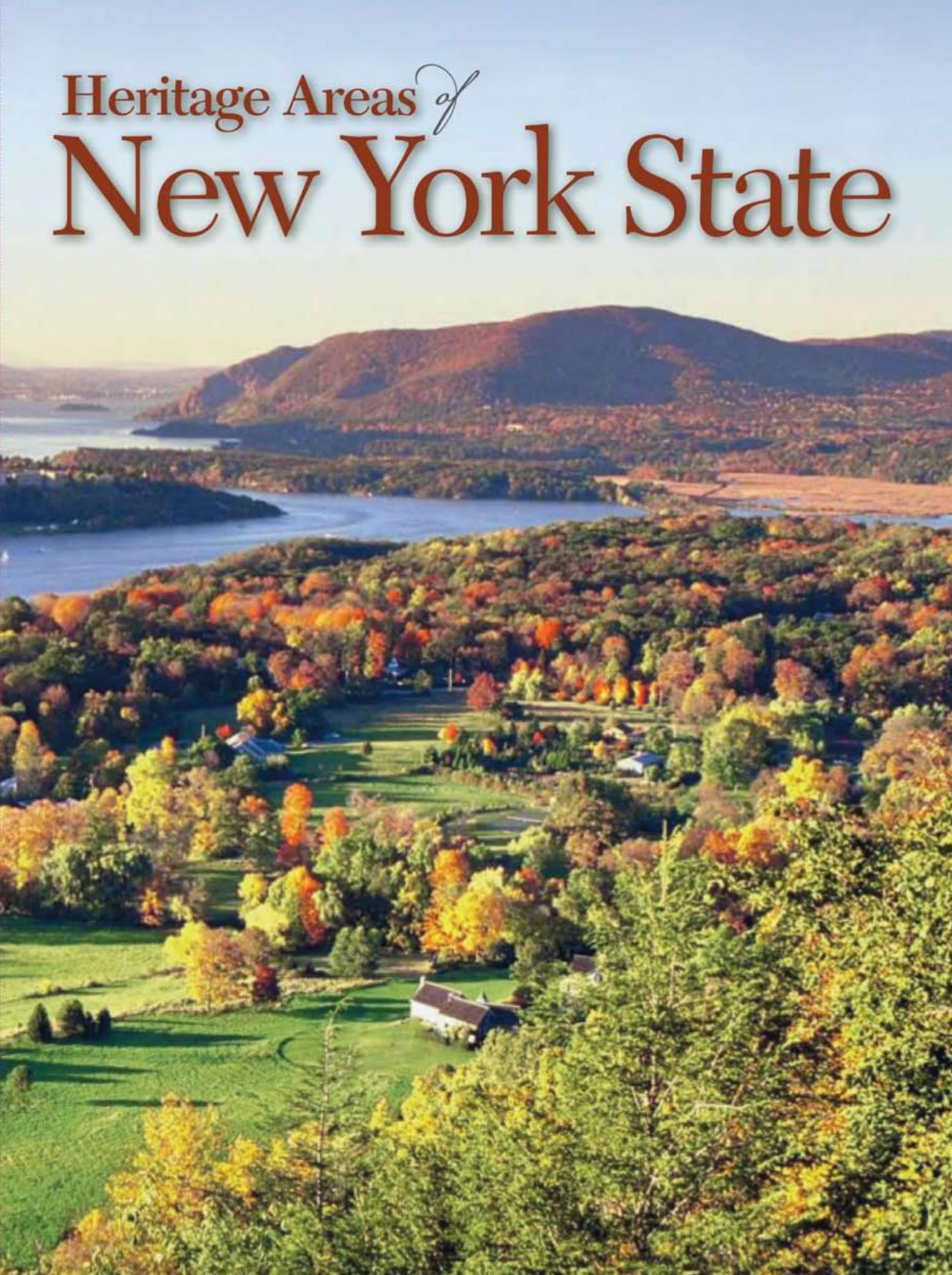


Heritage Areas *of*
New York State



“If we want *to* know
who we are, what we are,
and where we are going...

we have *to* know
the story
of our heritage.”
- U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey

What is Heritage Development?

Heritage Development is an effective model of economic and community development that has deep roots in historic preservation, tourism development and open space protection. Heritage Development creates a framework for regional collaboration and cooperation among private, local, state and federal partners. It has flourished as a powerful community revitalization movement with widespread participation and strong partnerships at the grass roots of New York State communities.

For over 30 years, state and nationally designated heritage areas have planned and implemented hundreds of successful Heritage Development projects across New York. The true foundation of Heritage Development is the “pride of place” realized by the citizens who live in one of the Heritage Areas of New York State. Those citizens create projects that encompass a broad spectrum of revitalization strategies linking a region’s economic prosperity to its cultural assets and environmental quality.

