

Ellicott Creek Park

# VOLUME 2 PARK SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS: VOLUME 2

1.0	INTRODU	JCTION	V2-4
	1.1	CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS	.V2-5
2.0	HERITAG	E PARKS	. V2-10
	2.1	AKRON FALLS PARK	V2-11
	2.2	CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK	. V2-33
	2.3	COMO LAKE PARK	.V2-67
	2.4	ELLICOTT CREEK PARK	V2-93
	2.5	EMERY PARK	. V2-127
3.0	WATERF	RONT PARKS	V2-154
	3.1	ISLE VIEW PARK	. V2-155
	3.2	BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK	. V2-171
	3.3	TOW PATH PARK	V2-181
	3.4	WENDT BEACH PARK	. V2-191
	3.5	BENNETT BEACH PARK	V2-207
4.0	SPECIAL	PURPOSE PARKS	. V2-222
	4.1	ELMA MEADOWS PARK	V2-223
	4.2	GROVER CLEVELAND GOLF COURSE	V2-235
	4.3	SPRAGUE BROOK PARK	V2-245
5.0	CONSER	VATION PARKS	V2-262
	5.1	BOSTON FOREST PARK	V2-263
	5.2	EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK PARK	.V2-269
	5.3	FRANKLIN GULF PARK	.V2-277
	5.4	HUNTERS CREEK PARK	. V2-283
	5.5	SCOBY DAM PARK	.V2-297
	5.6	BUFFALO RIVER NATURAL HABITAT PARKS	V2-307
	5.7	LAKEVIEW POCKET PRESERVE	. V2-343
	5.8	EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK HEADWATERS PROPERTY	.V2-347
6.0	FORESTE	RY LOTS (1.13)	V2-350

1.0 INTRODUCTION FINAL

# PARK SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Erie County Park System is comprised of 40 sites spread geographically throughout the County. The Park System's historical background and range of diversity separates the System as a truly unique park experience. The heritage parks personify this the most as they date back to the early 1920's, when the first Parks Commission visited various properties in all sections of the County to find sites of natural beauty. The four original park sites (Chestnut Ridge, Como Lake, Emery, and Ellicott Creek Park) demonstrated some of the finest natural qualities of the area including impressive ravines, gullies, waterfalls, mature forests, advantageous views, and rolling hills. Roads, bridges, pathways, and structures were all then developed on these parks to make them a reality.

Since then, many parks have been added to the System including smaller urban habitat parks consisting of just several acres, rural conservation parks of several hundred acres, and multi-purpose parks which feature golf courses and camping amenities, for example.

Because of the historical nature of the Park System, as well as diverse opportunities and amenities at each and every park, there is a need to constantly maintain and improve the park sites. Many parks have rapidly grown in popularity since the last Master Plan was completed in 2003 because of new features including; mountain biking trails, Disc Golf, Pickleball courts, kayak launches, bark parks, and much more. With increased popularity comes the task to keep up with general maintenance and improvements to the Park System as a whole. It will be advantageous for the County to make improvements with the help of key partners and stakeholders whom can be instrumental in bringing resources and additional help in maintaining the Parks System as a destination for the region.



Historic grouping of picnic shelters at Chestnut Ridge Park



Historic pump shelter at Emery Park



Kayak launch at Ellicott Creek Park

FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

#### 1.1 CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

The following is a list of partners and usergroups with whom the County is currently working with and/or should coordinate and work with to possibly bring more funding and resources into the parks, and to improve the overall Parks System.

It is recommended that the Erie County Parks
Department coordinates with all neighboring
municipalities, schools, and historical societies, in
order to improve and maintain the beautiful diversity
of parks that are found throughout Erie County.

#### Adirondack Mountain Club - Niagara Frontier Chapter

ADK works to protect all of New York's publicly-owned natural places ensuring they remain unspoiled and protected for the enjoyment of everyone within the letter and spirit of the Forever Wild Clause of the New York State Constitution.

#### <u>4-H:</u>

4H is delivered by Cooperative Extension, a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing. Kids complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and citizenship, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Kids experience 4H through in-school and after-school programs, school and community clubs and 4H camps.

#### **Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper:**

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper protects and restores water and surrounding ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. They protect clean water. They restore the health of ecosystems, connect people to water, and inspire economic growth and community engagement. Partner with Waterkeeper to continue waterway efforts, habitat restoration, invasive species removal, etc.

#### **Chestnut Ridge Conservancy (Chestnut Ridge Park):**

The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy was formed to support the restoration and preservation of the rich natural, recreational, and historic resources that comprise Chestnut Ridge Park. Their focus is:

- Identifying projects within the park that will help restore the park to its original beauty
- Raising awareness for these projects in the Western New York community
- Raising funds to supplement those provided by the county budget and allow the Conservancy to maintain a minimal operating budget

#### Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County (CCEEC):

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world. Supported by a federal, state, and local government partnership, the national land grant system, and Cornell University, CCE's professional staff engages New Yorkers in research, outreach and educational programs that transform communities.

#### **Erie County Correctional Facility (ECCF):**

Work with Erie County Correctional Facility and Sheriffs towards native tree and plant propagation, improving plant stock, and training opportunities for the parks.

#### **Erie County Environmental Management Council (EMC):**

The Erie County Environmental Management Council strives to effect environmental improvement within the inter-governmental system. EMC projects often take the form of studies that provide recommended courses of action for decision makers. Coordinate with EMC to address environmental issues within the parks. EMC may be able to bring new resources into the parks as well and become a common thread with the community.

#### **Erie County Soil and Water District (ECSWD):**

It is the mission of the District to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the present and future generations of Erie County residents through the conservation of soil, water, air, plant and animal resources by delivery of sound, science-based, locally-directed, technical and educational assistance. Partner and coordinate to address improvements and concerns such as native plantings, erosion control, forestland protections, and wildlife within the parks.

#### **Erie County Federation Snowmobile Clubs (ECFSC):**

- Holland Sno-Rascals
- · Colden Trail Riders
- WNY Snowmobile Club of Boston
- Pioneer Sno Surfers of Sardinia

#### Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc. (FLTC):

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc. (FLTC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose goal is to build, protect, enhance, and promote a continuous footpath across New York State.

#### **First Tee WNY:**

Their goal is to impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf. Partner with First Tee WNY to bring new opportunities and resources for our youth to enjoy golf in Elma Meadows and Grover Cleveland Golf Courses.

1.0 INTRODUCTION FINAL

#### Foothills Trail Club (FTC):

The Foothills Trail Club was founded in 1962 by hikers and outdoors enthusiasts who built a trail from Allegany State Park to Lake Ontario. The trail is called the Conservation Trail. It extends 180 miles from Pennsylvania through Western New York to Niagara Falls where it connects with Canada's Bruce Trail.

#### Friends of Ellicott Island Bark Park (Ellicott Creek Park):

The Friends of Ellicott was originally started a few years ago as an informal small volunteer group of Park users/dog walkers, who wanted to see the Park better utilized and improved upon. In 2013, they formed a "not for profit", allowing the Friends of Ellicott, Inc to have a status to better interact with Erie County Parks. The main goal of the Friends of Ellicott, Inc was to work with Erie County Park officials to provide for an environmentally sensitive off leash dog park. An agreement between the Friends of Ellicott and Erie County Parks has been attained, since Jan 1, 2014, the Ellicott Island Bark Park has been operating as an official off-leash dog park.

#### **GObike Buffalo:**

Partner with GObike Buffalo in an effort to maintain and enhance connectivity and accessibility to County parks. Use their resources and efforts to sponsor bike events and other activities which would be a great marketing opportunity.

#### **Great Lakes Seaway Trail Inc (GLST).:**

Partner with Great Lakes Seaway Trail to continue efforts of improving corridor along the Niagara River as a greater component of the Great Lakes Scenic Byway. Identify areas of future tourism enhancement, places of 'Travelers Signage', and coordinate future planning efforts.

#### India Association (Ellicott Creek Park):

They represent over 1000 families of Indian Sub-continent origin living in Western New York and Niagara Frontier region. The association was formed over 35 years ago to promote culture from Indian Sub-continent to our future generations and the local community. India Association has recently worked with the County to install a Cricket Pitch at Ellicott Creek Park.

#### Lakeshore Youth Soccer Association (Wendt Beach Park):

Continue to coordinate with Lakeshore Youth Soccer in regards to their summer soccer programs in Wendt Beach Park.

### New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC):

Their mission is to conserve, improve and protect New York's natural resources and environment and to prevent, abate and control water, land and air pollution, in order to enhance the health, safety and welfare of the people of the state and their overall economic and social wellbeing. DEC's goal is to achieve this mission through the simultaneous pursuit of environmental quality, public health, economic prosperity and social well-being, including environmental justice and the empowerment of individuals to participate in environmental decisions that affect their lives. Partner with NYSDEC to improve environmental conditions of the County parks. Work with DEC to restore/protect natural habitats and sensitive communities.

#### Newstead Historical Society (Akron Falls Park):

Partner with Newstead Historical Society on obtaining historic facts and images to be displayed on interpretive signage throughout the park. The mission of the Newstead Historical Society is to ensure a sense of community by preserving and interpreting the Town's rich social and cultural history through education and programming. The Newstead Historical Society is a volunteer organization.

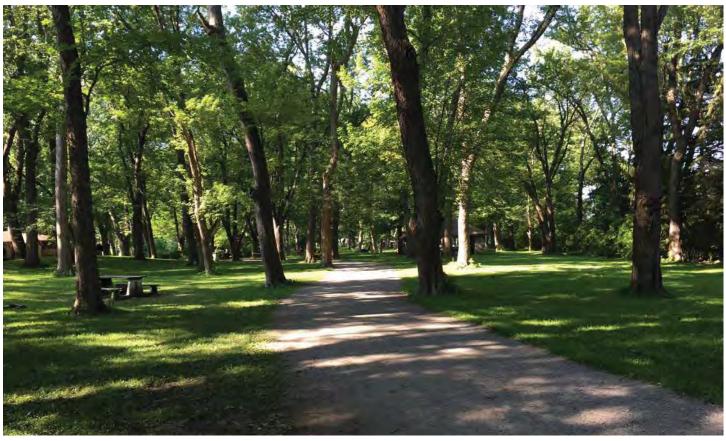
#### Niagara Region Disc Golf (NRDG):

Niagara Region Disc Golf is an organized club managed by a group of professional individuals from the Niagara Region. Their goal is to promote the growth of the sport in our area. Their success has come from having a good working relationship with the State of New York Parks, Erie County Parks, local businesses and the hard work of many individuals. Continue to coordinate with NRDG to routinely make necessary improvements to disc golf course and layout.

#### Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC):

Their goal is to continue and advance the state's commitment to the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Niagara River Greenway while continuing to emphasize economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule. Partner with Niagara River Greenway as a funding source for the Buffalo River sites and waterfront parks. Funding could include signage, greenway connectivity opportunities, parks enhancements, etc.

FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2



Ellicott Island Bark Park: Partnership with Friends of Ellicott Island Bark Park



 ${\it Como\ Lake\ Park\ Disc\ Golf\ Course:\ Partnership\ with\ Niagara\ Region\ Disc\ Golf}$ 



Viewing binoculars at Chestnut Ridge Park funded by the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy

1.0 INTRODUCTION FINAL

#### Preservation Buffalo Niagara (PBN):

Preservation Buffalo Niagara (PBN) was established in 2008, formed from the joint memberships of the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier and the Preservation Coalition of Erie County. In part, PBN has created a vision that includes, but is not limited to: creating alliances and partnerships, fostering job opportunities related to historic preservation, and addressing community needs.

We believe that the WPA-era buildings and structures present a unique opportunity for a collaboration between PBN and Erie County Parks that will create a strong partnership, foster job opportunities, and address community needs, all while preserving and ensuring the continued use of these historically significant structures and buildings.

The embodied value of these structures and buildings is significant, if they are lost due to neglect or lack of upkeep, they will not be replaceable as they are currently constructed. For example, the cost of constructing a shelter grill out of field stone is simply not realistic in 2017 dollars. If lost, they will be replaced by a modern, steel grill.

With minimal, basic, and inexpensive, upkeep the dozens of park grills, shelters, and restrooms that date to the WPA-era can continued to be used for generations to come, at a cost that is considerably less than outright replacement.

#### A Training Program

The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has recently created a certification program for window restoration and is in the process of creating a certification program for masonry restoration. These programs are being developed in order to teach the hands-on skills needed to work with historic structures and buildings.

In many instances, these programs will target skilled tradespersons for enrollment with the goal of equipping people who are already working in the field with unique skillsets needed to effectively restore, for example, historic wood windows or, in the case of masonry restoration, properly identify and match the composition of historic mortar prior to repointing.

Preservation Buffalo Niagara is working to bring each of these certification programs to the Buffalo region. Once the programs are established in the region, Erie County Parks would be a natural partner, with a number of the parks containing WPA-era buildings and structures or historic buildings (e.g. Wendt Mansion or Schenck House at Grover Cleveland Golf Course) serving as a potential hosts sites for the training/certification courses. In addition, Erie County Parks staff members could attend the training/certification courses, equipping them with the skills needed for the long-term care and maintenance of these structures/buildings.

The tradespersons would gain valuable hands-on historic preservation skills and a marketable skill that would set them apart in a region filled with historic assets, PBN facilitates the preservation of valuable WPA-era historic resources (to the benefit of the entire Erie County community), and Erie County Parks has buildings and structures preserved for park users to continue to enjoy and to use.

The goal is not to freeze these buildings and structures in 1939 and/or to prevent them from being utilized, but rather to see to it that they are preserved and rehabilitated in a way that ensures that their historic integrity is kept intact (i.e. in 50-years they will still be recognizable as WPA-era structures/buildings) and to see them continued to be used and enjoyed by members of the visiting pubic. These buildings/structures are assets that are uniquely identifiable and help to set these parks apart as destinations and should be treated as such.

#### Funding a Training Program

Funding for the above-described training/certification program could come through grants, such as CLG monies (Certified Local Government) in those circumstances in which an Erie County Park is located within or abutting a CLG. Examples of such instances include: Chestnut Ridge Park (Orchard Park) and Como Lake Park (Village of Lancaster). Another grant source could be CFA funds (Consolidated Funding Application), as the training/certification program would have tangible job training benefits that would transcend the Parks and serve tradespersons working in and around the Buffalo region, an area flush with historic assets in need of people with handson window restoration and masonry restoration skillsets.

Private funding sources should also be explored. Companies are eager to assist with the preservation of buildings/structures that are deemed to be local, state, and national significance, especially if they receive the benefit of being recognized as a partner in some way (i.e. press release, website announcement, printed brochure). In the past, Delaware North (headquartered in downtown Buffalo) has provided funding to the National Park Service. Their advice should be sought as it relates to their past experiences with the National Park Service and any advice and/or guidance they could provide to Erie County Parks would be of high value.

#### **Private Businesses:**

Identify key businesses, partners, corporations, etc., near parks and trails that may be interested in providing volunteering efforts to make general park improvements (i.e. clean-ups, plantings, trash removal, trail maintenance, etc.)

#### Push Blue:

Work with Push Blue to coordinate volunteering efforts, restoration, watershed stewardship, green infrastructure improvements, and native plants within parks and trails, while providing job training through these programs.



FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

#### **Margaret L. Wendt Foundation:**

Foundation places an emphasis on education, the arts, and social services; support also for churches and religious organizations, public interest organizations, and youth agencies. The Foundation provides numerous grants that may be suitable to improve the Erie County Parks System.

## Western New York Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (WNY PRISM):

A regional partnership created to address the negative impacts of invasive species on our economy, environment, and human health. Our collaborative approach to invasive species management allows for coordinated and cooperative efforts that share and leverage limited resources and result in improved control and prevention efforts. Partner groups and volunteers are essential for success, making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. The WNY PRISM Partnership includes local citizens, private landowners, non-profit organizations, state, federal, tribal, and local agencies, business, researchers and universities

## Western New York Mountain Bicycling Association (WNYMBA):

Volunteers design, develop, and maintain trails working with every major recreation land manager. The key to ensuring not only a good ride, but continued access to the trails itself is a strong, active, and knowledgeable trail work program. Trail construction is performed with full permission and review from land managers including work in Erie County Forests through the Revocable Permit to construct and maintain trails. WNYMBA maintains constant communication with local land management agencies including the Erie County Parks Department.

#### WNY Land Conservancy (WNYLC):

Their goal is to permanently protect land with significant conservation value in Western New York, for the benefit of future generations. They envision a future in which natural areas, working farmlands, wildlife habitat and scenic beauty are cherished and protected as part of the landscape and character of Western New York. Work with WNY Land Conservancy to explore future opportunities and combined goals/efforts with native plants and other park improvements.

#### <u>University At Buffalo (UB)</u>:

The University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning could serve as an excellent partner for Erie County Parks. The School of Architecture and Planning offers a graduate certificate in historic preservation and students from this program, under the tutelage and guidance of their professors, could utilize one or more of the Parks' deteriorated buildings and/or structures as hands-on classrooms.

