival button. Purchase price \$6-8. <http://www.riverfestival.com/2004/>

Wichita River Festival, Wichita, KS – Nine days. Expect 350,000 visitors. Theme days (Wild West, Mardi Gras, etc). Music, theater, arts, sports, humor, environmental. <http://wichitariverfestival.org/home.html>

Kern River Festival, Kern Valley, CA – Three days. Variety of professional and amateur whitewater races. <http://www.kvrc.org/festival.htm>

American River Festival, Northern CA – Two days. Kayaking focus. <http://www.americanriverfestival.org/about.html>

Madrid Bluegrass River Festival, St. Lawrence County, NY – Three days. Music, food, canoe races, crafts, ice cream social. \$8-13/day. <http://web.northnet.org/madridbluegrassfest/>

Jazz by the River, Owego, NY – Two days.

Moose River Festival, Old Forge, NY – One day. Entertainment, food, marketplace, water sports, silent auction. <http://www.iplayoutside.com/Articles/2000/10/14-moose.html>

Reno River Festival, Reno, NV - Celebrating revitalization of downtown Reno. Kayaking, music. <http://www.renolaketahoe.com/outdoors/kayak/>

Fall River Festival of the Arts, Fall River, MA – Three days. Jazz, blues, folk, ethnic music, film. <http://www.festivalofthearts.net/whatsnew.htm>

Raritan River Festival, Raritan, NJ – Two days. Celebrates history of the Delaware and Raritan Canal and Towpath. Ecology, children’s activities, music, boat floats, shows, tours. http://www.loc.gov/bicentennial/propage/NJ/nj-6_h_pallone2.html

RiverFest, Lowville, NY – One day. Barbecue, music, kayak/canoe family festival. <http://www.yankeemagazine.com/travel/search/onelisting.php?number=15057>

Albany RiverFest, Albany, NY – One day. Celebration of Riverfront Park. Music, kids' activities, fireworks.
<http://www.albanyevents.org/riverfest/index.cfm>

RiverFest, Cornwall, NY On the Hudson – One day. Food, entertainment, crafts.
<http://www.cornwallny.com/riverfest.htm>

RiverFest, Yonkers, NY On the Hudson – One day. Agricultural and transportation linkages with growers upstream in Lewis County.
<http://www.ci.yonkers.ny.us/riverfest.htm>

Great Falls RiverFest, Great Falls, MT – One day. Food, music, entertainment.
<http://www.ci.great-falls.mt.us/events/riverfest.htm>

Connecticut RiverFest, Wilder, VT – One day. Watershed ecology, music, pontoon boat tours, canoe rentals, celebration of economic and aesthetic elements of the River. <http://www.ctriverfest.org/about.html>

River Festivals: Multi-Week Events

NYC Downtown River to River Festival, Lower Manhattan. Sponsored by American Express. “The largest arts festival in NYC.” Types of events: nature, music, visual arts, historical, readings, family activities, sports, dance. June-Sept.
<http://www.rivertorivemyc.com/>

Hudson River Festival, Battery Park City, Lower Manhattan. All events free. Dance, music, theater, art, family, kids. June-August.
<http://www.hudsonriverfestival.com/hrfest/Home.html>

Oswego NY - Canal Corridor City

<http://www.oswegocountybusiness.com/issue52/52Saloga.html>

<http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/pdf/index.html>

<http://www.oswegocountybusiness.com/issue43/43specialarticle.html>

Kingston NY – On the Hudson

<http://www.ulster.net/~hrmm/welcome.html>

<http://www.darp.noaa.gov/neregion/hudsltr.htm>

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/whatwedo/projects/03pr-ny.html>

Owensboro, KY - **Good process parallel. Similar size city.**

<http://www.plfo.org/ReportsPresentations/RiverfrontReport.htm>

<http://www.iompc.org/documents/Riverfront/>

Kalamazoo – Similar size city.

<http://www.detnews.com/2003/metro/0301/19/metro-63053.htm>

Memphis – Great visuals, great ideas – but the Mississippi

http://www.memphisriverfront.com/2_10-master-plan_template.cfm?page_number=1

http://www.memphisriverfront.com/2_10-master-plan_template.cfm?page_number=4-5

<http://www.memphisriverfront.com/>

Port Allen/Baton Rouge – Great visual of BATTURE SHELF (**creative use of a earthen dike**)

<http://www.portallen.org/projects/riverfront/program/alta.html>

Portland OR – Process

<http://www.oregonwri.org/RiverCityConference/Willamette/portland.pdf>

Corpus Christi TX – Process

http://www.caller.com/ccct/local_news/article/0,1641,CCCT_811_2378140.00.html

Albany NY – Good use of funding for parks

<http://www.behanplanning.com/bpfiles/PDF/City%20Albany%20Canal%20Corridor%20Grant.pdf>

<http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/june17.html>

Harrisburg PA

<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~diethelm/Riverfront.html>

General - Process

<http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/111-10182003-180330.html>

<http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/113-10182003-180341.html>

Columbia SC

<http://www.midnet.sc.edu/river/alliance.htm>

Chattanooga TN

http://rivercitycompany.com/21st_waterfront/home.asp

<http://www.chattanoogariverfront.com/vision.html>

Montgomery AL

<http://www.montgomery.al.us/riverfront.asp>

Richmond VA– Great River Walk

<http://www.richmondriverfront.com/>