Heritage Development helps to create healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities that protect the best of the past and the present while meeting the needs of future generations.

What is a Heritage Area in New York State?

A Heritage Area is a special place that merges a strong sense of place, interpretation of regional stories, natural scenic splendor and exciting recreational opportunities to maximize economic revitalization.

The Heritage Areas of New York State form a network of organizations that celebrate the special character and culture of our state. There are twenty Heritage Areas in New York designated by the New York State Legislature, and four National Heritage Areas designated by the U.S. Congress. Together, the Heritage Areas of New York State work to protect historic and cultural resources while encouraging development for tourism and other economic opportunities.

The Heritage Areas of New York State harness a wide range of community assets and interests, from historic preservation, outdoor recreation, museums, performing arts, folk life and crafts, and scenic and working landscapes, to grassroots community-building activities that, when combined, create a whole far greater than its individual parts. They illuminate the history and culture of a region so that people within that region feel proud of their heritage and so those who visit come away with a deeper appreciation of the heritage of the area.

The Benefits of Heritage Development

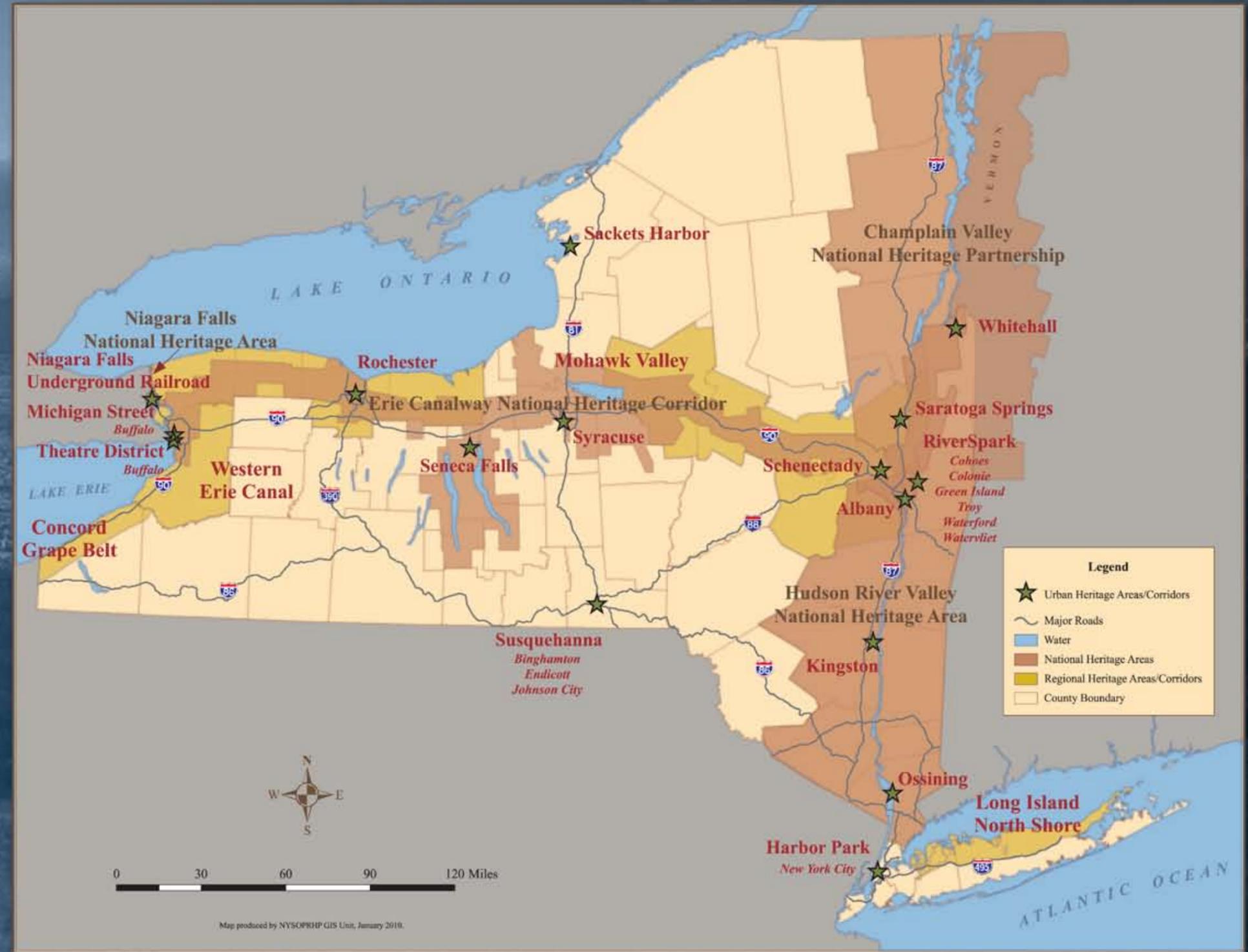
What do the Canajoharie Main Street Program in the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor and the Michigan Street Baptist Church in Buffalo and a log cabin in the Whitehall Heritage Area all have in common? What makes a comprehensive waterfront plan in the Town and Village of Fort Ann and a unique agritourism strategy in Chautauqua County and a tax credit property redevelopment in Cohoes similar in nature? They are all found in communities that have banked part of their future successes on the rich stories and the strengths of their heritage.