Students would have the opportunity to gain firsthand experience working in and around a historic building and/or

structure and learn the hands-on skills necessary to better manage, review, or work on such assets once they enter their professional careers. Erie County Parks would benefit from having a building and/or structure restored over a course of time at little-to-no cost to the County taxpayers.

The materials needed to facilitate the restoration/ rehabilitation could be donated by local businesses or purchased by private donors interested in seeing a wellknown local landmark brought back and given new life.

The School of Architecture and Planning is located on the University at Buffalo's South Campus in North Buffalo, across the street (Bailey Avenue) from the Erie County Parks' Grover Cleveland Golf Course. The circa 1820 Schenck House is situated in the heart of the Golf Course and, based on a cursory exterior condition assessment completed in 2017, is in need of some general upkeep. Given its close proximity to the School of Architecture and Planning, it would seem like a natural beneficiary of such a partnership.

#### A Working Model:

Similar partnerships have been proven to work at historic preservation programs at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, and the University of Maryland, College Park.

At the University of Maryland, College Park, the historic preservation program engaged with nearby Town of Bladensburg, Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust by signing a memorandum of agreement that allowed the program to use a circa 1746 Georgian style estate as a living laboratory for "the study of architectural history, preservation planning, and building conservation; in the process, the program is applying the knowledge and creativity of its faculty and students in developing a preservation plan tor the historic property."

The agreement was signed in 2008 and, since that time, students from the historic preservation program have performed structural analyses, engaged in landscape restoration, installed shoring/bracing beneath the foundation, performed window restoration, and held events/presentations/classes at the estate.

#### Visit Buffalo Niagara (VBN):

Visit Buffalo Niagara sells and markets assets and attractions to visitors outside the Buffalo Niagara region as a convention, tourism and leisure destination for the economic benefit of the community. VBN is Erie County's lead marketing organization for conventions, meetings, amateur sporting events, cultural and heritage tourism and consumer travel. The Parks Department should partner and coordinate with the VBN to promote its parks and to expand opportunities for passive and active recreation.



#### 2.0 HERITAGE PARKS

- 2.1 Akron Falls Park
- 2.2 Chestnut Ridge Park
- 2.3 Como Lake Park
- 2.4 Ellicott Creek Park
- 2.5 Emery Park

#### **AKRON FALLS PARK**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Akron Falls Park, in the Village of Akron and Town of Newstead, is one of the older parks in the County's overall system. It was initially built as a Village Park in the early 1930s, but was later acquired by Erie County in 1947. This 154-acre, multi-purpose park features many iconic old stone structures and sloping terrain that straddles the scenic Murder Creek.

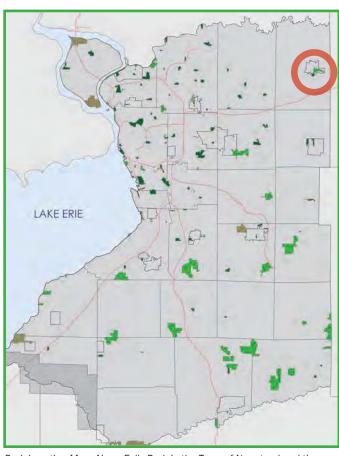
The dominant natural feature of the park is the 80'-high Akron Falls along the Onondaga Escarpment, which includes two separate cataracts on Murder Creek. The Creek then flows through a scenic glen within the park that includes an old manmade lake with dam, several islands, pathways and picnic areas. Numerous old, unique stone park structures dot the landscape, making this a unique 'Heritage Park' in the Parks System.

#### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

The first settlement in the area began in 1829, and following a rapid development of commerce and industry, the Village of Akron was incorporated in 1849. Cement and gypsum industries sustained the Akron economy for over a century. In fact, once nicknamed the "Cement City," an old news article from 1884 states that "there is hardly a piece of masonry of any importance from the Hudson River to the Rocky Mountains into which it [Akron Cement] has not entered as one of its component parts." In fact, there is a strong connection between the cement industry with the Akron Falls Park, including a series of mines underneath the falls and park. Remnants of one of the tunnel entrances can still be seen under the upper falls within the park. Also in 1884, the West Shore Railroad came to Akron, adding to the service provided by the New York Central Railroad, dubbed the "Peanut Line," running from Niagara Falls to Canandaigua beginning in 1854. As for park specific history, in 1933, the Civil Works Administration, which was funded by the Public Works Administration (WPA), initiated the development of Akron Falls Park, with approximately 90 men working for a minimum of \$15.00 per week. Later that same year the dam and artificial lake was constructed from bond funds (The Akron News 1933 - Wnyrin). Following the County acquisition in 1947, additional acreage was purchased to provide for skating and picnic space.



Manmade lake and Murder Creek within Akron Falls Park.



Park Location Map: Akron Falls Park in the Town of Newstead and the Village of Akron

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and repair historic stone structures; comfort stations, shelters, old stone grills, and unique features like the Rock Garden and stone railings at the Lower Falls.
- Reduce lawn mowing to provide natural areas of wild flowers and meadows, especially along Parkview Drive.
- Enhance falls viewing opportunities at the **Lower and Upper Falls.** Fortify and provide safety measures, possible barrier wall or guard rails at Lower Falls overlook, or by providing safe areas to view the falls at closer points along the creek.



Local context map



Park road featuring old stone culvert walls on either side

#### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

Since the earliest days of the Akron Falls Park development, the area around Akron and Newstead has seen and continues to see growth. In its earlier days, Akron Falls Park served the recreational needs of nearly all area residents. Now, with more recent developments of other local park and recreation facilities, there is less demand on Akron Falls Park for certain types of active recreation, while more and more people have rediscovered the park for its natural beauty, unique assets, and heritage features. One significant recreational feature in the northern Erie County area is the recreational trail that links the Village of Akron to the Town of Clarence. This Rails to Trail development on the old "Peanut Line" has the potential to eventually link Akron all the way to Ellicott Creek Park and the Riverwalk, through the Towns of Clarence, Amherst and Tonawanda.

#### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Akron Falls Park lies directly adjacent to Akron Village, and yet there does not appear to be any direct or significant relationship between the two. Parkview Drive cuts through the park and provides a direct connection for passing vehicles into the east end of the business district (near the historic Octagon House). The Village of Akron has been revitalized over the past few years, and has become a destination for many looking for that small, quaint historic village setting. Other area industries and businesses have flourished, including the Perry's Ice Cream Plant on the north side of the Village. Given its location, Akron Falls Park likely draws most of its users from the immediate area of Akron Village and Town of Newstead, as well as the surrounding communities of Clarence to the west, Alden to the south, Pembroke to the east, Royalton to the north and the Town of Alabama to the northeast. The Tonawanda Indian Reservation also is within close proximity to the Park.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Natural scenic beauty is the greatest asset of Akron Falls Park. The falls themselves changes throughout the seasons as stream flow varies, making each visit a slightly different experience. Below the falls, steep wooded slopes provide a feeling of wilderness, despite the park's proximity to the village. These slopes are home to spring wildflowers, which should be protected as well as possible from visitors short-cutting the historic foot path by climbing straight downslope from the parking area.

Murder Creek provides a natural division of the park into north and south portions, which are also different in character. The northern part of the park consists mainly of wooded glen and creek floodplain, as well as the man-made lake. The southern portion is at higher elevation, and includes large areas of manicured lawn that present opportunities for enlarging natural habitat and re-introducing native plant species.

VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN





Stone and timber railing along path to Lower Falls

The character of the lake also varies with seasonal changes in stream flow. In spring, high flows top the dam easily, allowing flow and mixture within the lake, but in late summer and fall, low flows mean the lake level drops, and the water can become stagnant. While it is not a practical possibility at this time, in the long term, modification or even removal of the dam could be considered as a way of improving the connectivity of stream habitat within the park. Flow variability also effects the stream itself-- portions of Murder Creek above the lake show bank erosion from fast flowing spring high-waters.

While invasive species are not a severe problem at Akron Falls Park, there are scattered populations of non-native plants such as Vinca minor, which have the potential to become problems in the future.

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

The 2012-2016 Capital Improvements within Akron Falls Parks totaled \$1,820,029 and included the following projects:

- Sealed and striped tennis courts, and striping for pickleball
- Sealed and striped basketball courts

- Parkview Dr. Replacement of bridge over Murder Creek
- Brooklyn St Replacement of bridge over Murder Creek
- Roadway improvements Drain inlets replaced, road to shelter #3 reconstructed
- Parking improvements Cummings Lodge and Parkview Comfort Station lots reconstructed
- Cummings Lodge General repairs and painting
- Parkview Comfort Station Replaced roof
- Valley Comfort Station Replaced roof
- Brooklyn St. Comfort Station Replaced roof
- Gas Shed Replaced roof
- Shelter #1 Replaced roof including decking
- Shelter #5 Replaced roof
- Shelter #10 Replaced roof and concrete pad
- Shelter #11 Replaced roof and concrete pad
- Shelter #12 Replaced roof
- Shelter #14 Replaced roof and concrete pad
- Shelter #15 Replaced roof and concrete pad
- Waterfall access Fencing added and repaired, walkway resurfaced
- Dam sedimentation study completed



Warning sign and temporary barrier at the Lower Falls overlook



VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN



Lower Falls - Many people trespass and jump into and off of the falls, creating significant safety issues and increased duties for the Park



Old stone grill near Parkview Drive - All grills are displaying signs of deterioration like this throughout the park



Old ball diamond on Brooklyn Street; diamond is not maintained and hardly used

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The park is showing deterioration in its older, historic stone structures.
- Chain link fencing prevents access and views to the upper
- Over the years, safety has become a big concern with deteriorating walkways, railings and former viewing areas.
- More connections to the Village are needed.
- Park lacks distinct gateway signage needed at key locations entering the park.
- As resources and funding dwindle, a new strategy for lawn mowing needs to emerge. Currently, most of the open space in the park is mowed, including areas that are beyond the recreational use areas.
- There is an apparent underutilization of some of the park facilities, for example the Concession Stand and Ice Skating Lodge.
- Numerous reports and accounts of unruly park users entering the falls beyond the 'safe viewing areas'. Park Rangers have had difficulty maintaining safety around the falls and keeping individuals from high risk areas. This has precluded the Rangers from being able to function and perform their regular
- Many old stone grilling stations still exist throughout the park, many are in disrepair and falling apart.
- Older pieces of playground equipment, not compliant with current guidelines, are scattered throughout the park.
- The Park has two baseball diamonds, but infields are not maintained. The diamond near Brooklyn Street has stadium lighting that is in disrepair.
- Poor safety along Parkview Drive for pedestrians. A sidewalk or crosswalk is not provided in the main park area, this creates an unsafe condition with park users walking along the road to access different areas/amenities of the park.

# ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



# MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- "value" of these old park features for (O) (P: 1.0-9.3) Preserve/enhance and restore Heritage Areas within the stations, WPA era grills, other structures.. Consider the heritage park, including; shelters, comfort future tourism and visitor appreciation
- non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures, (2003 Master Plan) (2) (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in
- strategies can be pursued. Lower the speed limit on Parkview Drive to (3) (A: 5.0) Improve pedestrian safety along Parkview Drive, Several 15mph to coincide with the park speed limit.
- newer methods of pedestrian safety. opportunities at the Upper and Lower Falls; Provide new ADA accessible overlook platforms with (4) (C: 4.0) Enhance falls viewing
- that current and proposed area trails may expand to connect with Akron Falls Park. (5) (A: 10.0) Partner with Town of Newstead/Village of Akron to ensure
- © Consider the removal or repurposing of sports fields and courts based on recreation trends and interests of the area. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara (VBN) to identify possible
- (?) (C: 6.0) Provide striped lines for Pickleball use.
- (C: 7.0) Install new updated basketball hoops (Rim/backboard
- Enhance the usage and purpose for the Cummings Lodge, located off of Skyline Drive.



# MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

· (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health

- Improve ADA access throughout maintained areas. Remove dead, of the park, in particular within dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
- the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
- · (A: 7.0-7.5) Establish more dominan including upgraded entrance signs, enhanced landscaping with seasonal interest, etc. (2003 Master gateway" features for the park,
- recognizable directional signage to - (A: 9.0-9.4) Establish legible and
- (C. 2.0-2.4) Provide new interpretive signage system and informational kiosks that tie the park better into the mix with other local cultural and
- playground structures throughour (A: 6.1) Improve and maintain
- · (A: 6.2) Remove the numerous old equipment that dot the landscape metal playground structures and throughout the park.
- · (P: 10.0) Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Waterkeeper, Soil and Water District and other local stakeholder groups to continue to improve the health of Murder Creek.
- Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to





# MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 3.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 13.5 acres Wildflower Meadow: 8.5 acres Total: ~27 acres Wet Meadow: 1 acre

Natural Regeneration

TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

wildflower seeds can be planted to replace lawn until the tree canopy cease altogether, and woody plant neighboring forest can be planted to speed natural reforestation, and regeneration areas are adjacent to In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most removal will be limited to non-native species. Young native expand continuous forest habitat within the parks. Mowing will existing forest, and serve to native meadow grass and trees of species found in cases, suggested natural

the "low-mow" management category, there exists flexibility for tailoring management to a potentially see different use in the future, and are not intended to be reforested. They would be mowed infrequently to prevent woody plants from establishing. Within These are areas that may

# Wet Meadow

particular park or zone.

A sub-type of Low-Mow Area, Wet Meadow simply refers to areas that currently tend to remain wet, and plant species than typical Low-Mow Meadow. Wet Meadow is not intended to retain standing therefore may support different water as a pond would.

# Wildflower Meadow

In locations with low use but high visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest han simple mowing reduction. addition of significant native



## RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURALIZATION

Lawn Reduction

of this area can be converted to use as A large percentage of Akron Falls Park wildlife habitat and passive recreation is currently mowed despite seeing little use for active recreation. Much

At Akron Falls Park, the majority of lawn reduction will be conversion to Certain areas near the western edge Low Mow and Wildflower Meadow. of the park tend to be wet, making

Natural Regeneration areas can begin a process of expanding this valuable waterfalls and the lake is one of the The natural forest area between the main attractions of Akron Falls Park, them opportunities to create Wet

maintenance and service area. These recommended surrounding the park will provide visual screening over time, and function much like an addition to the existing woodland Natural Regeneration areas are north of the main park drive.

orest habitat.

unmowed margin areas surrounding the higher activity zones can be In the northern part of the park, the increased over time without compromising flexibility for the

# Nater Quality Protection

known to help maintain water quality Akron Falls Park offers an opportunity ncreasing natural vegetation buffers adjustments to the dam may be the only way to prevent the lake from been a concern for the community to enhance the water quality of Murder Creek, which has at times becoming stagnant in late summe and stabilizing streambanks are when stream flows are low. In the long term, however,

many public parks. It is important to keep monitoring for changes so that impact at Akron Falls, compared with the current level of quality can be protected. Aggressive non-native plants are currently having a relatively low Invasive Species Management

> ---- Park Boundary Existing Trail

Nature Trail

 Wildflower Meadow Area Low-Mow Area

Wet Meadow Area (1) Natural Regen

0

Legend:

#### 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

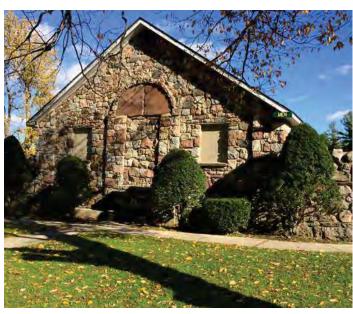
#### Historic Structures/WPA/Other Structures:

- (P: 1.0-9.3) Preserve/enhance and restore Heritage Areas within the park, including; shelters, comfort stations, WPA era grills, other structures. Consider the heritage "value" of these old park features for future tourism and visitor appreciation
  - The Rock Garden
  - Enhance and promote Old Rock Garden as unique destination to the Erie County Park System. Include interpretive signage about the history of the site. Picnic Groves including grill structures
  - Preserve and/or repair, depending on condition and location, WPA grilling structures to be used again as part of the original picnic groves
  - Hillside trails with unique stone steps, posts, railings and stone bench built into the hillside.
  - Lower Falls viewing area
  - Stone structures such as culvert headwalls and small foot bridges
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: PBN/In-House
- (A: 1.0) Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

Stone bench at the rock garden

- (A: 13.0) Picnic Shelter #13 should be preserved and/ or considered for possible reuse. The shelter, which is at the west end of lake does not have vehicular access and it is not available for rentals at this time.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 14.0) Enhance the usage and purpose for the Cummings Lodge, located off of Skyline Drive. This facility could be retrofitted to serve as a multi-purpose recreation center, "nature education center," or other park use.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



WPA era comfort station off of Parkview Drive



Shelter #2

VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN



Large areas of open lawn on the west side of the park

#### Maintenance/Safety:

- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 4.0) Enhance falls viewing opportunities at the Upper and Lower Falls; Provide new ADA accessible overlook platforms with newer methods of pedestrian safety.
  - Consider a new trail access route and viewing area to the upper falls from the north side of Murder Creek off East Avenue.
  - Provide safe areas to view the lower falls at closer points along the creek utilizing elevated platforms/boardwalk.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Contractor

- (A: 5.0) Improve pedestrian safety along Parkview **Drive.** Several strategies can be pursued:
  - Lower the speed limit on Parkview Drive to 15mph to coincide with the park speed limit.
  - Provide high visibility crosswalks and signage to provide a safer crossing scenario for park patrons using features on both sides of the road.
  - Construct a sidewalk or walking trail from the bridge to the park boundary. Coordinate with the Village to continue the walk to Buell Street.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Highway
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations can present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example, designing sports fields/ courts for greater accessibility and seating, improved accessibility/updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people of different abilities.

