

## II. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

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### A. Waterfront Location

The City of Long Beach is located on a barrier island along the southern end of Nassau County on Long Island, New York. Long Beach is bordered on the west by the village of Atlantic Beach, on the east by the hamlet of Lido Beach, on the north by Reynolds Channel, and on the south by the Atlantic Ocean.

The City of Long Beach is about 3 ½ miles long (east to west) with its bayfront area on the north and its oceanfront area on the south, both extending the full length of the City. Long Beach varies from between 0.4 to 0.8 miles wide (north to south). In total, it encompasses approximately 3.90 square miles (24,986± acres), comprised of 2.14 square miles (1,370± acres) of land area, and 1.76 square miles (1,126± acres) of water area.<sup>1</sup>

Because of its location on a barrier island, the entire City lies within the New York State designated coastal area. However, the primary focus of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) will be the City's lands and uses which are immediately adjacent to the water. Future uses and development of all other land within the City has been the subject of a recent comprehensive plan undertaken by the City, which was accepted on April 4, 2007.

The Long Beach waterfront is separated into two distinct elements, the southern oceanfront on the Atlantic Ocean and the northern bayfront on Reynolds Channel, as well as the four Canals, which are located off of Reynolds Channel, and are (from west to east): Sarazan, Ouimet, Hagen and Bob Jones Canals. For the purposes of the LWRP, the City of Long Beach's water resources will be divided into the Atlantic Ocean waterfront (which includes Ocean Beach Park), the Reynolds Channel bayfront and the Canals. There are seven major neighborhoods in the City that include the West End; Westholme, including the Walks; North Park; Central; East End, including the Presidents Streets; the Canals; and the Downtown/Government Center, also considered to be a neighborhood for the purposes of this document. See Exhibit \_\_\_\_, Community Structure for neighborhood locations.

The beach fronting on the Atlantic Ocean is designated as Ocean Beach Park. Preservation of the characteristics of Ocean Beach Park, including its depth and quality, is critical not only to the natural environment, but to the very essence of what makes Long Beach unique. A 2¼ mile boardwalk, stretching from New York Avenue to Neptune Boulevard, distinguishes this beach front from other stretches of beach along the Atlantic Ocean barrier island in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Raised dunes are located in the West End and the City's East End, west and east of the boardwalk, although the eastern dunes are not as large as those in the west. Wooden walks, including modular roll-out walkways, provide access from the street level, over the raised dunes, to the beach. Due to this, the pattern of development varies from west to east. In the West End, it ranges from bungalows and single-family homes to small apartment buildings along the boardwalk, and in the East End, land uses are largely multifamily residential with

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau 2000

some limited commercial along the boardwalk. Beach entryways are controlled not only at block ends, but also by fee stations located below the boardwalk at the rear entrances of private apartment buildings, particularly in the East End.

Reynolds Channel is part of the inland waterway that runs from the East Rockaway Inlet from the Atlantic Ocean, approximately 5 miles west of Long Beach, to the Shinnecock Channel, approximately 5 miles to the east. The Jones Beach inlet to the Atlantic Ocean is approximately 6 miles to the east. The depth of Reynolds Channel along the City of Long Beach varies from 1-2 feet at areas adjacent to the bulkhead to up to 60 feet within the channel. Generally, the water depth along the marked navigation route of the channel is 13 to 26 feet.

## 1. Regional Waterway Context

### a. The South Shore Estuary Reserve

The City of Long Beach and its surrounding waterways are included in the Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve, which extends from the Nassau County/New York City border eastward about 75 miles, to the Village of Southampton in Suffolk County. From south to north, the Reserve extends from the mean high tide line on the ocean side of the barrier island to the inland limits of the mainland watersheds that drain into Hempstead Bay, South Oyster Bay, Great South Bay, Moriches Bay and Shinnecock Bay. From west to east, the South Shore Estuary Reserve stretches from the western boundary of the town of Hempstead to the middle of the Town of South Hempstead.<sup>2</sup> Exhibit \_\_\_\_, South Shore Estuary Reserve Boundaries, depicts the physical location of the Reserve.

The South Shore Estuary consists of a series of interconnected bays separated from the Atlantic Ocean by barrier islands, such as Long Beach Island, where the City of Long Beach is located. Long Beach borders West Bay and Middle Bay (within Hempstead Bays), two of the seven bays that constitute the waterways of the South Shore Estuary. In the bays of the South Shore Estuary, freshwater from adjacent upland areas mixes with saltwater from the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>3</sup> Reynolds Channel, which is located north of the City of Long Beach, runs along the southerly edge of the Hempstead Bays, which are comprised of the West Bay, Middle Bay and East Bay.

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<sup>2</sup> Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan, Executive Summary.

<sup>3</sup> Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve. Interim Report, March 1998.

Insert exhibit 2 Community Structure

Insert Exhibit 3 South Shore Estuary Reserve Boundaries

The estuary's shallow, interconnected bays and tidal tributaries provide highly productive habitats and support the largest concentration of water-dependent businesses in New York State. Commercial and recreational fishing and shellfishing depend on the health of the estuary's fish and shellfish species which, in turn, depend on clean water.

Human population growth and escalating development in the Reserve continues to have a dramatic effect on the estuary, resulting in habitat loss and diminished public use and enjoyment. Non-point source pollution poses potential hazards to human health, causes the periodic closure of bathing beaches, and has forced the closure of approximately 34,500 acres of hard clam beds. Additionally, the viability of traditional water-dependent businesses is closely tied to the health of the ecosystem.

The Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Act (New York State Executive Law, Article 46, 1993) created the Reserve. The Act called for the Reserve's protection and prudent management and created the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council, which is chaired by the New York State Secretary of State and includes representatives from south shore towns and villages, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, the City of Long Beach, State agencies, and recreation, business, academic, environmental and citizen interests.

The Act charged the Council with overseeing preparation of a Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Reserve for the purpose of establishing a consensus-based blueprint for the protection and restoration of the estuary's natural, cultural and economic-related resources. The CMP was adopted by the Council in April, 2001.

Following CMP adoption, the Council identified initial priorities for its members and partners to address. The Council's Citizens Advisory Committee continues in its education and outreach role, working closely with the Council and its partners to build the broad public support needed for implementation of the plan.

The Council generally meets quarterly and reviews programs on CMP implementation and is updated on evolving issues affecting the Reserve. The Council provides a CMP Implementation Status Report to the Governor and State Legislature leadership on a bi-annual basis.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan and Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve. Interim Report, March 1998.