Creative partnership-building drives the success of the Heritage Areas of New York State. No one group, agency, or community can do it alone. Citizens, private business, local, state, and federal government all play a vital role. The millions of dollars leveraged for heritage development projects over 30 years are proof that collaboration and diverse participation is at the creative heart of effective revitalization work in New York State.

Heritage development:

- Capitalizes on the unique historic, cultural and natural assets of the Heritage Area as a base for economic revitalization
- Brings vital partners and stakeholders together to strategically plan for a revitalized economy and improved quality of life
- Fosters community pride and a distinct sense of place that appeals to residents, tourists, and others making place-based investment decisions
- Builds networks of organizations and agencies that can have a powerful influence on regional outcomes and attract multi-level funding
- Attracts new investment and economic development that serves the best long term interests of the regions served by the Heritage Area

Heritage Areas of New York State



The Power *of the* Past

The unique cultural, historic and natural assets of a Heritage Area provide a foundation for economic revitalization.

RiverSpark: Harnessing Powerful Heritage Assets to Charge the Economy

In the 1820's, industrialists recognized the power of the mighty Cohoes Falls and harnessed it for industrial success. Today, visionaries in the **RiverSpark Heritage Area** encourage investors to capitalize upon the region's assets in the modern economy.

Cotton production began in Cohoes in 1834. The proximity of the Mohawk River, the Hudson River and the Erie Canal enabled finished goods to be shipped to widespread markets. By 1872, the mill town boasted the largest individual cotton factory in the world.

The **Harmony Mills District** is a National Historic Landmark, designated for the historical and architectural significance of its mills and worker housing. At the heart of the district is the Second Empire style Harmony Mill #3, an immense factory building that still houses its original 800 HP Boyden turbines, which are listed as National Mechanical Engineering Landmarks. Underutilized and deteriorating since the 1950s, Mill #3 has recently undergone a significant adaptive reuse as the site of 96 luxurious loft apartments, with 135 more units planned.

Rather than write off this significant regional heritage gem after it fell into disrepair, the **RiverSpark Heritage Area** crafted a partnership that appreciated the value of the site. With an initial investment of \$11.5 million and creative use of the New York State Historic Tax Credit program, developers set about restoring the roof and flooring, replaced windows, and divided the open floors into attractive housing units, with

indoor parking on the lowest levels. The lofts offer unique spaces and great views of the Mohawk River. The citizens of Cohoes have embraced the Lofts at Harmony Mills as a catalyst for economic revitalization.

Just as Harmony Mills served as a model for cotton mills around the globe, their transformation illustrates the potential for adaptive reuse of industrial sites. Elsewhere in the **RiverSpark Heritage Area**, the **Arsenal Business & Technological Partnership** is dedicated to "extending our heritage to modern uses" in its development of the Watervliet Arsenal, founded in 1813 and still producing large caliber cannons. The conversion of Building #125 for cleanroom manufacturing and R&D serves the emerging nanotech, semi-conductor and advanced materials industries, while maintaining the National Historic Landmark's historic military mission. In the **Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor**, the Newell Shirt Company Building in Medina is becoming a mixed-use restaurant, retail, office, and residential complex.



Saratoga Springs: Today's Prosperity Bound to Vital Past

The **Saratoga Springs** of today, heralded by American Heritage Magazine as a "Great American Place," entertains millions of visitors every year. Once again one of America's most sought after destinations, Saratoga Springs is very much aware that its present economic fortunes are strategically built upon its glorious past.

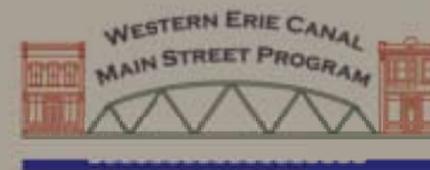
The economic revitalization of Saratoga Springs is manifest in a revived and bustling downtown, a joyously unrestrained architectural legacy, one of the world's top ten sports venues, and the crown jewel of the New York State park system. It is a place of music and dance and literature, where some of the world's most talented artists and writers convene to perform and nurture their talents each year. The attractions of Saratoga Springs have been drawing visitors for centuries. Increasingly, those visitors have been coming to stay, open their businesses and raise their families in the region. Quality of life is a strong economic development tool.