■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House



Parkview Drive, heading north

- (A: 10.0) Partner with Town of Newstead/Village of Akron to ensure that current and proposed area trails may expand to connect with Akron Falls Park.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Town of Newstead/Village of Akron
- (A: 7.0-7.5) Establish more dominant "gateway" features for the park, including upgraded entrance signs, enhanced landscaping with seasonal interest, etc. (2003 Master Plan)
  - The park contains several entry points, and Parkview Drive splits the park into three distinct areas.
  - Two primary entrances into the park are from Skyline Drive and Parkview Drive. It is recommended that Major gateway features be implemented at these locations. These features would include upgraded entrance signs, informational kiosks nearby, and landscape treatments to impact a sense of arrival.
  - At several other entry points to the park a 'minor' gateway, or welcome type sign and treatment is recommended. At these locations the park rules should be posted. The locations identified for these 'minor' gateways include;
    - The park boundaries along Parkview Drive.
    - The Brooklyn Street entrance.
    - East Avenue at the roller hockey rink.
    - Skyline Drive at the parking lot to Cummings Lodge
      - Priority: MediumPartner: In-House
- Continue working with the Town to develop an overall plan for Akron Falls Park. An access to the park should be promoted from Main Street in the Village, to increase the profile of the park in the Village. A walkway should be developed along Buell Street to link the Park with East Avenue. (Recommendation from Newstead/Akron Joint Comprehensive Plan)
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Newstead Town Board/Akron Village Board
- (A: 9.0-9.4) Establish legible and recognizable directional signage to the park.
  - There are small signs at the intersections of Crittenden Road and Skyline Drive, and at Buell Road and Parkview Drive that are difficult to spot, the County outline shape blends in with the background, and the text is hard to read. In addition to replacing the wayfinding signage at these two locations it is suggested that additional wayfinding signage be provided at:
    - Intersection of Crittenden Road and Skyline Drive.

- Intersection of Buell Street and Parkview Drive
- Intersection of John Street and Parkview Drive.
- Intersection of Main Street and Parkview Drive.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House/Highway
- (C: 2.0-2.4) Provide new interpretive signage system and informational kiosks that tie the park better into the mix with other local cultural and historical attractions.
  - Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's geological and local history, i.e. How and when the falls were formed?; How did Murder Creek get its name?; When was the Village and Town first Settled?; What's the history behind the Octagon House?; What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?; When were the old stone structures built?; How did the discovery of Gypsum Deposits change the Village of Akron?; What is the background of "Cement City?" etc.
  - Provide interpretive signs or markers at key history and natural sites, such as at the site of any old mills on Murder Creek, at the falls, etc.
  - Enhance existing nature trail system along Murder Creek with new interpretive signage (2003 Master Plan)
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Existing park sign off of Parkview Drive from the south

VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN



Murder Creek



Entrance to the Rock Garden

#### Recreation:

- (A: 6.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
    - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 11.0) Consider the removal or repurposing of sports fields and courts based on recreation trends and interests of the area. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara (VBN) to identify possible opportunities.
  - Priority: Medium ■ Partner: VBN/In-House
- (C: 6.0) Improve tennis courts by including striped lines for Pickleball use. Allow for dual-use courts.
  - Priority: Medium ■ Partner: Contractor
- (C: 7.0) Install new updated basketball hoops (rim/ backboard and nets).
  - Potentially restripe basketball court as a 'multipurpose court' responding to the recreation trends of the area. Court could accommodate several sports, i.e basketball, volleyball, 4 square, floor hockey, and more.
    - Priority: Medium ■ Partner: Contractor



Playground off of Parkview Drive

- (A: 6.2) Remove the numerous old non-compliant metal playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park. These pieces of equipment are outdated, most are unsightly, and many do not meet any current playground safety requirements.
  - Consideration should be given to several "legacy" playground pieces, such as the pumpkin coach. This equipment appeared to be in good condition and could be maintained in the park as a feature or considered artwork, without a fall surface which would encourage its use as play equipment. Refer to Volume One for additional information regarding "legacy" playground pieces.
  - Consider earthtone colors for playground equipment in the Heritage park setting rather than bright, primary colors.
  - Potentially reuse this old playground equipment by reaching out to local artists and craftsman. The metal parts could be used as installation pieces located throughout the park. (2003 Master Plan)
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 9.0) Improve fishing access and opportunities to the edge of the park lake (2003 Master Plan)
  - Provide a small deck similar to the one featured near the Commissioners Cabin at Chestnut Ridge for fishing access and as an overlook destination.
    - Priority: LowPartner: In-House

#### **Environment:**

- (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - o Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new native tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along Parkview Drive to enhance the arrival experience into the Park. (Consult County Forester and local experts to determine appropriate species to benefit wildlife).
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - Apply for funding from NYSDEC for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/NYSDEC/ECSWD/Forestry



Old swingset and slide adjacent to Murder Creek



Pumpkin coach - One of the many unique attractions providing character and charm to the park setting



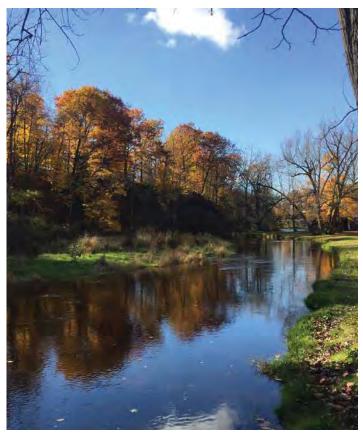
Existing tree canopy on the west side of the park

VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN

- (P: 12.0) Coordinate with partners to identify opportunities to naturalize the lake edge with riparian native plantings and other natural features. Projects can take the shape of the "Living Shoreline" project at Ellicott Creek Park.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/

ECSWD/NYSDEC

- (P: 13.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize native pollinator friendly plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
  - The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (P: 14.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD
- (P: 10.0) Murder Creek focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Waterkeeper, Soil and Water District and other local stakeholder groups to continue to improve the health of the Creek.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the creek and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/ ECSWD/NYSDEC



Creek edge conditions as it flows into the lake



Murder Creek flows towards the lake, surrounded by beautiful fall color

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	2.0	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Natural Regeneration Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
A	31	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
A			Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
А	4.1	throughout the park. The overall age	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	6.1		Continue to provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А		·	Coordinate with the Village of Akron and Town of Newstead to ensure proposed trail projects connect to Akron Falls Park.	High	Ongoing	NA
С			Reconstruction deteriorating stone wall(s) and construct period appropriate (in appearance) guard rails.	High	1-2 Years	\$60,000
Р	13.0	Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	14.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



VOLUME 2

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	4.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
А		Improve pedestrian safety along Parkview Dr.	Coordinate with the Village to reduce the speed limit of Parkview Dr. to 15 MPH within the park boundary.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.0	Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules,for the park at the following locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.1	Parkview Dr. (north end)	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.2	Parkview Dr. (south end)	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.3	Brooklyn St.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.4	East Ave.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.5	Cummings Lodge	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
А	8.1	The Falls	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	8.2	The Rock Garden	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.3	Trail heads, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С	3.0	Prevent further deterioration of warming lodge next to pond. Replace roof.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$99,000
С	5.0	Improve safety along Parkview Drive:	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	51		Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$2,500
С		Install new updated basketball hoops (rim/backboard and nets).	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$1,600
Р	12.0	Coordinate with partners to identify opportunities to naturalize the lake edge with riparian native plantings and other natural features. Projects can take the shape of the "Living Shoreline" project at Ellicott Creek Park.	Coordinate and partner with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper and NYSDEC	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А		Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places	Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer assigned to Erie County to complete the required nomination forms and submit to a State review board.	Low	Ongoing	In-House

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



VOLUME 2

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		provide wildlife habitat	Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
А	6.2	Improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of the pumpkin coach or other "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А		park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Skyline Dr.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А			Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А			Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А			Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Remove dysfunctional lighting from Brooklyn St baseball diamond	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Low	6-10 Years	In-House

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	13.0		Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	14.0		Planning and improvements implemented by parks staff	Low	6-10 Years	\$25,000
С		Establish Enhanced Gateways for the park at the following locations:	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	х
С	1.1		Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	1.2	_ =	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С		park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
С	2.1		Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.2		Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	2.3	The Legend of Murder Creek	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.4	History of WPA structures	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С		Construct sidewalk from Parkview Dr. bridge to west park boundary.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the sidewalk	Low	6-10 Years	\$13,200
С	8.0	Improve fishing access and opportunities to the edge of the park lake (2003 Master Plan) Provide a small deck similar to the one featured near the Commissioners Cabin at Chestnut Ridge for fishing access and as an overlook destination.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р		Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters:	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	Х
Р	1.1	Shelter #3 - Repoint stonework	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,000
Р	1.2	Shelter #8 - Repoint stonework	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$25,000
Р	1.3	Shelter #10 – Repoint stonework	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,000
Р	1.4	Shelter #11 – Repoint stonework	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$25,000
Р	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of stone work at Brooklyn Street Comfort Station; Repair loose and missing stones, repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$6,000
Р	3.0	Prevent further deterioration of stone work at Falls Comfort Station; Repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$120,000

#### **AKRON FALLS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	4.0	Prevent further deterioration of stone work at warming lodge next to pond; Repair loose and missing stones, repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$85,000
Р	5.0	Prevent further deterioration of stone work at small seat/shelter near rock garden; Repair loose and missing stones, repoint stonework.		Low	6-10 Years	\$21,000
Р		Prevent further deterioration of stone bench near falls. Repair loose and missing stones, repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,500
Р	7.0		Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,500
Р		l •	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,000
Р	l .	Rehabilitate the following WPA Era grills to prevent further deterioration:	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	Х
Р	9.1	Grill #8; Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
Р	9.2	Grill #9; Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
Р	9.3	Grill #17; Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
Р	10.0	Murder Creek through stream bank stabilization, erosion control, habitat	Coordinate and partner with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper and NYSDEC to develop projects similar to the Living Shoreline project in Ellicott Creek Park	Low	Ongoing	\$150,000

KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK FINAL PLAN

#### CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

#### **DESCRIPTION**

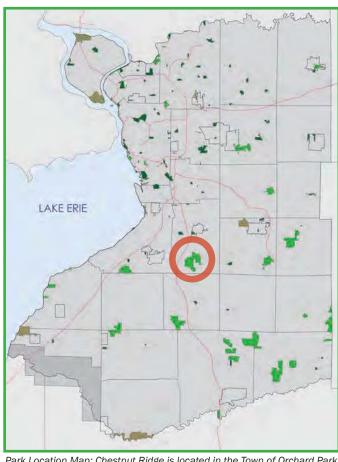
Acquired in 1926, Chestnut Ridge Park is the largest and most heavily used County-owned park. This jewel of a property includes some of the most impressive natural scenery and vintage WPAera park structures around. Located in the Town of Orchard Park, the 1,151-acre park is centrally located within the County Parks System, has convenient access and has always been a popular destination to residents all over Erie County. This is the largest County Park in the system and arguably one of the largest County Parks in the United States. The most well-known portion of the park is the large open grass hillside, upon which sits the old stone Park "Casino" building. This north-facing hillside allows for impressive vistas to downtown Buffalo, and has been a favorite in the snowy winter months for its sledding and tobogganing. Rugged terrain, deep ravines, mature woodlands, open meadows, scenic picnic areas and miles of nature trails has made Chestnut Ridge a popular getaway from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The Eternal Flame, originally known as the "Burning Spring", is now a regional destination on the 'west' section of the park. It has increased in popularity over the years with the addition of parking access and trailhead signage off of Chestnut Ridge Road, Route 277. It is within this remote section that nature is at its finest, with its seemingly primitive wooded ravines and a most unique natural feature: the constant emission of gas producing a small flame.

Chestnut Ridge Park's popularity is not just for its natural wonder and unique assets, but also now for the increasing amount of events and activities that take place. Events such as "movie in the park" nights, kite flying events, tennis tournaments, 5K races, Santa Land, and Winterfest. These events have brought in thousands of people to the park, due in part to the help and support of the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy and continued efforts of park staff.



Chestnut Ridge Casino



Park Location Map: Chestnut Ridge is located in the Town of Orchard Park off of Chestnut Ridge Road

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and enhance "Heritage" areas and special park features, including; Repoint/clean stonework where needed, replace missing stones, replace or repair roofs, make improvements to concrete/asphalt floors, etc. to all historic structures and facilities.
- Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use, little-trafficked areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures.
- Relocation of Disc golf holes to prevent continuous damage to natural areas and wildlife from excessive foot traffic.

#### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Chestnut Ridge Park is one of the original Erie County Parks, beginning its development in 1926. Much of the park construction was handled through the WPA work force through the 1930s; this consisted of shelters, pump shelters, colony ovens, and pavilions. The most significant and prominent structure was and is the Casino, a stone building sitting atop a hill overlooking the surrounding park and community. The original timber Casino was built in 1925, and destroyed by fire in 1932. The present day stone Casino was completed in 1938 by nearly 50 employees of the WPA. The use of stone in the construction of the park during the days of the WPA provided its structures with a rustic feel. The flagstone area behind the building allows park users to gaze upon marvelous views out towards Buffalo and even far out beyond Lake Erie to Canada.

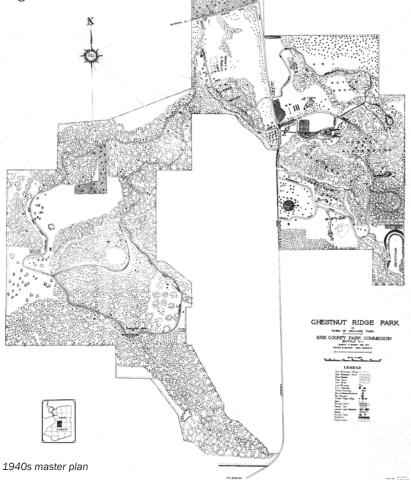
The design of bridges and cabins blended into the natural beauty of the park and 3.5 miles of roads were constructed to allow access to the natural areas of the park. The diversified forest provides many habitats to wildlife and opportunities for relief from urban living.



One of the original picnic shelters at the park (Photo Credit: Chestnut Ridge Conservancy)



Historic photograph - Playground at Chestnut Ridge



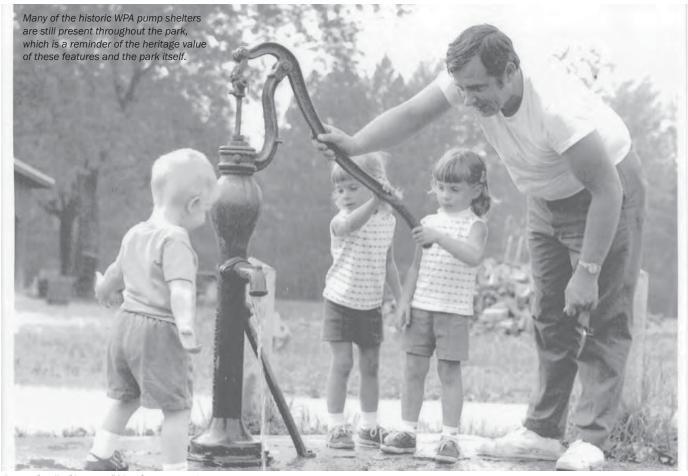
VOLUME 2 FINAL PLAN



Past and present views from the Chestnut Ridge Casino



2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK FINAL PLAN



(Image Credit: Chestnut Ridge Conservancy)



Existing WPA pump shelter, all of them no longer function





Local context map



Historic view of people playing baseball at the park (Photo Credit: Chestnut Ridge Conservancy)

#### LOCAL CONTEXT

Route 277, running north-south between the Village of Orchard Park and hamlet of North Boston, divides the park into two halves, with the park's most developed section lying to the east of the state highway. Chestnut Ridge Park is strategically located at the center of the County's overall park system holdings, and has easy and well-signed access from the local highway system (Route 219 to Armor Duells Road to Route 277 southbound). It also lies just off a major access route to the nearby ski areas of Ski Tamarack and Kissing Bridge, as well as off of the main route to Holiday Valley Ski Resort from points north (Route 219).

#### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

At one point, Chestnut Ridge served as a central recreation facility for the local residents, including both active and passive forms of activities. It has always been a magnet for regional park users for certain types of recreation (i.e. sledding, hiking, etc.) and special events. Although still utilized for some organized sports, the Town of Orchard Park and the Orchard Park School District have since developed their own recreational facilities that offer many of the active recreational courts and fields at a local level.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Chestnut Ridge Park is home to a number of popular activities and events, but is also characterized by high quality woodlands with dramatic terrain crisscrossed by small headwater streams. The majority of these wooded areas are not heavily impacted by invasive species, but should be a high priority for surveillance so that their current high level of quality can be maintained. Particularly on the west side of the park, broad footpaths and roads make the woodlands accessible to a wide range of visitors, but also have the effect of creating erosive runoff patterns in some locations. Streambank erosion is minor in many areas, but is a significant issue in the southwest corner of the park, downstream from the Eternal Flame. Throughout the park, small areas formerly occupied by structures provide opportunities for closing forest habitat gaps. In some areas, unused lawns are opportunities to create wildflower meadow habitat.

#### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / **IMPROVEMENTS**

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Chestnut Ridge Park totaled \$2,719,032. Recent projects included:

- Entrances from Chestnut Ridge Road New guiderails installed
- East Entrance Drive Constructed median divider and island to define drive from parking, added lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks and accessible parking spaces
- Roadway Improvements Repairs to Construction Road, Fire Tower Loop, Commissioners Cabin Road, and approximately 2 miles of roadway
- Maintenance Parking Lot Repaired pavement including
- Parking Lots Repaired three parking lots including drainage
- Culverts Replaced two major culverts at the lower end of the park
- Casino Replaced doors, added sidewalks and repaved around building.
- Storage Building Replaced roof, including portions of rotted deck, and electrical improvements.
- Mechanic Shop Replaced roof, new siding, doors and windows
- Martin Lodge Replaced floor and doors, upgraded restroom fixtures, repaired areas of damaged block/ masonry, and fascia.
- Many improvements to various shelters and comfort stations
- Tennis Courts Twelve courts repaired, repaved and surfaced including new nets and posts
- New viewing binoculars were installed on top of the sled hill next to the Casino
- New Hamilton Ward Plaque installed at memorial site on west side of park
- New fencing installed at Eternal Flame parking area
- Roof completely torn off and replaced at Maintenance Shop
- Complete renovation of comfort station #8 including ADA accessible stalls
- Trail head kiosk and map installed at Eternal Flame parking lot



ADA Improvements to comfort station #8



New shelter construction



New sign kiosk installed at the Eternal Flame Trailhead



WPA comfort station in poor shape - not functional



Erosion and damage to the environment



No screening to the large maintenance area at the park as you enter near

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The park is showing deterioration in its older, historic stone structures.
- The arrival to the park near the casino is underwhelming and "out of character" for this magnificent, natural park. A "sea of pavement" and views to the maintenance structures greets all visitors to the east side of the park.
- Threats to natural reserve areas including erosion of waterways, fallen limbs/trees, disc golf, and invasive species.
- Lack of directional and interpretive signage highlighting the wonderful park structures and natural features
- Most of the open space in the park is mowed, including areas that are beyond the recreational use areas.
- There is an apparent underutilization of some of the park facilities, i.e. main casino building, concession stand, Martin Lodge, etc.
- Popularity and heavy usage of the Disc Golf course is causing many environmental concerns to nature reserve zones including erosion, root/tree damage, and littering.
- The park still contains many old wooden picnic tables, and some are in very poor shape.
- There are numerous outdated play structures that do not meet current safety or accessibility codes.
- Limited staff to operate tobaggan chutes.
- Safety concerns and other issues over the management and maintenance of the Eternal Flame Trail.
- Recent damage to trees from Emerald Ash Borer.
- Trails very rarely have information providing users with trail name, map, trail length, etc.
- No bathroom provided on west section of park during the winter - no heat.
- West section of the park contains one primary vehicular entrance which is on the northern-most portion of the park, which could be an issue for emergency responders.
- "Shale Creek" portion of Chestnut Ridge Park contains significant riparian and aquatic habitats that are at risk from erosion, sedimentation, invasive species and lack of ecology-based management plans.
- Runoff from Eternal Flame parking lot flows directly onto trail.

## PARK (EAST)

- structures, picnic shelters, comfort stations, pump the Casino building. Restore historic stone houses and original park buildings;
- 3) (P: 1.0) Potential relocation of disk golf holes to
- the park which can display historic images and content of significant park assets like the Eternal Flame Falls, Hamilton Ward site, WPA structures, etc.
  - pillars at Newton Road entrance. Replace missing stones, repair loose stonework and clean and (P: 2.0) Prevent further deterioration of Gateway
- 6) (P: 10.0) Restoration of '100 steps' on east side of park would produce a new destination spot at Chestnut Ridge.
- large parking area between the casino and tennis (C: 17.0) "Soften" the appearance of the existing treatments and trees to this important visual courts by providing additional landscape
- additional signage and/or painted crosswalks at the (C: 19.0) Need better transition/connection from east section of park to west section. Provide on/off ramps to route 277.
- maintain proper safety standards and continued recreational value. Increased staff is needed to operate toboggan chutes if repaired.
- based on usage and partnership opportunities. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to explore tournament and recreation prospects.





## CHESTNUT RIDGE **MASTER PLAN**

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (C: 1,0-1,9, 3,0-15.0/ P: 4,0-9.0) Preserve and enhance original Heritage Areas, particularly the area around
- 3) (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures. (2003 Master Plan)
- (C. 2.0-2.6) Provide interpretive signage throughout prevent continuous damage to natural areas and

- 9 (A: 15.0) Upgrade toboggan chutes as necessary to
- (P: 12.0) Repurpose or restore baseball diamond





## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

## MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003) Master Plan)
- throughout the park through an expanded trail system and park signage; provide new (A: 8.0-8.10) Promote natural and cultural wayfinding system to bring awareness to existing trails and hidden park features. heritage interpretation and enjoyment
- (A: 6.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park,
- picnic tables throughout the park. Dispose of rotten and decayed tables, and repair all those · (A: 14.0) Remove all old, dilapidated wooden that can be salvaged.
- playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park. (A: 6.2) Remove the numerous old metal
- promote educational and interpretive elements native plantings to make suitable for bird and ecology. Prioritize protection and enhanceme Encourage and emphasize natural features of areas deemed appropriate for additional butterfly habitats. Native plant gardens will and opportunities to connect with park while increasing habitats for insect/bird
- Promote and expand four seasons use of the park, including winter use e.g. tobogganing, sledding, cross-country skiing, weekend sleigh

habitats.



#### NATURALIZATION CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK (EAST) PLAN

## TOTAL PARK MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 8.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 17.5 acres Wildflower Meadow: 8 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

## Natural Regeneration

neighboring forest can be planted to speed natural reforestation, and native meadow grass and wildflower seeds can be planted to replace lawn until the tree canopy matures. expand continuous forest habitat within the parks. Mowing will cease altogether, and woody plant removal will be limited to In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most cases, suggested natural regeneration areas are adjacent to existing forest, and serve to non-native species. Young native trees of species found in

mowed infrequently to prevent woody plants from establishing. flexibility for tailoring management to a particular park or zone. future, and are not intended to be reforested. They would be These are areas that may potentially see different use in the Within the "low-mow" management category, there exists

In locations with low use but high visibility, such as near park entrances; the Low-Makow Meadown treatment ran be modified by the addition of significant native wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest than simple mowing reduction.





#### RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURALIZATION

Lawn Reduction

this is high quality native woodland. Natural regeneration areas are recommended in small pockets within the park, for The majority of Chestnut Ridge Park is forested, and much of once active but now infrequently used as activity types have example where structures have been removed, or for areas changed over time. In some locations, particularly near more active areas, low mow meadow is recommended as a way of increasing habitat value without sacrificing open views or flexibility for future changes of use.

#### Tree Planting

attractions of Chestnut Ridge Park. Planting young native trees in select areas can begin a process of diversifying and adding resillence to this valuable forest area. The extensive natural forest area is one of the main

## Forest Floor Restoration

high quality habitat that has been lost to begin. The addition of signage such as "Restoration in progress" can aid in this otherwise sensitive areas will allow a process of restoring the compaction, and loss of understory vegetation due to heavy On the east side of Chestnut Ridge Park, certain areas of foot traffic. Redirecting activities away from steep or forest floor are suffering from severe soil erosion, soil

## Water Quality Protection

In some locations, streams that run through Chestnut Ridge Park are impacted by erosion. This is most noticeable at road the park. Strategic use of erosion control measures such as crossings, and along stream banks in the southwest part of check dams and streambank stabilization can help protect the health of these waterways.

## Invasive Species Management

Aggressive non-native plants are currently having a relatively low impact at Chestnut Ridge, compared with many public parks. It is imprtant to keep monitoring for changes so that the current level of quality can be protected.



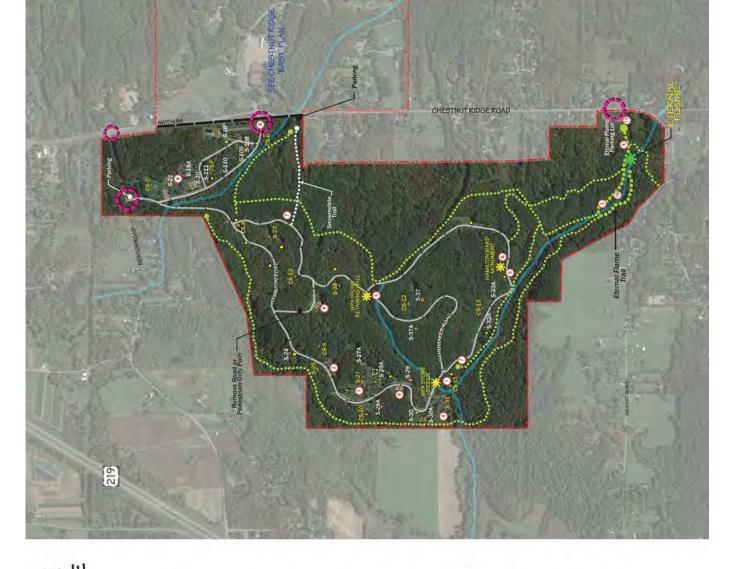
### MASTER PLAN CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK (WEST)

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ① (C. 1.0-1.9, 3.0-15.0/ Pt. 4.0-9.0) Preserve and enhance original Heritage Areas, particularly the area around the Casino building. Bestore historic stone structures, picnic shelters, comfort stations, pump houses and original park buildings.
- O (A: 17.0) Allow West section of park to become more 'natural' and passive in use. Refrain from adding new playgrounds. Remove old backstops from ball fields not in use. Allow passive mowed areas to naturalize into meadows/natural reserve areas.
- (A: 13.0) Prioritize the safety and maintenance of the main trail to the Eternal Flame. Stabilize trails and prevent erosion issues. Provide proper warnings and signage alerting users of the difficulties of the trail. Repair steps and provide possible railings in areas where applicable.
- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures, (2003 Master Plan)
- © (C 2.0-2.6) Provide interpretive signage throughout the park which can display historic images and content of significant park assets like the Eternal Flame Falls, Hamilton Ward site, WPA structures, etc.
  - (P. 3.0) Restore Hamilton Ward Memorial; Replace missing stones, repair loose stonework, and clean/repoint stonework. Provide wayfinding signage to find/highlight the historic site.
- Continue progress with expansion, enhancements, and connectivity among park trails. Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
- (C.19.0) Need better transition/connection from east section of park to west section. Provide additional signage and/or painted crosswalks at the on/off ramps to route 277.
- 9 (A: 16.0) Relocate smaller (3 piece) playground components out of West section of park. Playground features take away from the Heritage and natural scenic value of the park.
- 9) (P: 11.0) Design and construct alternative methods and wiewing points to see the waterfall and the Eternal Hame. Provide a safe route which may reduce possible risk to park users wishing to see the natural feature.







### ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

(C. 18.0) Divert runoff from primary park trails wherever possible, especially at the base of the Eternal Flame trail where the trail starts at the parking lot, install planting areas or rain gardens as a means of capturing runoff from

## MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- (A: 4.1 4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
- (A's 8.0 & 10) Promote natural and cultural heritage interpretation and enjoyment throughout the park through an expanded trail system and park signage; provide new askinfind system to bring awareness to existing trails and hidden park features.
- (A: 6.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
- (A: 14.0) Remove all old, dilapidated wooden picnic tables throughout the park. Dispose of rotten and decayed tables, and repair all those that can be salvaged.
- (A: 6.2) Remove the numerous old metal playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park.
- Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology. Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park.



## NATURALIZATION PLAN CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK (WEST)

## TOTAL PARK MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 8.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 17.5 acres Wildflower Meadow: 8 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

## Natural Regeneration

In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most cases, suggested natural regeneration areas are adjacent to existing forest, and serve to expand continuous forest habitat within the parks. Mowing will cease allogether, and woody plante removal will be limited to mon-native species. Young native trees of species found in neighboring forest can be planted to speed natural reforestation, and native meadow gass and wildflower seeds can be planted to replace lawn until the tree canopy matures.

#### 2 Low-Mow

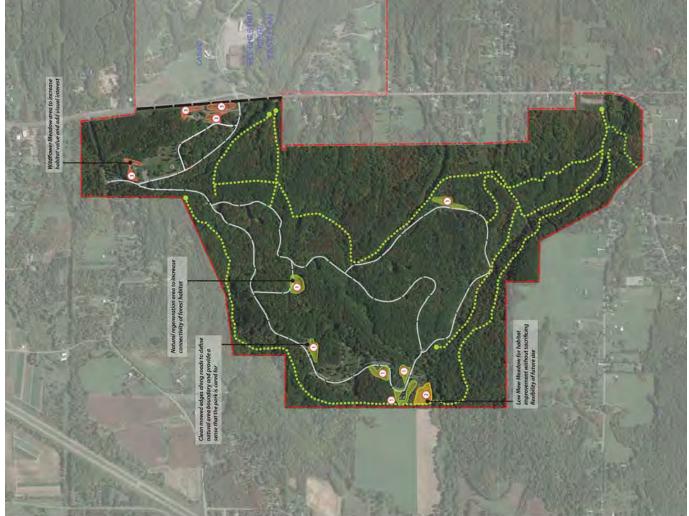
These are areas that may potentially see different use in the future, and are not intended to be reforested. They would be mowed infrequently to prevent woody plants from establishing. Within the Flow-mowf management category, there exists flexibility for tailoring management to a particular park or zone.

### Wildflower Meadow

In locations with low use but high visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the addition of significant native wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest than simple mowing reduction.







#### NATURALIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Lawn Reduction

The majority of Chestnut Ridge Park is forested, and much of this is high quality native woodland. Natural regeneration areas are recommended in small pockets within the park, for example where structures have been removed, or for areas once active but now infrequently used as activity types have changed over time.

In some locations, particularly near more active areas. Low word or Wildillower Meadow is recommended as a way of increasing habitat value without sacrificing open views or flexibility for future changes of use.

#### Free Planting

The extensive natural forest area is one of the main attactions of Chestruk Ridge Park, Planting young native trees in select areas can begin a process of diversifying and adding resilience to this valuable forest area.

## Water Quality Protection

In some locations, streams that run through Chestnut Ridge Park are impacted by erosion. This is most noticeable at road crossings, and along stream banks in the southwest part of the park. Strategic use of erosion control measures such as check dams and streambank stabilization can help protect the health of these waterways.

## invasive Species Management

Aggressive non-native plants are currently having a relatively low impact at Chestrust Ridge, compared with many public parks. It is impritant to keep monitoring for changes so that the current level of quality can be protected.



