

OUTCOME 9: MARITIME CENTERS THRIVE



Maritime centers are areas with concentrations of water-dependent businesses, often supported by water-enhanced businesses that may be linked to or situated near a community's business district. They offer opportunities for public access to the estuary and frequently serve as tourist destinations. Maritime centers are the core of the estuary's unique maritime heritage and contribute to the Reserve's sense of place. There are twenty maritime centers in the Reserve where water-dependent uses have been concentrated historically and continue to function today.

Preparation and Implementation of Maritime Center Action Plans

Long-range planning to protect existing water-dependent businesses, attract new complementary water-dependent and water-enhanced uses, and provide additional public improvements are key to the future of maritime centers and protection of the Reserve's maritime heritage. Maritime center action plans identify economic development and public access and recreation opportunities and capitalize on unique historic and cultural resources. Each of the largest maritime centers - Freeport, Bay Shore, Patchogue, and the Shinnecock Canal - have prepared plans for their waterfronts. These plans are used as reference points for further improvements. Many communities begin the process to improve their waterfronts with these plans, and initiate Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs to further enhance their community.

Promotion of Maritime Centers

Maritime centers should be promoted as appropriate locations for new water-dependent businesses. Also, there is a need to document and recognize historic and cultural resources that epitomize the rich maritime heritage of the region. Reserve partners have completed the following projects to promote maritime centers and maritime heritage:

- The Town of Hempstead maintains 31 bay house leases per year, which constitutes an important part of preserving maritime heritage.
- The Islip Town Leaseholders Association promotes the maritime history of three islands - Havermeyer, Sexton, and Captree.
- Long Island Traditions conducted a maritime heritage and cultural resources survey for the Oakdale to Brookhaven Hamlet portion of the Reserve. The survey documented historic structures and locations for traditional maritime activities in the Patchogue, Sayville and West Sayville Maritime Centers.
- Four primary maritime centers have recognized Bayway Destinations: Freeport's Nautical Mile; the Patchogue River Maritime Center; the Shinnecock Canal Maritime Center; and Bay Shore's Bay Shore Marina and Watchogue Creek Park.

THE VILLAGE OF FREEPORT NAUTICAL MILE

The Village of Freeport, a primary maritime center identified in the Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan, has worked proactively to preserve, restore, and expand maritime activities and tradition on the Village waterfront. Freeport has largely completed comprehensive revitalization of the area along the Woodcleft Canal known as the Nautical Mile and has created an environment for exploration of maritime heritage, traditional maritime industry, and interpretation. The Nautical Mile continues to function as a traditional working waterfront, but has developed new water-related activities.



The annual Waterfront Festival on the Nautical Mile



The US Naval Academy visits the Nautical Mile

The Nautical Mile is now home to a variety of eating establishments, nautical-themed shops, seafood markets, and a center for the recreational and charter boating industry. The establishment of the Long Island Marine Education Center and the Reserve Office on the Nautical Mile has created a solid foundation for future maritime education and outreach activities. The Nautical Mile is recognized by the Reserve Council as a South Shore Bayway destination, and its public esplanade on Woodcleft Canal is the site of the first New York State Coastal Interpretive Program kiosk on the south shore.

Since revitalizing the Nautical Mile, Freeport has organized a variety of regular events promoting the Village as a primary maritime center. Freeport is a port-of-call for visiting sailing vessels including the US Naval Academy fleet and historic sailing vessels including the *H.M.S. Bounty*, which was used in making the 1963 film *Mutiny on the Bounty*, and the historic schooner *Pioneer*, giving residents and tourists an opportunity to experience these vessels first-hand. The Nautical Mile is also home to Freeport's annual Waterfront Festival, attracting over 100,000 people to enjoy food, crafts, activities, fun, and experience the south shore's maritime environment.

NEXT STEPS FOR THRIVING MARITIME CENTERS

The Reserve Office and partners will organize a workshop for maritime center businesses to focus on public/private partnerships to support water-dependent businesses.

Reserve partners will use restored historic sailing vessels, such as the 1888 oyster sloop *Priscilla*, operated by the Long Island Maritime Museum, to carry passengers for educational cruises and mobile interpretive exhibits to Reserve maritime centers with appropriate docking and access facilities.

Reserve partners will continue to prepare maritime center action plans for all primary and secondary maritime centers in the Reserve.

Reserve partners will conduct cultural resource surveys in maritime centers identified by the CMP.