The city's attractions are bound together and presented, celebrated and preserved by the planning and partnerships of the **Saratoga Springs Heritage Area**. Its 1915 Beaux-Arts Visitor Center is the public portal through which tens of thousands of visitors are introduced and reintroduced every year to the region. The Heritage Area has become the glue that binds the past to the present to create and sustain economic revitalization.



Work In Progress

In the **Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor**, the Western Erie Canal Alliance and the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council work together to provide comprehensive, regional programming in economic development and historic preservation. They have partnered with the National Trust Main Street Center and are successfully applying the Main Street Four-Point Approach® – design, economic restructuring, promotion, and organization – in three rural counties in western New York.



The Power of Stewardship

Preservation of natural and cultural resources enhances the quality of life in Heritage Areas and generates opportunities for recreation, tourism and economic development.

Battery Bosque: Conserving a Garden Oasis

Thanks to the enlightened stewardship and vision of the Battery Conservancy in the **Harbor Park Heritage Area**, there is now a stunning example of horticultural mastery in Battery Park at the tip of Manhattan. The Battery Bosque, Spanish for “a grove of trees,” provides residents and visitors with a beautiful garden oasis in the midst of the hustle and bustle of New York City. In its past state of decay, this four-acre space was an uninspired mass of granite Belgian block interrupted by cracked asphalt, outdated picnic tables and rows of worn-out benches. Through superb planning, creative designs, and an investment of \$8.2 million, the Bosque now hosts 65,000 square feet of gardens by renowned Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf. These gardens welcome the return of 34,000 perennial plants and 70,000 naturalized bulbs each year. The Bosque is enhanced by 1,500 linear feet of flowing serpentine benches, two distinctively designed food kiosks, and a 60-foot-wide spiral granite fountain with 35 water jets, all under the dapple shade of 140 mature London plane trees.

Opened in 2005, the Battery Bosque is a living, breathing example of the benefits of good conservation planning and planting, along with excellent public park stewardship, even in the most unlikely of places.

Work In Progress

The **Lake Champlain Basin Program** administers the new **Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership**. The Basin Program has a longstanding reputation of developing and carrying out diverse programs and projects that benefit the water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources of the large region which includes portions of New York, Vermont, and Quebec. The new Heritage Partnership will build on this work and expand the opportunities for the conservation, interpretation, and promotion of heritage resources.