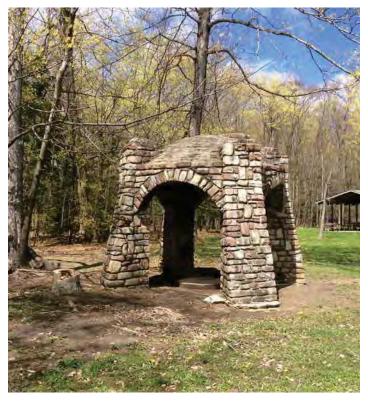
#### **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

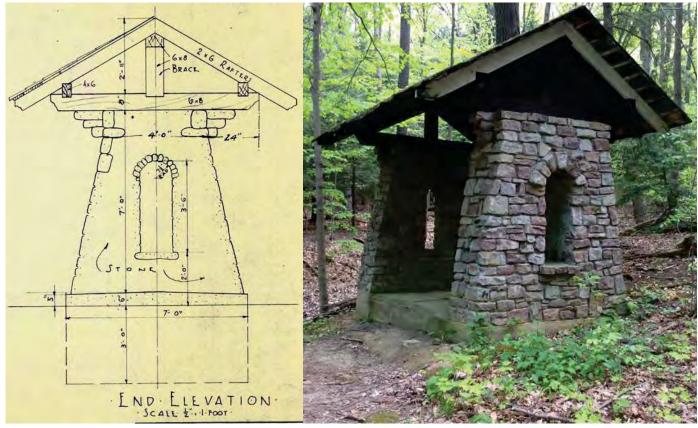
- A Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks Staff
- P Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group
- C Capital project

#### Historic Structures/WPA/Other Structures:

- (C: 1.0-1.9, 3.0-15.0/ P: 4.0-9.0) Preserve and enhance original Heritage Areas, particularly the area around the Casino building. Restore historic stone structures, picnic shelters, comfort stations, pump houses and original park buildings;
  - Restore old stone picnic shelters and structures before building new picnic shelters and structures. (Consider the heritage "value" of these old park features for future tourism and visitor appreciation). Consider the entire park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Repoint/clean stonework where needed, replace missing stones, replace or repair roofs, make improvements to concrete/asphalt floors, etc.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/ Chestnut Ridge Conservancy/PBN



Historic WPA pump shelter



Original construction drawing of a typical parks pump shelter on the left; on the right is an existing pump shelter





Hamilton Ward Memorial site



Eternal Flame

- (C: 2.0-2.6) Provide interpretive signage throughout the park which can display historic images and content of significant park assets like the Eternal Flame Falls, Hamilton Ward site, WPA structures, etc.
  - Consider restoring and utilizing the numerous small stone pump shelters throughout the park as new interpretive signage and informational kiosks that would tie into the heritage park setting.
  - Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's geological and post-settlement history, i.e. How and when the ravines and rock formations were formed?
  - How did the park get its name? When was the Village and Town first Settled?
  - What's the history behind the Eternal Flame? What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?
  - When were the WPA stone structures built?; What is the history behind the Round Barn site?; etc.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House



WPA Shelter #25

- (P: 3.0) Restore Hamilton Ward Memorial; Replace missing stones, repair loose stonework, and clean/ repoint stonework.
  - Provide wayfinding signage to find/highlight the historic site.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: PBN/ In-House
- (P: 2.0) Prevent further deterioration of Gateway pillars at Newton Road entrance: Replace missing stones, repair loose stonework and clean and repoint stonework. Improve entry with additional landscape treatment, etc.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: PBN/In-House
- (C: 20.0) Restore a single hand pump to be a fully functional water source, as a potential historic element to show respect to the history of the park and gives the youth a chance to operate a working pump.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: PBN/ In-House

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

- Investigate additional uses for Casino which may generate additional revenue;
  - Potential Visitor Information Center for Overall Erie County Park System. This could house information for all of the parks in the County. In addition, the Casino could be the "headquarters" and central administrative "clearinghouse" for picnic shelter and facility rentals/ reservations for all of the parks.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Chestnut Ridge Conservancy
- (P: 10.0) Restoration of '100 steps' on east side of park would produce a new destination spot at Chestnut Ridge.
  - With sufficient staff and funds consider potential trails and connections at base of steps to allow for future exploration of the park and its scenic assets.
  - Continue to prevent access to stairs in the short term. Preserve steps for future long-term restoration effort.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Significant investment from Chestnut Ridge Conservancy and/or other resources/grants
- (A: 1.0) Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House

#### Maintenance/Safety:

- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Consider a large portion of the bottom of the sled hill to become a low-mow area, with a nature trail connecting park users with various scenic locations of the park.
  - Establish select zones of 'no-mow' naturalized areas where excess lawn is being mowed with potential wildflowers and meadows.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Large mowed area in front of the Casino



Missing stones and damage observed at the '100 steps'



- (A: 13.0) Prioritize the safety and maintenance of the main trail to the Eternal Flame.
  - Stabilize trails and prevent erosion issues;
  - Remove fallen limbs and trees that increase risk of tripping hazards and falls for trail users trying to see the Flame.
  - Provide proper warnings and signage alerting users of the difficulties of the trail. Additional warnings and information may be needed (i.e. proper footwear, dangerous for young children, etc.)
  - Repair steps and provide possible railings (new railings to be sensitive to park aesthetics) in areas where safety and accessibility is a concern. Further studies needed to continue to properly maintain safety of the trail.
    - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 18.0) Divert runoff from primary park trails wherever possible; especially at the base of the Eternal Flame trail where the trail starts at the parking lot.
  - Install planting areas or rain gardens as a means of capturing runoff from parking area.
  - Construction of drainage swales may also be appropriate to divert water from trails.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House

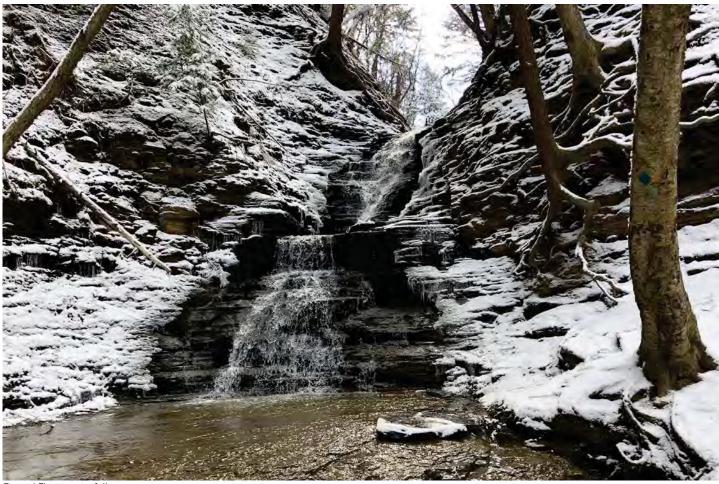


Water was pooling into the trail from the Eternal Flame parking lot



A view into the snowy woods near the Eternal Flame Trail

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK



Eternal Flame waterfall



Fallen limbs in several cases nearly prevent people from getting to the Fternal Flame

- (P: 11.0) Design and construct alternative methods and viewing points to see the waterfall and the Eternal Flame. Provide a safe route which may reduce possible risk to park users wishing to see the natural feature.
  - Provide railings directly north of the Eternal Flame falls off the trail as it meanders towards the edge of the ravine. This can add a layer of safety for those trying to see the natural attraction from the trail itself.
  - Provide new steps down areas of the ravine where it is not as steep, to bring people to a possible overlook area over the creek.
  - This can be a concept that may be applied to other parks with similar situations, like Emery Park with waterfalls that are difficult to access.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Chestnut Ridge Conservancy/ Grants



- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations can present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example, designing sports fields/ courts for greater accessibility and seating, improved accessibility/updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people with mixed abilities.

■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 17.0) "Soften" the appearance of the existing large parking area between the casino and tennis courts by providing additional landscape treatments and trees to this important visual setting.
  - Provide appropriate buffers and screening to the maintenance yard, such as landscaped berms and rain gardens. Screening the maintenance area creates a better sense of place upon arrival into the Casino/park area
  - Better organize and define the parking lot with painted spaces and driving lanes, landscaped islands, etc.
  - Prioritize methods of green infrastructure including rain gardens and other bio-retention strategies throughout the large lot. Better strategies of stormwater management will prevent contaminants and pollutants entering nearby streams/ravines.
  - Main lot at Chestnut Ridge is the priority, but other larger parking areas may also be suitable for possible rain gardens and planting medians.
  - Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements

■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House



Renovated ADA accessible comfort station - As improvements to other structures continue, ADA accessibility should be considered



Large parking area is in need of additional landscape treatment



Large parking area is in need of additional landscape treatment



Large parking area is in need of additional landscape treatment



Orienteering Trail



Commissioner's Cabin and pond

 (A: 14.0) Continue to remove all old wooden picnic tables throughout the park. Dispose of rotten and decayed tables, and repair all those that can be salvaged. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

#### Connectivity/Signage:

- (A: 7.0-7.4) Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the park at the following locations:
  - Newton Road entrance
  - Eternal Flame Falls parking lot
  - Boy Scout Trail parking lot
  - South entrance to east side of park
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Highway
- (A: 8.0-8.10) Promote natural and cultural heritage interpretation and enjoyment throughout the park through an expanded trail system and park signage; provide new wayfinding system to bring awareness to existing trails and hidden park features, e.g. the 100 stone steps, stone monument area, impressive ravines, waterfalls, Commissioner's Pond, etc.
  - Provide ADA access to these important and scenic vista locations.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- Continue progress with expansion, enhancements, and connectivity among park trails.
  - Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations (develop similar models to the one recently installed at the Eternal Flame Trailhead)
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife.
  - Design and provide distinct trail markers for better park orientation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- (C: 19.0) Improve transition/connection from east section of park to west section. Provide additional signage and/or painted crosswalks at the on/off ramps to route 277.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: NYSDOT/In-House

#### Recreation:

- (A: 6.1) Continue to improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
    - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 1.0) Potential relocation of some Disc golf holes to less environmentally sensitive areas to prevent continuous damage to natural areas and wildlife.
  - Shift some holes away from wooded/forest areas into existing mowed lawn areas. Disc golf at Ellicott Creek Park and Como Lake Park is played across their mowed lawn areas, and result in far less damage to the landscape. Work with Niagara Region Disc Golf to redesign the course into less environmentally sensitive areas. Provide alternate hole locations to reduce compaction.
  - Further studies and analysis is needed.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Niagara Region Disc Golf



Playground near the Martin Lodge



Heavy usage of the Disc Golf Course is eroding away the forest understory

- Enhance and promote fishing platform at Commissioner's Pond.
  - Provide park rules sign at pond enforcing 'catch and release only', no boats, no ice fishing, etc.
  - Fish species include; largemouth bass, sunfish, and yellow perch

Priority: MediumPartner: In-House

- (A: 6.2) Remove the numerous old metal playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park. These pieces of equipment are outdated, most are unsightly, and many do not meet any current playground safety requirements.
  - Consideration should be given to several "legacy" playground pieces, such as the shoe slide. This equipment appeared to be in good condition and could be maintained in the park as a feature or considered artwork, without a fall surface which would encourage its use as a play event.
  - Consider earthtone colors for playground equipment in the Heritage park setting rather than bright, primary colors.
  - Reuse old playground equipment by reaching out to local artists and craftsmen. The metal parts could be used as installation pieces located throughout the park. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- Promote and expand four seasons use of the park, including winter use – e.g. tobogganing, sledding, crosscountry skiing, weekend sleigh rides.
  - Investigate opportunities for flooding area for iceskating.
  - Current snowmobile trails should be properly posted to avoid future multi-use conflicts. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



Old non-compliant swingset with missing swings in the middle of the woods

- (P: 12.0) Repurpose or restore baseball diamond based on usage and partnership opportunities. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to explore tournament and recreation prospects.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Visit Buffalo Niagara/Chestnut Ridge Conservancy
- (A: 16.0) Relocate smaller (3 piece) playground components out of West section of park. Playground features take away from the Heritage and natural scenic value of the park.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



Toboggan chutes



One of the many old non-compliant metal playground pieces of equipment scattered throughout the park





Baseball diamond on the east side of the park



Playground on the west side of the park is in a somewhat random location, this area should be low-mow/no-mow (Relocate playground to active area)

#### **Environment:**

- (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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: 13.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD
- (P: 14.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements



Large wooded area behind Shelter #2

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK FINAL PLAN

while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.

- Priority: High
- Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (A: 17.0) Allow West section of park to become more 'natural' and passive in use.
  - Refrain from adding new playgrounds.
  - o Remove old backstops from ball fields not in use.
  - Allow passive mowed areas to naturalize into meadows/natural reserve areas.
  - Remaining picnic shelters on west side of park should be evaluated in terms of usage. Shelters should be removed/or repurposed if significant repairs are needed or deemed unsafe. If they are historic or considered WPA, shelters should be preserved and repaired.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

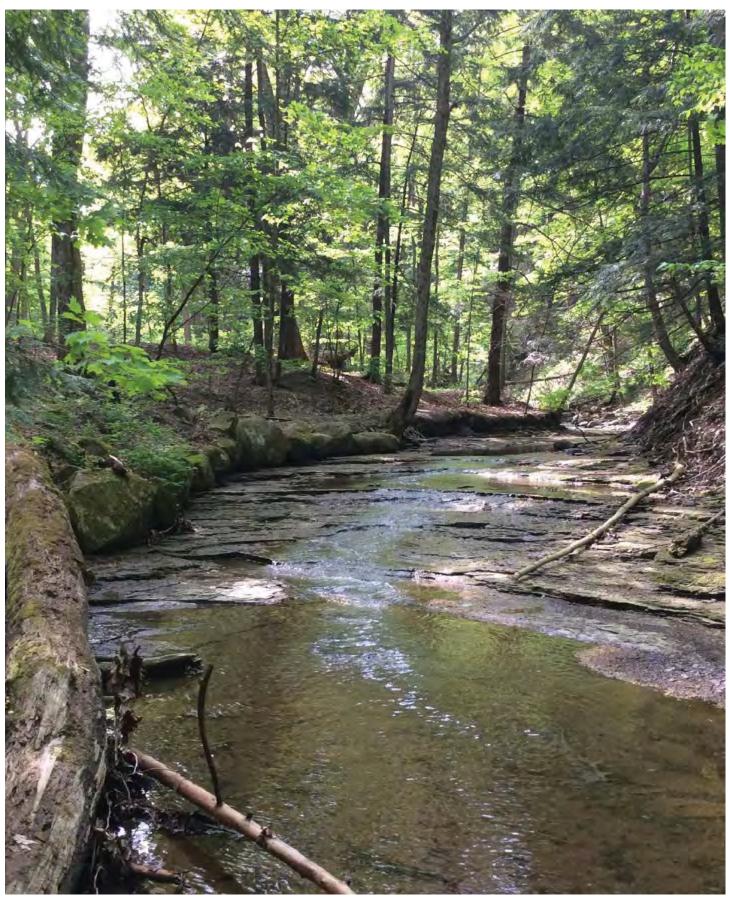


Shelter #117



WPA era pump shelter surrounded by low-mow area





 $\textit{View down the Creek which flows along the Orienteering Trail, down through the \textit{Eternal Flame}\\$ 

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	2.0	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А	3.1	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
A	3.3		Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
A	4.1	throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	6.1	Continue to improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	11.0	Improve safety on pedestrian bridge near Commissioners Cabin	Review railing condition to determine if they can be repaired or require replacement	High	1-2 Years	In-House
A	13.0	main trail to the Eternal Flame. Stabilize	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements and repairs to trail during a routine basis	High	Ongoing	In-House
С	1.2	Shelter #7 - Posts have rot, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	1-2 Years	\$10,000

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	1.9	Shelter #12 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.		1-2 Years	\$22,000
Р	1.0	Reconfigure the disc golf route to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.	Coordinate with Niagara Region Disc Golf regarding a new course layout. Accommodate alternative hole positions to reduce compaction / erosion from repetitive foot traffic.	High	1-2 Years	\$15,200
Р	13.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	14.0	Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	4.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time.	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	5.0	Improve aesthetics along east entrance driveway, between Casino and parking lot through additional tree plantings.	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	7.0	Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the park at the following locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
A	7.1	Newton Road entrance	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.2	Eternal Flame Falls parking lot	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	7.3	Boy Scout Trail parking lot	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	7.4	South entrance to east side of park	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	8.0	Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.1	Boy Scout Trail, only maps	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.10	XC Ski Outer Loop, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	8.2	Eternal Flame Falls Trail, only maps	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.3	Orienteering Trail, only maps	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.4	Reservoir Trail, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.5	Seufert Trail, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.6	Snowmobile Trail, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	8.7	Ward Hill Trail, only maps	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



VOLUME 2

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	8.8	Ward Hill Walkway, maps	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.9	XC Ski Inner Loop, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	12.0	Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А		Continue to remove all old wooden picnic tables throughout the park. Dispose of rotten and decayed tables, and repair all those that can be salvaged.	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
А	17.0	Allow West section of park to become more 'natural' and passive in use.	Educate parks staff on procedures and improvements	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
С	1.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following picnic shelters:	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	1.1	Shelter #4 - Replace roof and repair gable ends	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.3	Shelter #14 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.4	Shelter #19A - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.5	Shelter #20 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.6	Shelter #24 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.7	Shelter #33A - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.8	Shelter #37 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	I	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Shelter #13. Replace roof.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.0	Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Comfort Station #7. Roof repairs required	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	5.0	Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Comfort Station #12. Replace roof and fascia boards, repair broken windows.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$12,500
С	16.0	Improve safety and accessibility on pedestrian bridge near Shelter #31. Construct railings and approach guiderails, provide a level transition to bridge approach. Potentially replace entire bridge with accessible structure.	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$30,000
С	18.0	wherever possible; especially at the base of	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct or have parks staff to implement improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
Р	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of Gateway pillars at Newton Road entrance. Replace missing stones, repair loose stonework and clean and repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$6,000
Р	11.0	the Eternal Flame. Provide a safe route	Significant investment from Chestnut Ridge Conservancy and/or other grants/resources, increased staff would be needed.	Medium	6-10 Years	\$200,000
А	1.0	Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places	Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer assigned to Erie County to complete the required nomination forms and submit to a State review board.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А	3.2		Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
А	6.2	Improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		Reduce damage to turf areas and reduce erosion by providing a resilient surface, such as crushed stone or millings at each shelter location.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Low	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А		Relocate smaller (3 piece) playground components out of West section of park.	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
С	2.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
С	2.1	Geological history	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.2	Eternal Flame Falls	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.3	Hamilton Ward	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.4	Round Barn Site	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.5	100 Stone Steps	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.6	History of WPA structures	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С		Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Old Comfort Station "L" (Note this comfort station is located near shelter #33A, as there are two comfort stations numbered with 13). Replace roof and fascia boards, repair broken windows and doors.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$12,500

2.2 CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	7.0		Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	8.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #14, east of MacKinnon Lodge, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	9.0		Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	10.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #58, near Ward Hill Trailhead, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	11.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #55, near Hamilton Ward memorial, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	12.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #51, east of Shelter #37, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	13.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #44, east of Shelter #38, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	14.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era stone shed near fishing pier parking lot, replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	15.0	Prevent deterioration of Comfort Station #2. Clean, re-point and paint exterior CMU walls.		Low	6-10 Years	\$7,500
С	170	screening at the maintenance facility and storage yard. Remove a portion of pavement	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,500
С	l	section of park to west section. Provide additional signage and/or painted crosswalks at the on/off ramps to route 277.	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct or have parks staff to implement improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



VOLUME 2

#### **CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	20.0	Restore a single pump shelter to be a fully functional water source, as a potential park destination and to show respect to the history of the park.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	3-5 Years	Additional Studies Needed
Р	3.0		Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р		IINCINARATOR WAST OF SHAITAR # 74 RANAIR INNSA	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$12,500
Р	5.0	Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Comfort Station #1. Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р			Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$9,000
Р	7.0		Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$9,000
Р			Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$9,000
Р			Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$25,000
Р	10.0	park	Significant investment from Chestnut Ridge Conservancy and/or other grants/resources, increased staff would be needed.	Low	6-10 Years	Partner
Р	12.0	· · ·	Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.

