

Village of Black River

Resources are located between NYS DOT End Mile Point Jefferson County 3.93 through 7.98

Located in Jefferson County in the Town of Rutland. According to local historians, the areas first inhabitants of the area were Native Americans from the Onondaga Tribe, one of six tribes belonging to the Iroquois Nation. Founded by white settlers in the early 19th century. Settlers were first attracted to the area due to its abundance of woodlands and proximity to the Black River to support business development around agriculture and wood products. Appealing remnants of days-gone-by can be seen through the architectural design of historic homes and intriguing factory ruins scattered along its riverbanks. Incorporated in 1891, the village was well known as home to the Dexter Chair Company.

Today approximately 1300 residents reside in the village and serves mainly as a bedroom community to the City of Watertown and neighboring communities. Currently, the Jefferson County Department of Transportation has scheduled a reconstruction project to replace two bridges located in the downtown area of the village in 2004, as funding becomes available. Designs for the project include open rails to allow a scenic view of the river, ornamental lighting, brick pavers, and landscaping and general enhancements.

<i>Resources and Special Sites & Attractions</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Potential/Likely Partners or Stakeholders</i>
<i>Scenic</i>		
The Black River – Originates in Herkimer County and traverses 115 miles to Lake Ontario and is the longest river lying entirely within the boundaries of New York State. It traverses through the center of the Village of Black River and continues to be a focal point for development. Scenic vistas, picnic areas, fishing area and portages are located throughout the village, inviting visitors to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build upon cooperative municipal efforts, currently underway along the 8-mile segment of Rt. 3 from Watertown to Great Bend, to implement a design initiative to identify & enhance scenic vistas along the Rt. 3 corridor (1-2 yrs). Reconstruction and replacement of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rt. 3 Sewer Board, Jefferson County Planning, Tug Hill Commission, local planning and town and village boards, and circuit rider, NYS DOT & village DPW Crews. Jefferson County Highway

<p>linger along its banks or experience the thrill of the swift moving water in a canoe/kayak.</p>	<p>2 bridges in the village- “Main Street,” “Black River Bridges” over the Black River and the Orion Power Canal with newly designed construction & enhancements to include open rails, ornamental lighting, signage and clearly marked pedestrian routes and rights-of-way (Planned construction is scheduled for spring 2004).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing effort to encourage private investors and entrepreneurs to develop existing properties and create new services as opportunities are presented. • Ongoing efforts to identify opportunities to promote and market area attractions, special events and activities. <p>(Recommendations are also identified in the “Black River Corridor Design Initiative Study” & “Reconstruction of Main Street Bridges over Black River in the Village of Black River”)</p>	<p>Department assisted with input from local officials, residents, business owners, and circuit rider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village town & planning boards, Jefferson County Tourism, Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency (JCIDA), Chamber of Commerce, Local Municipality • Business owners & entrepreneurs, Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce, Jefferson County Tourism & Thousand Island Tourism Councils.
<p>Agricultural Farm Land & Open space – Located along Rt. 3 in the village limits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide development in open space areas to enhance opportunities for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village & Planning Boards working with private owners &

and adjacent to the village turnoff, privately owned non-operating generational farm with a breathtaking view of well maintained agricultural structures and landscape that invite visitors to admire the rolling hills, winding/twisting stream, and open space.	development while preserving and protecting the natural landscape (As development opportunities are presented to the planning board and as part of the ongoing efforts of the Rt. 3 Sewer board Planning Committee to implement the Corridor Design Initiative.)	investors.
Recreation		
Poors Island – located in the village downtown area, a bridge links the mainland to Poors Island providing vehicular and pedestrian access to its recreational area, providing a car top launch site, canoe/kayak portage, walking trail, and shoreline fishing & picnic areas. In addition, ruins of historic industrial and mill sites remain and serve as points of interest to visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance enhancements and general improvements that open scenic vistas –i.e. rest areas & park benches; ornamental lighting, & picnic sites; • Directional signage to clearly mark access/exit areas. • Interpretive signage to clearly mark the historical significance of ruins; <p>(Supported documentation identified in “A Tourism Plan for the City of Watertown, New York” & “EDR Rt. 3 Corridor Design Initiative”)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant Power/Energy with supported efforts by NYS DEC, Local Municipality, and local interest groups.
Overlook Park – a scenic vista area -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant Power/Energy with

located in the heart of the village and overlooking the Black River and Poors Island offers visitors an invitation to sit and enjoy its magnificent beauty as well as intriguing the inquisitive to explore Poors Island and mill site ruins from a closer vantage point.	enhancements to the park as opportunities are presented and funding is available.	supported efforts by local DPW crews and special interested groups parties.
6 Canoe/Kayak Portage Areas – are located at multiple access points in the village along approximately a 2-mile stretch of the Black River, offering water enthusiasts an invitation to experience the river first hand at various access and exit points. In addition, several portage areas offer fishing and picnicking sites. (See 1000 Islands Black River Guide & Corridor Resource Map.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and enhancements; • Develop a signage plan to clearly mark access/exit points as funding opportunities are presented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant Power and support efforts through local DPW Crews, interest groups & individuals. • Village of Black River Planning & Town Board, Orion Power, NYS DEC
<i>Historic</i>		
Mill Site Ruins – Located on Poors Island-Visitors are intrigued by the visual presence of the historic foundations along the banks of the Black River and are enticed to further explore their significance to the early development of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify mill site ruins; • Interpretive signage to mark the sites and inform visitors & residents of the significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant Power supported by local efforts from the municipality, interest groups, and DPW crews.
Black River Cemetery – Peaking the interest of historic and/or genealogy buffs, the cemetery is located within the boundaries of the village along the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the grounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black River Cemetery Association

riverside of Route 3, headstones date back as far as the early 1800's with several of the early village founders, veterans from the 10 th NYS Heavy Artillery, Civil War, Battle of Fredericksburg, and War of 1812 are buried.		
Architecture –in traversing up and down village streets, visitors will be interested in the architectural styles and design reflected in early period structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing preservation, maintenance and enhancement of historic structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private property owners.
<i>Nature</i>		
Hiking/Biking Trail – located on the eastern side of Rt. 3, the trail includes a 10' wide paved asphalt walk with rest areas placed every 4800'. A trailhead parking lot is located on the western side of Rt. 3 and offers is a picnic/rest area and a canoe/kayak portage. The trail links to the eastern skirts of the City of Watertown and tempts visitors to enjoy the great outdoors with the breathtaking beauty of the river, foliage and wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance plans to pave the trail as identified in Phase I of the project. • Place directional signage to inform visitors of points of access and exit as project evolves. • Plan Phase II of the trail project is to link to Water-works Park on Huntington Street in the City of Watertown and expand the trail from the village to Felts Mills (projected time frame to implement is 4-6 years, contingent upon funding availability). • Phase III of the trail project is to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYS Office of Parks & Recreation, Reliant Power, NYS DEC, in orchestration with other NYS agencies and local support from officials and interest groups.

	<p>include a one-mile trail section through the village to Poors Island and complete a one-mile section from the Ridge Road to Eastern Blvd., in the City of Watertown. An expansion from Felts Mills to Great Bend and connecting the trail to Poors Island in the village (projected time frame to complete project is 6-10 years out and is also contingent upon the availability of funding).</p>	
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Culture	•	•
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<p>Churches – Located within the village 5 traditional churches significantly contributed to the historic and cultural roots of the community while influencing patterns of development through social interaction. The architectural design and structural materials are reflective of rural values and affluence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance, restoration, and enhancements to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The respective church boards, congregations, and responsible entities.