Babeville: Embracing the Future While Preserving the Past

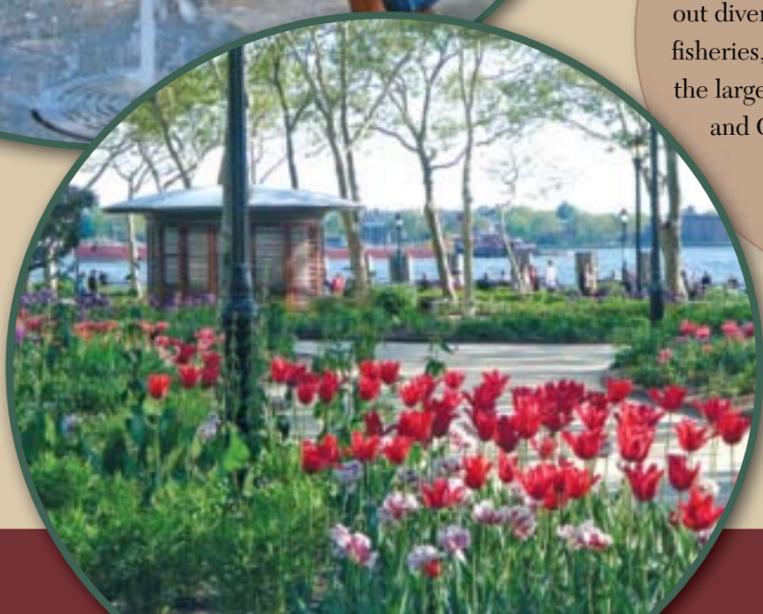
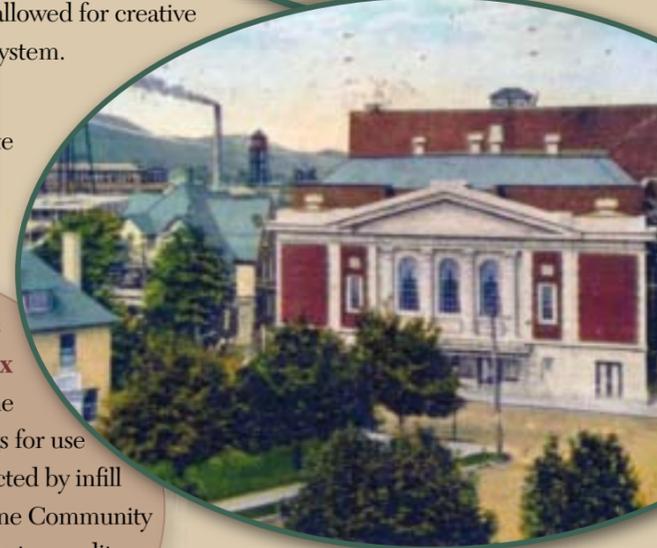
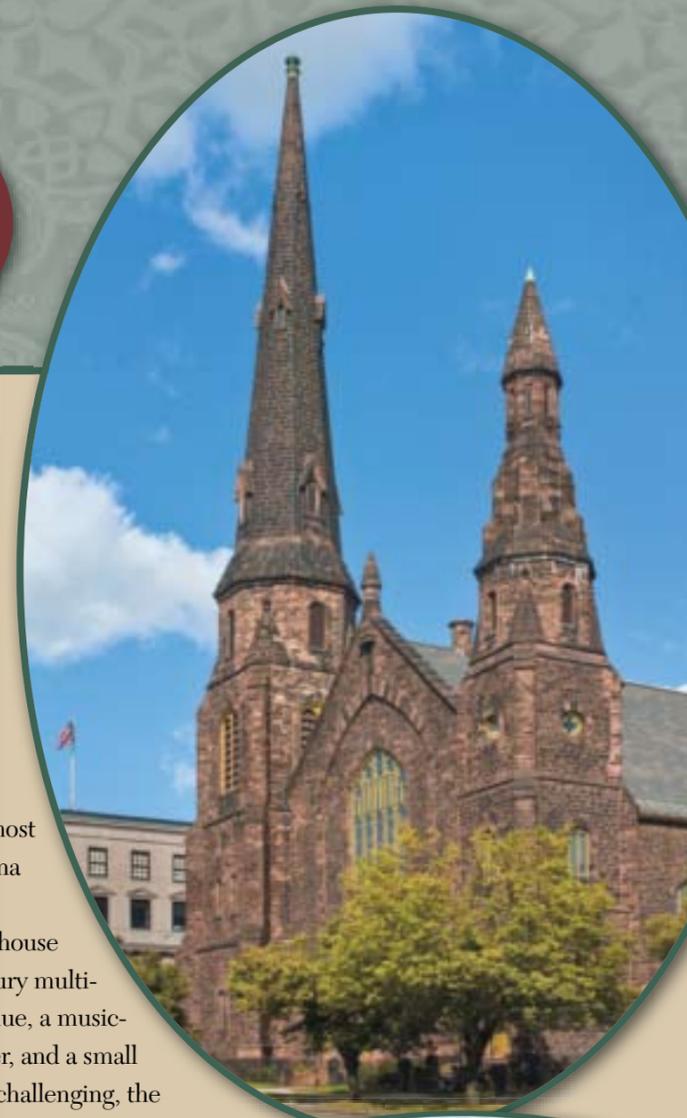
As observed by the New York Times, “Buffalo is home to some of the most interesting architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries.” Some of the most appealing evidence of this is found in the **Buffalo Theatre District Heritage Area**. To say that the historic preservation project at Babeville is “interesting” is a bit of an understatement.

Built in the 1870’s during Buffalo’s Golden Age, the site is a former church and parish house and boasts one of downtown’s most recognizable steeples. The building features an exterior of Medina sandstone and a roof of Vermont slate. Today, through creative partnership-building and innovative planning, this 19th-century house of worship has been preserved and transformed into a 21st-century multi-purpose venue. Babeville houses a performance and concert venue, a music-recording studio, the gallery and screening room of an arts center, and a small lounge. While the preservation project sometimes proved quite challenging, the entrepreneurial nature of the private-public partnership approach allowed for creative solutions such as a state of the art geothermal heating and cooling system.

Babeville brings together past and future, art and commerce, private and public, in a model adaptive reuse project.

Work In Progress

The creation of the **Goodwill Theatre Performing Arts Center and Professional Training Academy Complex** in Johnson City is an ongoing historic preservation project in the **Susquehanna Heritage Area** that will rehabilitate three buildings for use as performance venues and education space. The buildings will be connected by infill structures incorporating green design. The complex is a certified Empire Zone Community Project and the project plans to take advantage of state and federal historic tax credits as part of a 2010 capital campaign. There is already tremendous progress. An intersection that was once a blighted area is being transformed into a place where family friendly programs are already happening, with exciting plans for expansion in the future.



The Power of Story

Residents and visitors come to know the people, places and events that shaped the Heritage Areas' past and inform the future.