# SCHEMATIC PLAN CHESTNUT RIDGE PARK - MAIN PARKING LOT



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

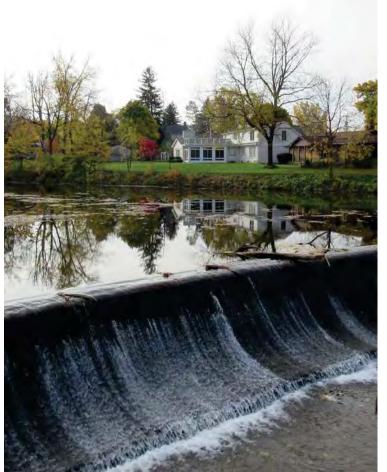
2.3 COMO LAKE PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **COMO LAKE PARK**

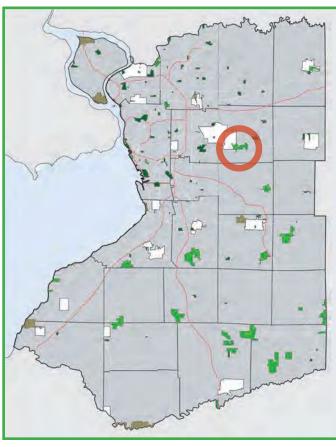
#### **DESCRIPTION**

Como Lake Park is a 524-acre park facility located in both the Village and Town of Lancaster, approximately 14 miles east of downtown Buffalo. The park was among the first four parks acquired by the County in 1926, and lies along the banks of Cayuga Creek. The park includes a dam and lake at its western end, with natural islands, extensive picnic grounds, play fields and courts, skating rink, sledding hill and nature trails. This Heritage park includes numerous old stone park structures that continue to enjoy heavy use by both local residents and those coming out from the urban areas to enjoy a slice of nature. In contrast to much of the manicured older park areas and picnic groves, the eastern-most section of Como Lake Park (east of Bowen Road) is an undeveloped natural zone straddling Cayuga Creek.

The park in recent years has continued to see increased popularity for its location among dense residential areas. The park has added an 18-hole Disc golf course (2007) and a multi-generational fitness station, diversifying its attractions and unique role within the regional park context.



Como Lake



Park Location Map: Como Lake Park is located in both the Town and Village of Lancaster with several entrances within the community

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and enhance Heritage areas and special park features, including; Repoint/clean stonework where needed, replace missing stones, replace or repair roofs, make improvements to concrete/asphalt floors, etc. to all historic structures and facilities.
- Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting: Create and provide meadows and wildflower areas in high visibility areas to produce a more natural park landscape.
- Improve pedestrian safety and provide improvements/upgrades to pedestrian bridges crossings onto the islands. Improve bridges to be ADA compliant if possible and repair missing/ broken rails.

2.3 COMO LAKE PARK FINAL PLAN

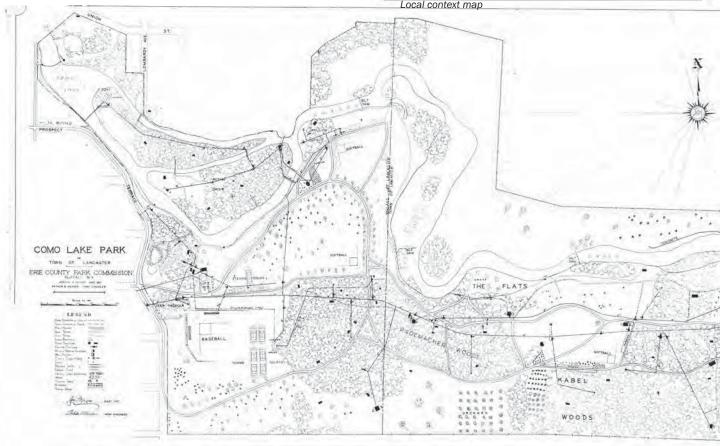
#### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Como Lake Park was originally developed as a Village of Lancaster Municipal Park beginning in 1923. The original acquisition totaled 120 acres, with later acquisitions adding an additional 404 acres. The Park was originally developed as a water-oriented park to serve the densely populated area along Broadway from Buffalo to the Villages of Depew and Lancaster. In fact, boating was once a popular activity in the lake and around the islands. Archived plans show that a magnificent "Bath House" facility was designed and proposed to be built on one of the islands, but apparently never came to fruition. Original activities also included a small zoo. WPA crews handled much of the physical development of the park. WPA crews built many structures and features of the park which still stand today including numerous picnic shelters and the old stone Lighthouse which overlooks the dam.

#### LOCAL CONTEXT

Como Lake Park is a well-known and integral part of the historic Village of Lancaster. The park sits on the southeast side of the Village, and extends westerly along the Cayuga Creek corridor. Lake Avenue forms the park's western edge, while Bowen Road bisects the park and forms the boundary between the developed older section from the undeveloped section of the park at the eastern end. Development patterns





1940s master plan of the park



have shifted as new subdivisions are constructed to the south of the park off of William Street. Much of the area to the east of the park is still rural in nature, but Como Park remains one of the most heavily used parks in the system.

#### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

This large multi-purpose heritage park once provided most all recreational amenities for the Town and Village of Lancaster, as well as the Village of Depew. It also once served as a magnet for Buffalo residents, who could easily reach the park via public transportation. More recently, Lancaster has become one of Western New York's fastest growing suburban communities, spreading development into eastern areas beyond the Park, where farms once dominated the landscape. This recent surge in population growth has also come with the demand for expanded recreational facilities. The Town and Village have looked to expand their recreational offerings to provide many new opportunities to the area residents, and thus lessened the need for Como Park to provide large fields for organized sports.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Como Lake park consists of low-lying terrain, characterized by moisture-loving woodland communities and floodplain wetlands. Much of the park has traditionally been kept as mowed lawns, but Parks staff have already begun to reduce the area mowed, in an effort to increase habitat value and redirect resources toward other maintenance needs. There is significant acreage remaining that could be converted to regenerated forest or wildflower meadows.

Cayuga Creek is both a major asset and an area of concern in Como Lake Park. The creek provides wildlife habitat and interest for park users, but is subject to severe seasonal flooding and "flashiness," or rapidly fluctuating stream flow. Resulting rapid bank erosion reduces habitat value, visitor safety, and enjoyment. These conditions also contribute to rapid sedimentation of the man-made lake at the northwest corner of the park. The lake must be dredged periodically to prevent it from filling in entirely. While it is not under consideration at this time, in the long term interest may develop in removing the dam in order to improve stream habitat connectivity and provide a new type of recreational opportunity.

Invasive plant species are a serious concern within the park, particularly along parts of the stream bank. Large areas of Japanese Knotweed are particularly prominent along parts of the islands, in areas that are well used by visitors.

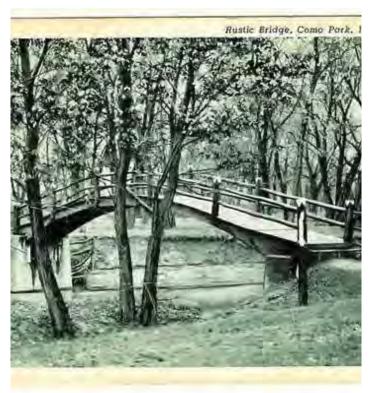
Because Ash species are more common in low-lying areas like Como Lake Park, the property will likely be more significantly impacted by the Emerald Ash Borer than some other parks in the system. This means large changes will come to the forested parts of the park in the coming years. Beginning to plant new

native trees now can reduce the time until a new generation of canopy trees can take over from those that will be lost.

#### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / **IMPROVEMENTS**

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Como Lake Park totaled \$902,711. Recent projects included:

- Comfort Station D Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Comfort Station E New glass block installed, ceiling replacement, and interior painting
- Shelter #5 Replaced roof
- Shelter #9 Repaired support posts, constructed new plywood ceiling
- Shelter #13 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #14 New parking area
- Shelter #17 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #18 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #19 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #29 New shelter constructed
- Shelter #32 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #33 Replaced roof and fascia boards
- Shelter #39 Replaced roof
- Shelter #49 New parking area
- Shelter #50 New parking area
- Shelter #56 Replaced roof
- Shelter #58 Replaced roof, concrete floor and constructed new parking area



Old photograph of one of the pedestrian bridges on the islands

2.3 COMO LAKE PARK FINAL PLAN

- New guardrail installed along main park road curve.
- Installed new multi-generational exercise recreation area.
- Installed new steel chain link fence on the slope of the sledding hill to separate children sledding from those walking back up to the top of the hill, installed lights.
- Alternative hold locations installed for Disc Golf holes (2018).
- Sealed and striped tennis courts, added pickle ball striping (2018).
- Sealed and striped basketball courts (2018).

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The park is showing deterioration in its older, historic stone structures.
- The interior of the park has many unattractive and out of character large paved areas, indicating an era of more heavy use of certain facilities.
- Vehicular circulation and park signage is very confusing.
- Health of Como Lake/the Dam continues to be an issue.
   Build-up of silt and debris is producing more islands, thus reducing the health and aesthetic of the lake.
- There is a lack of directional and interpretive signage highlighting the wonderful park structures and natural features.
- Most of the open space in the park is mowed, including areas that are beyond the recreational use areas.
- There is an apparent underutilization of some of the park facilities.
- There is a lack of connection/linkage to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Some play structures are starting to become outdated, most are from the late 90's/early 2000's.
- Park maps on website are outdated and do not show some amenities.
- Many shelters are showing general wear in their roofing and interior columns/face boards. Some shelters appear to be leaning.
- Cayuga Creek is rapidly eroding the streambank in certain areas of the park resulting in loss of land, and trees that are falling into the water.
- Lack of definition and organization of parking areas, especially the lot south of the Casino.



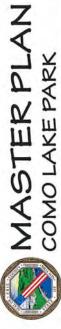
Large asphalt parking lot in front of the skating area

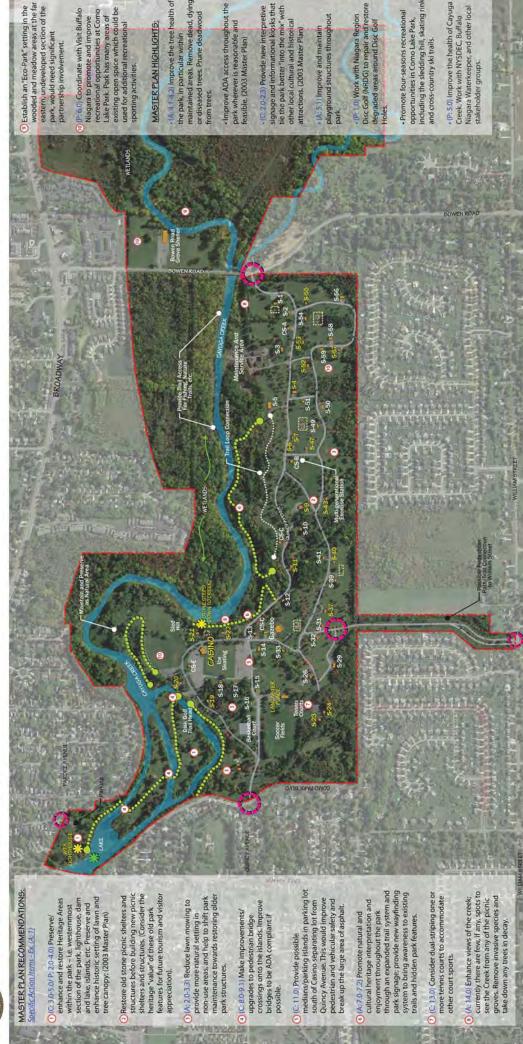


The shoreline continues to suffer from erosion



Many WPA shelters are in need of repairs and preservation









V2-72

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

## NATURALIZATION PLAN COMO LAKE PARK

## MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 26.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 8.5 acres Wildflower Meadow: 6 acres Total: ~41 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Natural Regeneration

wildflower seeds can be planted to replace lawn until the tree canopy regeneration areas are adjacent to cease altogether, and woody plant neighboring forest can be planted to speed natural reforestation, and In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most existing forest, and serve to expand continuous forest habitat non-native species. Young native within the parks. Mowing will removal will be limited to native meadow grass and cases, suggested natural trees of species found in

the "low-mow" management category, there exists flexibility for These are areas that may potentially see different use in the reforested. They would be mowed future, and are not intended to be plants from establishing. Within infrequently to prevent woody tailoring management to a particular park or zone.

visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the In locations with low use but high wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest than simple mowing reduction. addition of significant native 3 Wildflower Meadow

in order to help protect the health of Cayuga Creek.

important to address these invasions

increasing bank erosion. It is

---- Park Boundary Existing Trail

Low-Mow Meadow Area

0

Nature Trail

 Wildflower Meadow Area (1) Natural Regen Legend:

established along parts of the stream



icent to established woods, and provide an extension of the

cted to be lost to the Erne

### 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

### Historic Structures/WPA/Other Structures:

- (C: 3.0-5.0/ P: 2.0-4.0) Preserve/enhance and restore Heritage Areas within the park - i.e. westernmost section of the park, lighthouse, dam and lake, islands, etc. Preserve and enhance historic setting of lawn and tree canopy; (2003 Master Plan)
  - Restore old stone picnic shelters and structures before building new picnic shelters and structures. (Consider the heritage "value" of these old park features for future tourism and visitor appreciation). There are too many varied picnic structures throughout the park. Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places. (2003 Master Plan)
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/PBN



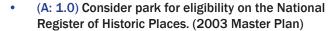
Historic staircase down to the Creek



Historic WPA Lighthouse



Stonework is starting to break apart at many shelters and structures



■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 12.0) Restore/reconstruct former structure at the west tip of the islands (currently has wood deck cover) as park pavilion or bandshell, etc.
  - Structure has a great view at the base of the lake
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- Consider removal of future shelters to include the demolition of the shelter as well as associated asphalt drive, foundation, and parking area.
  - Many shelters that have been removed have the old asphalt drive, parking area, and foundation still in place.
  - Allow area to renaturalize and revert back to the natural landscape.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Foundation from old boat house



Ball field and old backstop could have potential for future recreational opportunities



Concrete foundation remains from removed structure



### Maintenance/Safety:

- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures.
  - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 8.0-9.1) Make improvements/upgrades to pedestrian bridge crossings onto the islands.
  - Improve bridges to be ADA compliant if possible.
  - Repair missing/broken rails 0
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Consultant/Contractor

- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Renovations present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example, designing sports fields and courts for greater accessibility and seating, improved accessibility/updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people with mixed abilities.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House



Existing pedestrian bridge over the Creek

- (C: 11.0) Provide medians/parking islands in parking lot south of Casino separating lot from Quincy Avenue. This would improve pedestrian and vehicular safety and break up the large area of asphalt.
  - Construct a planted berm or rain garden, including evergreens, native trees, and shrubs.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/Contractor/In-House

### Connectivity/Signage:

- (C: 2.0-2.3) Provide new interpretive signage and informational kiosks that tie the park better "into the mix" with other local cultural and historical attractions. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park and area's history, i.e. When was the Village and Town first Settled?; What's the history behind the Lighthouse and Dam? What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?; When were the old stone structures built?; (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (A: 6.0-6.3) Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the park at the following locations:
  - o Bowen Road
  - Pardee Avenue
  - North Bridge

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Highway

 (A: 7.0-7.2) Promote natural and cultural heritage interpretation and enjoyment throughout the park through an expanded trail system and park signage; provide new wayfinding system to bring awareness to existing trails and hidden park features

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 1.0-1.2) Establish enhanced gateways for the park at the following locations:
  - William Street
  - Como Lake Boulevard

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House



Wayfinding signage



- Continue progress with expansion, enhancements, and connectivity among park trails.
  - Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife.
  - Design and provide distinct trail markers for better park orientation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- (A: 9.0-9.5) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - Intersection of Lake Avenue and Como Park Boulevard
  - Intersection of William Street and Lake Avenue 0
  - Intersection of William Street and Bowen Road 0
  - Intersection of Broadway and Bowen Road
  - Intersection of Broadway and Lake Avenue 0
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Orienteering Trailhead



Park signage off of Bowen Road

 (A: 11.0) Improve park circulation through consolidation of roadways and path system; Consider a new roundabout feature to better "organize" the park roadways where the southern access drive meets the internal road network. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

### Recreation:

- (A: 5.0) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 1.0) Work with Niagara Region Disc Golf (NRDG) to repair and restore degraded areas around Disc Golf Holes.
  - Explore the possibility of updating hole locations, such that they can be easily pulled up from their location and moved to a different nearby area. (Like on a typical golf course)

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: Niagara Region Disc Golf

- Establish clear partnership responsibilities and duties pertaining to future dog park areas and other recreational proposals within the park.
  - Coordinate with Lancaster Unleashed to adhere to partnership policy, locate a sensible location for a dog park which would not be

environmentally detrimental and adequate infrastructure exists (or would be economically feasible to provide).

