

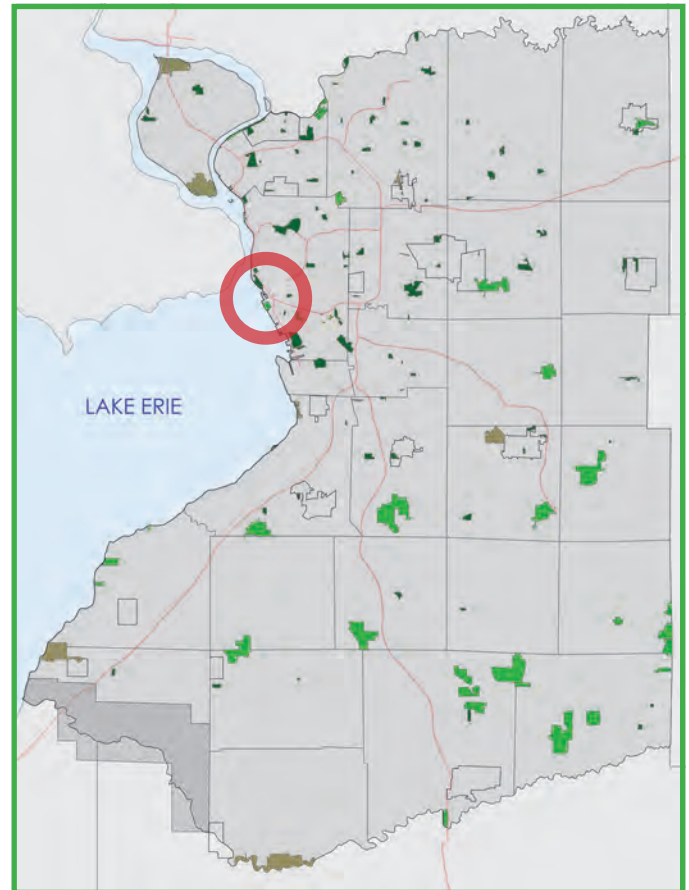
BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK

DESCRIPTION

Black Rock Canal Park formerly known as the Ontario Street Boat Launch and Cornelius Creek Park, before becoming a combined park in 2013. Part of the recreational Shoreline Trail system, the park attracts a wide range of park users including fisherman, boaters, dog owners, and casual park-goers. The park features a newly renovated boat launch and two separate fenced-in 'bark park' areas (large dogs and small dogs). The park's spectacular views of the Niagara River and shoreline attracts many from the community to enjoy the waterfront scenery and summer sunsets.

PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Black Rock Canal Park, on the former Erie Canal, is named after the nearby Black Rock Canal, which was named after Black Rock Village. Black Rock Village was annexed by the City of Buffalo in 1854, but the neighborhood of Black Rock continues to be a strong neighborhood in the City of Buffalo. A former City park, it was transferred to Erie County in 2000. Between 2008 and 2017, Erie County has invested \$2.4 million in the redevelopment of Black Rock Canal Park.



Park Location Map: Black Rock Canal Park is located in the City of Buffalo off of Niagara Street



Entry plaza

PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- ***If maintenance issues persist within the dog park, the area may need to be consolidated to open up more park space.***
- ***Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds and insects.***
- ***Provide additional sculptural elements along the aviary walk. Improve and maintain walk and plaza.***

LOCAL CONTEXT

Black Rock Canal Park is part of the growing system of waterfront parks in the Buffalo/Niagara region. The park lies along the Shoreline Trail which connects bikers, joggers, and walkers to a variety of waterfront destinations along the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers.

RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Black Rock Canal Park totaled \$352,150. Recent projects included:

- Redesigned roadway north (2013)
- Dog park (2013)
- K9 Monument (2013)
- Maintenance building (2013)
- Demolition of vacant concession stand (2013)
- Nautical roundabout (2013)
- Black Rock (2016)
- Redesigned parking lot (2016)
- BRCP iconic sign (2016)
- BDP security camera (2017)
- Repaired and renovated boat launch (2017)



Local context map

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Combined sewer outfall under the access road
- Lack of connection/transition to community/neighborhood.
- I-190 separation
- Poor partnership of the “Bark Park” resulting in poor maintenance conditions.
- Crime and vandalism



Promenade on a warm sunny day



MASTER PLAN BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

Specific Action Items - Ex. (A1)

- 1 (P-3.0) If maintenance issues persist within the dog park, the area may need to be consolidated to open up more park space. Revert to open lawn area for passive park usage.
- 2 (P-2.0) Work with City of Buffalo to improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Black Rock Harbor Road. Improvements could include possible sidewalk on south side of road, additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.
- 3 (P-6.0) Improve I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.
- 4 (C-1.0) The existing gateway signage off of Niagara Street, which is in good condition, does not conform to the signage used on the other parks. It is recommended that in the event the sign requires to be repaired or reconstructed it conforms to the branding of the parks system.
- 5 Coordinate with community groups and stakeholders to create community gardens within maintained lawn areas of the park. Would be a volunteer based opportunity and could reduce some of the mowing maintenance needed.
- 6 (P-4.0) Provide additional sculptural elements along the aviary walk. Improve and maintain walk and plaza.

- MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:**
- (A-1.1-1.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
 - (P-5.0) Explore possible partnership opportunities with Niagara River Greenway to provide further enhancements and amenities to Black Rock Canal Park.
 - Potential area for seasonal food trucks, small summer events. Possible partnerships with local stakeholder groups and community members could provide 'family-oriented' opportunities.



Legend:

- Potential Major and Minor Park Gateway Locations
- Destination
- Natural Features
- Playground
- Shoreline Trail
- Park Boundary



View towards the Niagara River

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

A - Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks Staff

P - Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C - Capital project

- **(A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.**
 - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
 - Prune deadwood from trees.
 - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.
 - Apply for funding from NYSDEC for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry
- **(P: 7.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; as well as the presence of Hummingbirds and Monarch Butterflies.**
 - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
 - Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens and plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
 - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Cornell Cooperative Extension
- **(P: 3.0) If maintenance issues persist within the dog park, the area may need to be consolidated to open up more park space.**
 - Revert to open lawn area for passive park usage.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: Dog Park Group/In-House



Frequent maintenance issues at the Bark Park

- **(P: 4.0) Provide additional sculptural elements along the aviary walk.** Improve and maintain walk and plaza.
 - Priority: High
 - Priority: Greenway funding/In-House
- **(P: 5.0) Explore possible partnership opportunities with Niagara River Greenway to provide further enhancements and amenities to Black Rock Canal Park.**
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Greenway funding
- **(P: 2.0) Work with City of Buffalo to improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Black Rock Harbor Road.**
 - Improvements could include possible sidewalk on south side of road, additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: City of Buffalo
- **(P: 7.0) Coordinate with community groups and stakeholders to create 'community gardens' within maintained lawn areas of the park.** Would be a volunteer based opportunity, could reduce some of the mowing maintenance needed, and would provide a great sense of community stewardship.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Community Groups - Niagara River Greenway Funds
- **(P: 6.0) Improve I-190 underpass to park;** potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Albright Knox Public Art Curator/ Buffalo Arts Studio/Private Businesses



Black Rock interpretive area



Conditions under the I-190



Sidewalk connection to Niagara Street



Parking area

- **Provide potential area for seasonal food trucks, small summer events.** Possible partnerships with local stakeholder groups and community members could provide 'family-oriented' opportunities.
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: Private Businesses
- **(C: 1.0) The existing gateway signage off of Niagara Street, which is in good condition, does not conform to the signage used on the other parks. It is recommended that in the event the sign requires to be repaired or reconstructed it conforms to the branding of the parks system.**
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: In-House



Gateway signage off of Niagara Street

BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health throughout the park.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
P	3.0	If maintenance issues persist within the dog park, the area may need to be consolidated to open up more park space.	Coordinate with Bark Park usergroups	High	Ongoing	P.O.B
P	4.0	Provide additional sculptural elements along the aviary walk. Improve and maintain walk and plaza.	Identify grant funding and other resources to make improvements	High	1-2 Years	Refer to costs of existing elements
P	8.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; as well as the presence of Hummingbirds and Monarch Butterflies.	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	2.0	Improve Black Rock Harbor Road, including pavement, sidewalks and possible on-road bicycle lanes.	Coordinate with the City of Buffalo to implement the improvements.	Medium	6-10 Years	\$210,000
P	5.0	Provide further enhancements and amenities to Black Rock Canal Park (i.e. additional landscaping/planting areas, viewing binoculars, etc.)	Possible partnership opportunity with Niagara River Greenway	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
P	7.0	Coordinate with community groups and stakeholders to create 'community gardens' within maintained lawn areas of the park.	Would be a volunteer based opportunity, could reduce some of the mowing maintenance needed, and would provide a great sense of community stewardship.	Medium	1-2 Years	Partner
C	1.0	Establish enhanced gateway	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
P	1.0	Construct restroom facility to service boaters and park patrons.	Identify a partner, such as NYS Canal Corp or Niagara River Greenway to provide funding	Low	Ongoing	\$270,000
P	6.0	Improve I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.	Coordinate with Albright Knox Public Art Curator/Buffalo Arts Studio/ Private Businesses	Low	6-10 Years	Partner

KEY:

A: Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks staff

C: Capital Project

P: Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

POB: Parks Operating Budget



Meandering path at the waterfront