Teaching the Hudson Valley: Engaging the Next Generation

Learn. Understand. Value. Protect. It is clear that the most effective method for the future preservation and conservation of our heritage assets is to educate young people about our rich past. **Teaching the Hudson Valley** helps educators discover, appreciate, and share the region's natural, historic, and cultural treasures with children and young people. This creative and engaging program, conceived and executed by the National Park Service and the **Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area**, fosters collaboration among schools, museums, parks, historic sites, art galleries, libraries, and other partners from throughout the Hudson Valley.



Teaching the Hudson Valley's ever-expanding collection of kindergarten through 12th grade lesson plans uses significant Hudson Valley sites to teach virtually every subject needed for today's curriculum. The grant programs of Teaching the Hudson Valley help teachers bring students out of the typical classroom to use the community as a teaching tool. Annual summer institutes and other programming offer unique opportunities for schools and educators to meet and exchange ideas.



Work In Progress

New York State was a major destination for freedom-seekers and was at the forefront of the 19th-century Underground Railroad and anti-slavery movements as well as the 20th-century Civil Rights movement. Visitors to the region will discover many stories of heroism in the name of freedom. The new **Niagara Falls National Heritage Area** and **Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area**, along with the **Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor** in Buffalo are working on plans to convey these stories as a means to increase pride, community revitalization and tourism opportunities in the region.



The Lois McClure: Thousands of Stories, Thousands of Miles

Since her launch in 2004 by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, the *Lois McClure*, an 1862 replica canal schooner, has become an ambassador for the waterways of New York, Vermont and Quebec. Each summer she leaves her home port in Burlington, Vermont – in the heart of the **Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership** – to visit ports of call far and wide to demonstrate what 19th-century life was like on the waterways.

In 2007, the **Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor**, in partnership with the New York State Canal Corporation and the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, carried out a voyage to celebrate and interpret the many historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources of the canalside communities of New York State. The citizens of the Empire State and their visitors were invited to enjoy and learn as the *Lois McClure* journeyed across New York on a 1,000-mile **Grand Canal Journey**.

In the course of her travels, more than 30,000 people, including visitors from 40 states and 10 countries, stepped aboard the *Lois McClure* for free tours offered in more than 25 communities. The voyage interpreted the Erie Canalway as a living and working system, promoted regional collaboration, educated the public on the historical significance of the canal, and helped communities interpret their own cultural, recreational and educational assets. Communities thanked the *Lois McClure* with numerous gifts and acts of kindness. The crew received baskets of peaches and cherries in Western New York, ten pounds of garlic in Brockport, and a block of Medina sandstone – cargo reminiscent of what would have been carried on canal boats in the 1800s.

The Power of Place

Heritage Areas celebrate a robust sense of place that appeals to tourists, residents and investors.

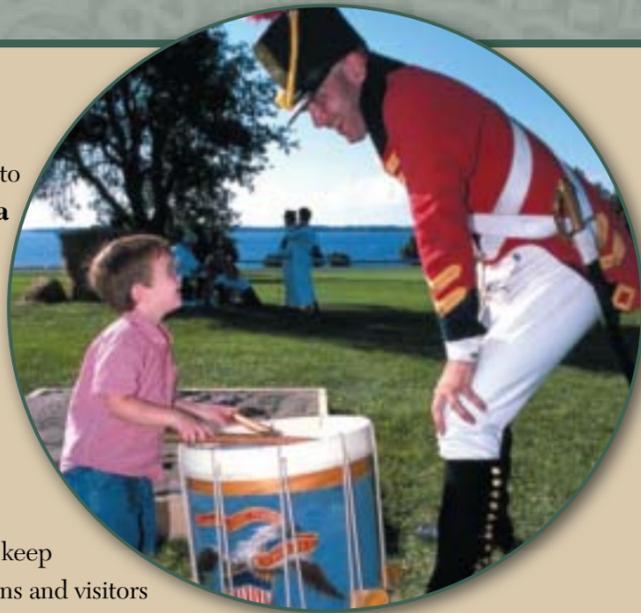
Community Carousels: A Legacy of Giving

To experience one of the most unusual heritage collections to be found anywhere, visit local parks in the **Susquehanna Heritage Area**, which harbor six of the 150 antique carousels left in North America. George F. Johnson, a shoe manufacturer and civic benefactor, donated these magnificent, colorful machines to the community. He felt strongly that merry-go-rounds contributed to a happier quality of life. He believed they should be enjoyed by all and insisted that there would never be a fee for a “magic ride.”

Over 80 years later, the Susquehanna Heritage Area has helped to keep these special heritage assets bright, spinning, and free to all. Citizens and visitors alike are challenged to “**Ride the Carousel Circuit.**” Happy riders may

collect a different colored “I Rode the Carousel” card at each carousel and, after collecting them all, receive a special “I Rode the Carousel Circuit” commemorative pin.

Every year, thousands of riders learn about the industrial heritage of the region through the amazing stories behind the donation of these working artifacts. American craftsmanship, music and motion all combine for an experience that is enjoyed by residents and visitors from around the world.