- Priority: High
- Partner: Lancaster Unleashed/Usergroups
- (P: 6.0) Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to promote and improve recreational opportunities at Como Lake Park.
  - Park has many areas of existing open space which could be used for additional recreational sporting activities.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Visit Buffalo Niagara/Lancaster Recreation



Recently installed multi-generational fitness area



Large playground featured on east side of park



- (A: 5.1) Improve playground facilities throughout the park.
  - Remove and replace oldest structures on-site. Consider earthtone colors in the Heritage park setting rather than bright, primary colors (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House

- (A: 12.0) Remove old backstop in large mowed area adjacent to the sled hill.
  - This can be a potential area for soccer, lacrosse, or other activities like a potential bark park, etc. in response to the recreational trends of the community.
  - This mowed area is in close proximity to parking and restrooms.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: VBN/Lancaster Recreation

- Enhance fishing access and opportunities along Cayuga Creek. This includes establishing strategically placed fishing platforms or stone areas, as well as paths to multiple areas of the Creek for access.
  - The DEC annually stocks about 3,000 keepersized rainbow trout in early April. Trout are stocked in 5 locations from Como Lake to the pavilion on Bowen Road.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/NYSDEC

- Consider additional recreational opportunities such as paddle boats or kayak uses in the lake. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Private Businesses

Newly striped tennis courts

Promote and expand four-seasons recreational opportunities in Como Lake Park, including the sledding hill, skating rink and cross-country ski trails.

> ■ Priority: Low ■ Partner: In-House

(C: 14.0) Explore the potential for transforming one of the basketball courts into a 'multi-purpose court'. Court could accommodate several sports and become a destination for the youth of the neighborhood.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: VBN/In-House



Foot traffic and heavy usage at Disc Golf hole is causing damage to the surrounding landscape



Basketball courts

### **Environment:**

- (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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: 10.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
  - The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (P: 11.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD
- (P: 7.0) Continue to improve the health of Como Lake because of continued accumulation of debris and silt. The lake is an important cultural/environmental landmark in Lancaster and the community strongly supports the on-going efforts to see the lake revitalized.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Grants/Other Resources

- Maintain and enhance natural wooded buffers along perimeter; This will offer more protection for the natural open space as more and more houses are built around the park. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 13.0) Preserve and enhance the environmental character of the islands at Como.
  - Create low-mow/meadow areas where appropriate;
  - Define trail surface on islands;
  - Repair and improve character of the pedestrian bridges;
  - Remove invasive species from shoreline areas.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: NYSDEC/ECSWD
- (A: 14.0) Enhance views of the creek; currently there are few, if any, spots to see the Creek from any of the picnic groves. Remove invasive species and take down any trees in decay.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/ECSWD
- (C: 15.0) Promote the expansion of the existing "Cayuga Creek Nature Trail" system, to continue along the Creek bank in both directions, with important signage and connections to other park attractions and picnic groves.
  - Provide ADA access to scenic creek vista locations. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Better define trails along Cayuga Creek with enhancements including wayfinding signage, viewing areas, interpretive signage, and benches.
  - Provide distinct trailheads with updated map information and trail descriptions.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House/Consultant



Como Lake



- (P: 8.0) Establish an "Eco-Park" setting in the wooded and meadow areas at the far eastern, undeveloped section of the park, would need significant partnership involvement; i.e. NYS DEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, local agencies.
  - Provide a pedestrian bridge crossing over the Creek
  - Establish a unique system of nature trails to view an impressive naturalization area of meadows and young woodlands. This would provide a new recreational and educational opportunity to the residents in the area, and provide enhanced protected habitat for wildlife.
  - Parking would initially be shared with the Bowen Road Picnic Grove.
  - Future developments could include a small nature interpretive/educational facility with meeting room.
  - New native plantings could be introduced to strengthen perimeter buffers, improve creek shoreline conditions, and enhance wildlife habitat.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- (P: 5.0) Improve the health of Cayuga Creek. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the creek and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper



Existing conditions on one of the islands at Como



Significant erosion of the bank pictured here

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	l	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А	3.1	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А	3.3	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А	4.1	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	5.0	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
С	3.1	Shelter #7 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$17,500
С		Shelter #55 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$17,500
С	3.9	Shelter #47 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$20,000
С	4.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era structure "Lancaster Place". Repair slab foundation near women's restroom.	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action. Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	1-2 Years	\$33,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	6.1	Shelter #10 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С		Shelter #13 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$7,500
С	1	Improve pedestrian safety on the Middle Bridge	Engage contractor to perform repairs to undermined bridge approach slab.	High	1-2 Years	\$25,000
Р		Reconfigure the disc golf route to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.	Coordinate with Niagara Region Disc Golf regarding a new course layout. Accommodate alternative hole positions to reduce compaction / erosion from repetitive foot traffic.	High	1-2 Years	\$15,200
Р	10.0	Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	11.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	4.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	6.0	Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the park at the following locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	6.1	Bowen Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
A	6.2	Pardee Avenue	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	6.3	North Bridge	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	1	Cayuga Creek Nature Trail, maps and trail markers	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Overall park maps showing drives, amenities and shelter locations	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels and maps.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	ı	Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	13.0	Preserve and enhance the environmental character of the islands at Como. Create low-mow/meadow areas where appropriate; Define trail surface on islands;	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements and enhancements	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
С		Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters:	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	3.11	Shelter #57 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С		Unnamed Shelter near garage - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.2	Shelter #8 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.3	Shelter #11 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.4	Shelter #20 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.5	Shelter #21 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.6	Shelter #22 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.7	Shelter #37 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



VOLUME 2

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	3.8	Shelter #40 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	5.0	Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Comfort Station "C". Replace roof.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$32,000
С	6.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following picnic shelters:	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	6.3	Shelter #15 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	6.4	ľ	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	Medium	3-5 Years	\$17,500
С	8.0	Improve pedestrian safety on the North Bridge	Engage a consultant to determine if existing railings can be modified to be brought into compliance, or if a new railing system is required.	Medium	3-5 Years	\$9,200
С	9.0	Improve pedestrian safety on the Middle Bridge	Engage a consultant to determine if existing railings can be modified to be brought into compliance, or if a new railing system is required.	Medium	3-5 Years	\$9,200
С	10.0	Improve pedestrian safety adjacent the Casino, replace areas of deteriorating concrete pavement.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$5,250
Р	3.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era structure "Lancaster Place". Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN		3-5 Years	\$33,000
Р	7.0		Coordinate with local stakeholders and agencies for funding and resources	Medium	Ongoing	Partner
Р	9.0	Enhance fishing access and opportunities along Cayuga Creek. This includes establishing strategically placed fishing platforms or stone areas, as well as paths to multiple areas of the Creek for access.		Medium	3-5 Years	Partner In-House

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places	Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer assigned to Erie County to complete the required nomination forms and submit to a State review board.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А		Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
A	ı	Continue to improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А	8.0	Reduce damage to turf areas and reduce erosion by providing a resilient surface, such as crushed stone or millings at each shelter location.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Low	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	ı	Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	9.1	Intersection of Lake Avenue and Como Park Boulevard	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	9.2	Intersection of William Street and Lake Avenue	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	9.3	Intersection of William Street and Bowen Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	9.4	Bowen Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
A		Avenue	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	11.0	Improve park circulation through consolidation of roadways and path system; Consider a new roundabout feature to better "organize" the park roadways where the southern access drive meets the internal road network.	Coordination between Parks and DPW	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	12.0	Remove old backstop in large mowed area adjacent to the sled hill. This can be a potential area for soccer, lacrosse, or other activities, etc.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	14.0	Enhance views of the creek; currently there are few, if any, spots to see the Creek from any of the picnic groves. Remove invasive species and take down any trees in decay.	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements and enhancements	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
С	1.0	the park at the following locations:	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	Х
С	1.1		Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	1.2		Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С		park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
С	2.1	_	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

### **COMO LAKE PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	2.2	Flora/fauna on the Bowen Grove portion of the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.3	History of WPA structures	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	7.0	Improve pedestrian safety on the pedestrian bridge near Shelter #23.	Replace bridge in its entirety	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,500
С	11.0	Enhance pedestrian/vehicular safety along Quincy Ave. Remove a portion of pavement between the drive and parking lot (approximately 420-feet by 20-feet) and construct a planted berm or rain garden, including evergreens, native trees and shrubs.	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$85,000
С	1	Restore/reconstruct former structure at the west tip of the islands (currently has wood deck cover) as park pavilion or bandshell, etc.	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
С	14.0	Explore the potential for transforming one of the basketball courts into a 'multi-purpose court'.	Engage consultant to design improvements and engage contractor to construct improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	1 15 ()	Promote the expansion of the existing "Cayuga Creek Nature Trail" system, to continue along the Creek bank in both directions, with important signage and connections to other park attractions and picnic groves.		Low	6-10 Years	\$10,000
Р	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters:	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$
Р	2.1	Shelter #11 - Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	22	Shelter #20 - Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	0.2	Unnamed Shelter near garage - Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$16,000
Р	4.0	Prevent further deterioration on WPA Era Comfort Station "C". Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$32,000
Р	5.0	Cayuga Creek through stream bank stabilization, erosion	Coordinate and partner with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper and NYSDEC to develop projects similar to the Living Shoreline project in Ellicott Creek Park	Low	Ongoing	\$75,000
Р	6.0	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to promote and improve recreational opportunities at Como Lake Park.	Low	6-10 Years	Partner
Р	8.0	the wooded and meadow areas	Significant partnership involvement; i.e. NYS DEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, local agencies.	Low	6-10 Years	\$100,000

# SCHEMATIC PLAN COMO LAKE PARK - CASINO PARKING LOT

DSSIBLE FORMAL DROPOFF CASINO ICE SKATING

25 00 S

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

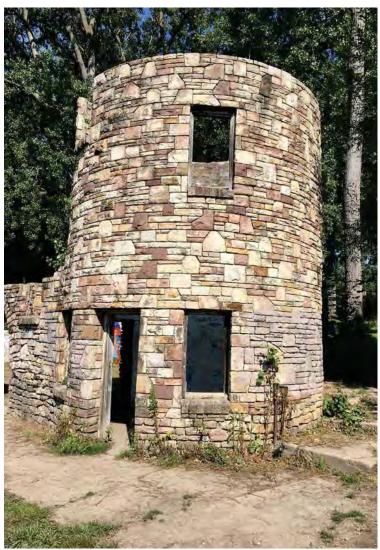
THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

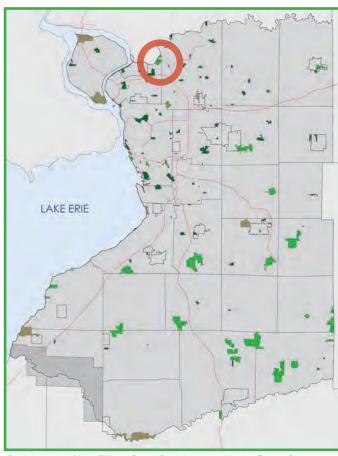
### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

At 165 acres, Ellicott Creek Park is one of the original Heritage parks in the County system, and is entirely within an urban environment setting. The park is centrally located and easily accessed by residents of Tonawanda, Amherst, Buffalo, and North Tonawanda (Niagara County), and is also a destination along area bike routes, including the Ellicott Creek Bike Path (via the Town of Amherst), and Erie Canalway Trail which connects with the Shoreline Trail. It is one of the four oldest parks in the system, acquired by the County in 1925 due to its attractive landscape setting between Ellicott Creek and the Erie Canal (Tonawanda Creek). This beautiful Heritage park is noted for its impressive collection of old stone structures and waterfront setting. Ellicott Creek Park is generally flat, which was considered ideal for the development of many field sports and active recreation, such as tennis and ice-skating. The Park is bisected by a major floodway corridor (spillway flume) between the two Creeks.



WPA-era Boathouse Ruins



Park Location Map: Ellicott Creek Park is located in the Town of Tonawanda

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and enhance Heritage areas and special park features, including; Repoint/clean stonework where needed, replace missing stones, replace or repair roofs, make improvements to concrete/asphalt floors, etc. to all historic structures and facilities.
- Reduce lawn mowing in passive recreational areas, provide meadows and wildflowers to enhance natural character of park.
- Coordinate with Friends of Ellicott Island Bark Park to maintain and upgrade amenities on Ellicott Island, as well as protecting and enhancing sensitive shoreline conditions.

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

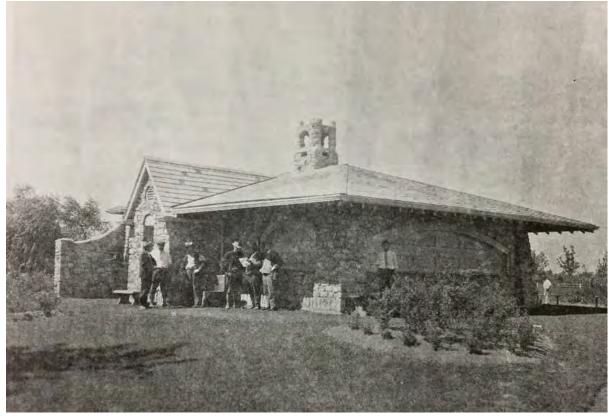
### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

No park in the system is more connected to the region's historical development than Ellicott Creek Park. It was constructed along the banks of the historic Erie Canal. The majority of the original 40 acres was acquired through purchasing private land and County tax foreclosures (1936 & 1937). During the 1930s, WPA crews built the original stone structures and park features. Ellicott Island, A.K.A. "Island at Three-mile Bend" was constructed to make the creek more navigable and divert canal traffic. Charles Ellicott, a landscape architect, heavily influenced the island in the design process. The residential building boom of the 1930s and 1940s established Ellicott Creek Park as a mecca for boaters and family picnics.

The more recent decades of the 1970s, 80s and early 90s were not overly positive for Ellicott Creek Park. These were years of neglect and overgrowth, which tended to attract undesirable activities into the park. This led to a "less-than-positive" reputation for the park that was not very attractive for family picnics or conducive for comfortable outings. However, beginning in the mid and late 1990s, Ellicott Creek Park saw a major resurgence in County attention, maintenance and care that has regained its positive standing with the community. The park, once again, enjoys large crowds of people utilizing its many diverse recreational amenities.

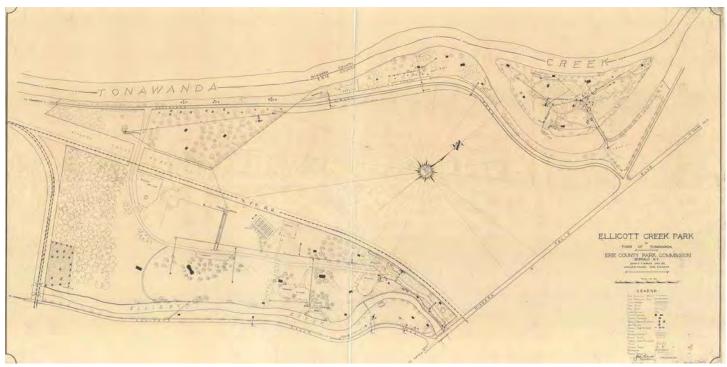


Ellicott Island Boathouse



Ellicott Island WPA Concession Stand





1940's master plan



2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Ellicott Creek Park is located in the northwest corner of Erie County along the shore of Tonawanda Creek, which also forms the boundary line with Niagara County. The park is entirely within an urban environment. The Park is strategically located between the Towns of Tonawanda, Amherst and City of North Tonawanda, and is less than 2 miles from the Towns of Wheatfield and Pendleton, as well as the City of Tonawanda. The University at Buffalo North Campus is situated only a few miles to the east, and is linked to the Park via the Ellicott Creek Bike Path (7.2 miles).