Work In Progress

Because of its geography and natural transportation corridors, New York was at the center of much historic military conflict on the North American continent. Many heritage areas interpret this aspect of our history through place-based educational programs, reenactments and festivals. Commemorative events have been held in several state and national heritage areas for the anniversaries of the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War. The upcoming Bicentennial of the War of 1812 will be a focal point for the **Sackets Harbor Heritage Area** and the **Niagara Falls National Heritage Area**.



Canal Town Tourism: Collaborative Impact

Since it opened in 1825, the Erie Canal has attracted travelers from all around the globe. Today an estimated 4.5 million people each year come by boat, bicycle, car, and train, all seeking recreation and enjoyment along the waterway that transformed the nation. The New York State Canal Corporation has estimated that the annual economic impact of tourism spending in the canal towns of New York is over \$378 million.

A number of heritage tourism activities, large and small, are collaboratively coordinated by the **Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor**, **Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor** and **Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor** to maximize connections throughout the canal towns and to raise the profile of the entire region as a tourist destination. Linking sites together leads people from one community to another, increasing visitation and overnight stays as well as offering a more complete experience.

Visitor Centers throughout the region serve as gateways to the many historic, cultural and recreational assets of the 524-mile long canal corridor. Visitor Centers – like the ones found in **Waterford**, **Seneca Falls** and **Brockport** – offer typical information and directions, but many also offer services uniquely suited to boaters, hikers, and cyclists, including free WiFi, showers, carts for transporting groceries, book exchanges, walking tours and overnight camping.

An example of heritage tourism at its best is the **Cycling the Erie Canal** tour from Buffalo to Albany. The annual 8-day, 400-mile expedition, sponsored by Parks and Trails New York, attracts over 500 riders and allows participants to enjoy great scenery, fascinating history and unparalleled cycling along the Erie Canalway Trail.

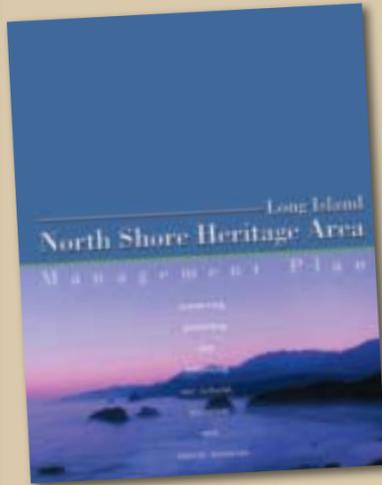


Work In Progress

Refurbishment of the hydroelectric plant at the Cohoes Falls includes fish-friendly technology and visitor-friendly access, including the new **Falls View Park** featuring interpretive signage and spectacular views of the Mohawk River and Cohoes Falls.

The Power of Partnership

Heritage Areas build influential networks that attract opportunity, resources and progress.



A Good Plan. Heritage Areas all across the nation are best known for their unique successes in getting interesting, creative and passionate citizens to work together. The most successful Heritage Areas are those that have a comprehensive blueprint for making that happen. The Heritage Areas of New York State are grass roots efforts that – by their very nature – demand inclusive planning by all of the facets of the community they strive to serve. The Heritage Areas of New York State are very good at crafting regional partnerships that build on the very best of heritage development and good stewardship ideas. They serve as regional hubs that often breathe new life into established planning efforts as well as provide leadership, coordination and vision for new collaborative ventures and economically valuable programming.

Having completed a sweeping management planning process in 2006, the **Long Island North Shore Heritage Area** established a new not-for-profit organization to work in collaboration with existing partners and municipalities in plan implementation. The **Concord Grape Belt Heritage Area** located along Lake Erie is embarking on its planning process in partnership with the agricultural industry that nurtures the oldest, largest Concord grape growing region in the world.

Working & Playing Together. The Heritage Areas of New York State are quite skillful at convening partners, not only for comprehensive and collaborative planning, but to join forces to implement those plans. The **Hudson River Valley Ramble** is a great example of the value of working together. The Ramble began as a modest effort to promote the variety of events and activities taking place in the **Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area** on a single fall weekend. Now, the Ramble is held every weekend each September, with nearly 300 individual events drawing over 130,000 participants to communities from Saratoga to New York City. Ramble events ranging from challenging hiking, biking and paddling opportunities to family-fun festivals celebrate the history, culture and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and the landscape, communities and trails throughout the region.



By working together, the sponsors – including not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and local, state and federal agencies – have brought the Hudson River Valley to the attention of the important geo-tourism market. In 2008, the Ramble drew over 13,000 participants from outside of the region, inspired event volunteers to contribute \$110,000 of donated time, and generated an estimated economic impact of \$8,099,000. The Ramble embodies the significant economic impact of heritage tourism and geo-tourism.

Unique Place.

Unique Partners. There aren't too many places that have a tourist information center, interpretive displays, a gift shop, a classroom/educational center, and even a planetarium all under one roof, but that's just what you will find at the **Albany Heritage Area Visitors Center**. And unique as the structure may be, the partnership crafted to keep it successfully operating is every bit as creative. Through careful planning and comprehensive execution, the project relies on the best of not-for-profit, civic and commercial leadership and city, county and state government abilities to make it work.



Assisted by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the City of Albany developed the Center, then operated and staffed it for many years. Since 1998, the City has contracted with the Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau to manage and operate the Visitors Center, a natural complement to the Bureau's core mission of tourism development. This partnership recognizes the central role that the city's heritage assets play in attracting visitors to the region, and has launched new initiatives, such as walking tours, workshops, even puppet shows. The Visitors Center welcomes more than 30,000 visitors every year, introducing them to Albany's history and encouraging exploration of the region's cultural resources.



Other Heritage Area Visitor Centers, including those in **Binghamton, Buffalo, Cohoes, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse, Troy, and Whitehall**, operate through a variety of collaborations between municipalities and not-for-profit or business organizations.

Heritage Areas *of* New York State

To learn more about the programs, policies and history of the state and national heritage areas in New York State, go to:
www.nysparks.state.ny.us/historic-preservation/heritage-areas.aspx

www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/

To discover more about each individual heritage area, go to:

State Heritage Areas

Albany

1-800-258-3582 or 518-434-0405
www.albany.org

Buffalo

1-800-BUFFALO or 716-852-2356
www.visitbuffaloniagara.com

Concord Grape Belt (Lake Erie)

716-386-4833
www.concordgrapebelt.org

Harbor Park (New York City)

212-344-3491
www.thebattery.org

Kingston

1-800-331-1518 or 845-331-7517
www.kingston-ny.gov

Long Island North Shore

516-456-6863
www.linorthshoreheritagearea.com

Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor

716-851-5713

Mohawk Valley

518-673-1045
www.mvhcc.org

Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area

716-286-4421
www.niagarafallsusa.org

Ossining

914-941-3189
www.hudsonriver.com/ossining

RiverSpark (Hudson-Mohawk)

518-270-8667
www.riverspark.org

Rochester High Falls

585-325-2030
www.centerathighfalls.org

Sackets Harbor

315-646-2321
www.sacketsharborny.com

Saratoga Springs

518-587-3241
www.saratoga-springs.org

Schenectady

518-382-5147
www.sayschenectady.org

Seneca Falls

315-568-2703
www.senecafalls.com/history-heritage.php

Susquehanna

607-778 6488
www.roberson.org and
www.endicottny.com

Syracuse

315-471-0593
www.eriecanalmuseum.org

Western Erie Canal

315-573-9827
www.eriecanalheritage.com

Whitehall

518-499-1155
www.washingtoncounty.org

National Heritage Areas

Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership

802-372-3213
www.champlainvalleynhp.org

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

518-237-7000
www.eriecanalway.org

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

518-473-3835
www.hudsonrivervalley.com

Niagara Falls National Heritage Area

315-336-3113
www.nps.gov/nifa

Credits

Cover & Map Page – James Bleecker; Inside Back Cover – Gary Gold; Power of the Past: Harmony Mills – RiverSpark Heritage Area, Saratoga Springs Visitor Center, streetscape and sign – Marcia Kees, WECMSP logo – Western Erie Canal Alliance; Power of Stewardship: The Battery Bosque – (top) The Battery Conservancy, (bottom) Stephen Doyle, Babeville – James Cavanaugh, Goodwill Theatre – Susquehanna Heritage Area; Power of Story: Teaching the Hudson Valley (top) – Bill Urbin; (bottom) – Debi Duke, Lois McClure – ©Jon Reis, Michigan Street Baptist Church – NYSOPRHP; Power of Place: Susquehanna Carousel – Greater Binghamton Convention & Visitors Bureau, Cohoes Falls and Canalway Trail bicyclists – NPS/Erie Canalway, Sackets Harbor – NYSOPRHP, Waterford Harbor Visitor Center – Marcia Kees; Power of Partnership: LINSHA Plan – Long Island North Shore Heritage Area, Inc., Hudson River Valley Ramble – Ognian Dojchinov, Albany Visitor Center – Albany Heritage Area, Concord Grape Belt Heritage Area – Andy Dufresne. This project was supported by the National Park Service's Challenge Cost Share Program. Points of view are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the position of the Department of the Interior. Additional support provided by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, NYS Heritage Areas Advisory Council, Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, Hudson Valley National Heritage Area, Champlain Valley Heritage Area Partnership, Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, the New York Heritage Area Association, and the state and national heritage areas that comprise the Heritage Areas of New York State.