The area south of Ellicott Creek Park is heavily populated and densely developed, including the mega-commercial developments along busy Niagara Falls Boulevard, while the area to the north of the park into Niagara County continues to grow with more residential and commercial development. Convenient access is provided to the park via numerous area roadways, with Niagara Falls Boulevard providing a direct linkage to the I-290 (Youngman Expressway), less than 2 miles south of the park. Residents of the Village of Kenmore and City of Buffalo can also easily utilize public transportation routes to access the Park. Creekside Drive cuts through the park along the Canal edge, while Ellicott Creek Road forms the southern border of the park

Most of Ellicott Creek Park lies within the Town of Tonawanda, with a small portion lying within the Town of Amherst. North Tonawanda (Niagara County) lies on the opposite side of the Tonawanda Creek that forms the western/northern boundary of the Park.



Local context map



Snow covered Ellicott Island





Area around Disc Golf hole has reverted to bare dirt, because of excessive foot traffic and use



Ellicott Creek with its expanse of open lawn areas is a popular destination for recreational activities

### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

Ellicott Creek Park has many diverse recreational facilities, and tends to be many things to many people. It offers both active and passive recreation opportunities. While beginning as more of a passive park with a boating and water-based theme, active recreational facilities were added to the park as the demand for these facilities grew strong. At one point, Ellicott Creek Park was one of the only parks of its kind around the area, and thus served the wholesale recreational needs of the public. However, the area surrounding the park has grown tremendously since the 1920s, and over the years, Town parks began to be added and began to take the active recreational pressure away from Ellicott Creek Park. This is particularly true with Brighton Park, a Town of Tonawanda park that is located less than a mile away, and offers numerous recreational facilities. Many other Tonawanda and Amherst Town parks also provide additional recreational amenities.

In 2010 the Niagara Region Disk Golf Association constructed an 18-hold disk golf course. In the last few years one of the tennis courts have recently been turned into a pickleball court, a kayak launch has been installed, and the India Association finished plans for a regulation Cricket Pitch on a former softball field within the park. Ellicott Creek Park has further separated itself from many of the County parks for the diverse amount of recreational amenities.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Ellicott Creek Park is characterized by low-lying floodplain landscapes. It is quite "urban" in character, with little significant natural area. It is important to keep open areas for active recreation. Some parts of the park are less used, however, and these areas can be naturalized into forest or wildflower meadow habitat. Even in more formal park areas, understory trees can be added to increase the complexity and diversity of the urban forest habitat.

The park's unique location between two major streams presents opportunities to celebrate and restore shoreline habitat. Projects such as the recent Living Shoreline demonstration can help connect residents with nearby nature. They can therefore be considered to improve habitat not just for wildlife but for human beings as well.

Invasive species are a moderate concern at Ellicott Creek Park, particularly on Ellicott Island. It is desirable to replace them with natives wherever possible. To this end, the Friends of Ellicott Island Bark Park have established an on-site native plant nursery, from which they are able to plant small restoration areas.

Because Ash species are more common in low-lying areas like Ellicott Creek Park, the property will likely be more significantly impacted by the Emerald Ash Borer than some 2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

other parks in the system. Beginning to plant new native trees now can reduce the time until a new generation of canopy trees can take over from those that will be lost.

### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Ellicott Creek Park totaled \$307,202. Recent projects included:

- Comfort Station 5 Waterline repaired, electrical upgrades/repairs, drainage work, new siding, and general carpentry
- Ellicott Island parking lot Resurfaced
- Shelter #3 Replaced roof
- Shelter #10A / 10B Replaced roofs
- Friendship Building Complete remodel of men's and women's restrooms, including ADA compliant stalls; additional upgrades completed (2018)
- Casino New doors and fireplace insert
- Pedestrian Bridge PK-6 Railings replaced
- New pickleball court created on existing tennis court
- Chimney repaired and repointed at Casino
- Cricket Pitch installed on former softball/baseball diamond (2017)
- New kayak launch installed off of Ellicott Creek Road and Niagara Falls Blvd. (2017)
- Paved parking lot off of new kayak launch site (2017)
- "Living Shoreline" 500 linear feet of Ellicott Creek shoreline has been reconstructed by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (2017)



New kayak launch installed 2017

- Roofs completely replaced at shelters 2, 3, & 4. Concrete pads completely replaced at shelters 3 & 17.
- Roof replaced on WPA pump shelter near main entrance off of Niagara Falls Blvd. (2018)
- 700 trees to be planted throughout park through partnership with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (2018)



Recent "Living Shoreline" project





WPA Comfort Station #1



WPA era Casino



WPA Creekside Stand

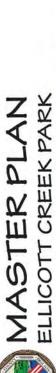
### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The park is showing deterioration in its older, historic stone structures.
- There is a lack of directional signage to the park, and within the park. The park occupies four distinct areas: the area between Ellicott Creek Road and Ellicott Creek, the 'main' part of the park between Ellicott Creek and Creekside Drive, the Creekside area, and Ellicott Island.
- Better linkages could be made between four park areas.
- There is a lack of interpretive signage highlighting the wonderful park structures and natural features.
- Currently, most of the open space in the park is mowed, including areas that are beyond the recreational use
- There is an apparent underutilization of some of the park facilities.
- There are numerous outdated play structures that do not meet current safety or accessibility codes.
- Many older trees are displaying health issues.
- Many dead trees within the park including Silver Maples and Ash.
- Nearly all shelters off of Creekside Drive are showing deterioration and need repairs.
- Heavy usage of the Bark Park on Ellicott Island has caused erosion and maintenance issues.



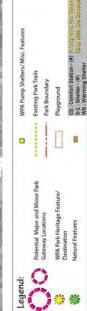
Poor shoreline conditions at Ellicott Island Bark Park

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE









## NATURALIZATION PLAN **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK**

## MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 8.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 5.5 acres Wildflower Meadow: 6 acres Total: ~20 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Natural Regeneration

wildflower seeds can be planted to regeneration areas are adjacent to cease altogether, and woody plant to speed natural reforestation, and In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will neighboring forest can be planted replace lawn until the tree canopy expand continuous forest habitat non-native species. Young native be allowed to develop. In most within the parks. Mowing will existing forest, and serve to removal will be limited to native meadow grass and cases, suggested natural trees of species found in

the "low-mow" management category, there exists flexibility for reforested. They would be mowed potentially see different use in the future, and are not intended to be infrequently to prevent woody plants from establishing. Within tailoring management to a These are areas that may particular park or zone.

### 3 Tree Planting

Understory tree species can also be added in order to create a more complex and diverse urban forest. those that are aging or may be lost appropriate than a fully natural park character, but existing tree canopy can be improved by adding young trees to replace In these areas, a tree canopy with lawn grass understory is more to the Emerald Ash Borer.

### In locations with low use but high Wildflower Meadow

addition of significant native wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the han simple mowing reduction.



### RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURALIZATION

Much of this area can be converted to use as wildlife habitat and passive Park is currently mowed despite seeing little use for active recreation. A large percentage of Ellicott Creek Lawn Reduction recreation area.

lawn reduction will be conversion to Low Mow and Wildflower Meadow. In many areas it is desireable to maintain the ability to change uses in the future, making Low Mow appropriate At Ellicott Creek Park, the majority of ecommended below power lines, where tree growth could be Low Mow Meadow is also problematic.

soll conditions are often wet enough to make mowing difficult. Appropriate extensive tree canopy, particularly in the western edge of the park, where clearings can be maintained for the recommended in locations with Natural Regeneration areas are existing disc golf course.

nearing the end of their natural lifespan. Planting native trees can establish the next generation of park trees for both visitors and wildlife to Tree Planting Many trees in Ellicott Creek Park are

## Nater Quality Protection

With major creeks on either side, Ellicott Creek Park is an opportunity to showcase practices that protect water Shoreline" demonstration project nea quality. This has already begun with addition of a bioswale to the Casino opportunities include exapnsion of this Living Shoreline, and potential the Casino building. Additional the construction of the "Living parking area.

concern at Ellicott Creek. As mowi Aggressive non-native plants are a is reduced it will be important to populations, as well as managing continue monitoring for new or those that are currently present. Invasive Species Management expanding invasive species

> ---- Park Boundary Existing Trail

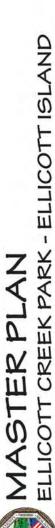
Nature Trail

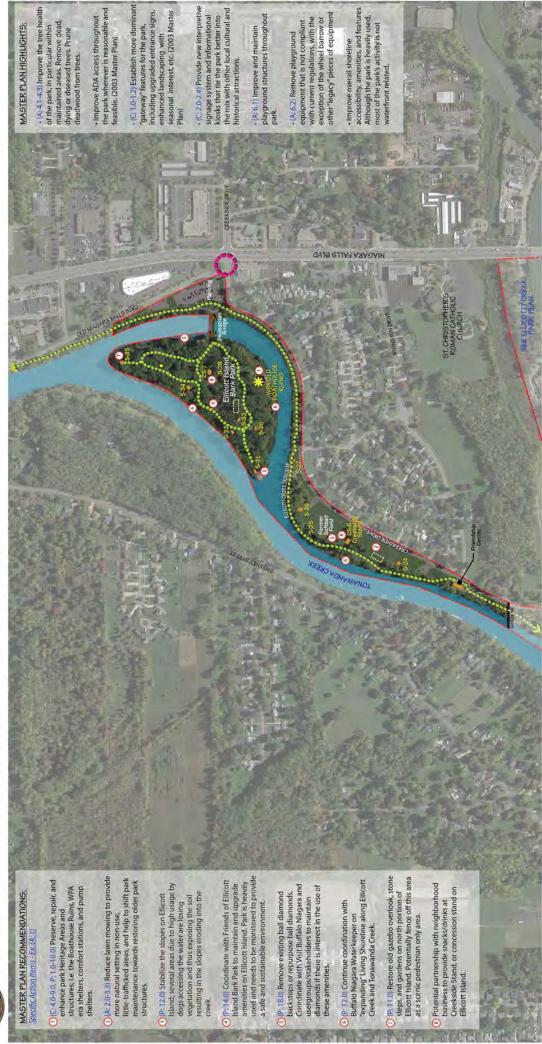
 Wildflower Meadow Area Low-Mow Area

Natural Regeneration Area

3 Tree Planting Area











Legend:
Potential Major and Minor Facations

WPA Park Heritage Feature/ Destination Natural Features



## NATURALIZATION PLAN ELLICOTT CREEK PARK - ELLICOTT ISLAND

## MOWING REDUCTION:

Total proposed mowing reduction at Ellicott Creek Park: 21 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

In this area, low use presents an opportunity for reduced mowing and improved natural habitat, but it is desireable to maintain open sight lines between Creekside Drive and the Ellicott Creek height would be encouraged. This strategy maintains flexibility for talloring management to changing Trailway. Adding young trees in widely spaced clusters can provide wildlife habitat, stormwater enjoyment. The space between plants from establishing, and native meadow plants with low periodically to prevent woody Low-Mow with Tree Planting management, and aesthetic clusters would be mowed



## NATURALIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

combine Low Mow with Tree planting awn reduction will be conversion to Low Mow Meadow. Near Ellicott At Ellicott Creek Park, the majority of compromising visitor safety and enjoyment by obscuring sight lines from the Ellicott Creek Trailway. increased natural benefits without sland, there is an opportunity to to create a diverse, visually open habitat space. This can allow Lawn Reduction

communities. Continuing to support this effort can lead to gradual increase reas near Tonawanda Creek, trees car in natural habitat in Ellicott Creek Park enjoy and use well into the future. In also help to reduce stormwater runoff ifespan. Planting young native trees process of reintroducing native plant can create a new generation of park rees for both visitors and wildlife to Tree Planting Many trees in Ellicott Creek Park are Within the Ellicott Island Bark Park, volunteers have already begun a that may contribute to flooding. nearing the end of their natural

## Water Quality Protection

Ellicott Creek Park is an opportunity to showcase practices that protect water quality. This has already begun with the construction of the "Living Shoreline" demonstration projects. With major creeks on either side,

where high traffic from dogs has worr away the vegetation. During heavy southern-most tips of Ellicott Island, Areas of particular concern include bank erosion at the northern and contribute excess sediment to rain, these exposed areas can onawanda Creek.

important to continue monitoring for new or expanding invasive species shoreline areas of Ellicott Island. It is populations, and managing those nvasive Species Management concern, particularly in some already present.

- Park Boundary

Nature Trail

Low-Mow Meadow Area with Tree Planting

Legend:

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

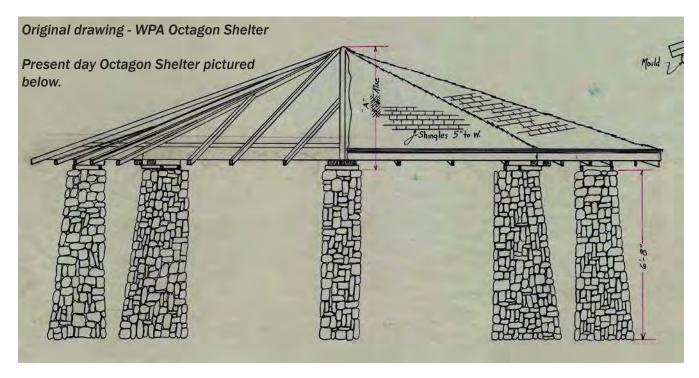
### **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### 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

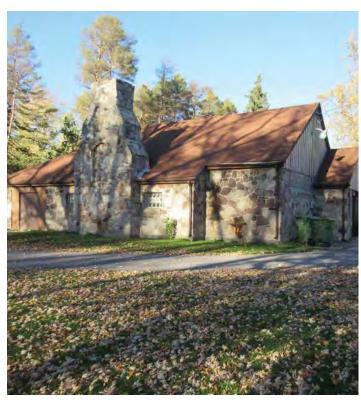
### Historic Structures/WPA/Other Structures:

- (C: 4.0-9.0, P: 1.0-10.0) Preserve, repair, and enhance park Heritage Areas and structures; i.e. the Casino, WPA era shelters and comfort stations, boathouse ruins and pump shelters.
  - Restore old stone picnic shelters and structures before building new picnic shelters and structures. (Consider the heritage "value" of these old park features for future tourism and visitor appreciation).
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: PBN/In-House





FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2



WPA era Casino

- (C: 3.0) Prevent further deterioration of the Casino including minor roof repairs, gutter replacement, soffit repair, exterior doors, window glass repair, window sill repair.
  - Potentially enhance and restore the Casino into a multi-purpose facility. Include Heritage Parks Visitor Information area /Concession building;
  - Building can be a great potential source for revenue by hosting events/parties, and seasonal activities.
  - Repair and enhance deck/overlook behind Casino.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: PBN/In-House
- (C: 15.0) Consider enhancements to the Friendship Center on Creekside Road;
  - Its proximity to the Creek makes it an ideal location to be a signature park facility;
  - Enhancements could include introducing stone work with 'earth-tone' façade treatments to 'fit' better into the appeal of the County Parks structures and facilities.
  - Improve area behind building; Clear overgrown vegetation to enhance and create views, and provide possible overlook with seating areas.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Greenway funding/In-House



Murals at the WPA Boathouse Ruins

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

 (P: 11.0) Restore old gazebo overlook, stone steps, and gardens on north portion of Ellicott Island. Potentially fence off this area as a scenic pedestrian only area.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: PBN/In-House

 Potential partnership with neighborhood business to provide snacks/drinks at Creekside Stand, or concession stand on Ellicott Island.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Private Businesses

 (A: 1.0) Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House



Gazebo shelter on the northern part of Ellicott Island



WPA Shelter on Ellicott Island



FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

### Maintenance/Safety:

- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-recreational use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Establish select zones of 'no-mow' naturalized areas where excess lawn is being mowed, especially along the Ellicott Creek shoreline.
     There are large areas of mowed lawn which have no active recreation; Areas which abut wooded areas can transition into no-mow areas with potential meadows and wildflowers.
  - Include signage like "Regeneration Area", or "No-Mow Zone" to engage park users to learn about the landscape management technique. Include potential benefits of the practice being used such as: Increasing habitat for insects and wildlife; improved health to adjacent Creeks like Ellicott and Tonawanda Creek; Promoting sustainable landscapes; Improving water quality by filtering pollutants such as fertilizers and pesticides that would have otherwise entered the water; Slowing stormwater runoff; Encouraging native plant growth; Providing an environment for observation; etc.
    - Priority: HighPartner: In-House



Almost the entire park is mowed



2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

- (P: 14.0) Coordinate with Friends of Ellicott Island Bark
   Park to maintain and upgrade amenities on Ellicott
   Island. Park is heavily used and needs to be monitored to
   provide a safe and sustainable environment.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Friends of Ellicott Island Bark Park/In-House
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations can present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example, designing sports fields/courts for greater accessibility and seating, improved accessibility/updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people with mixed abilities.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 15.0) Improve pedestrian safety and visibility along main road(s), particularly the trail crossing at Creekside Drive; possible reduction in speed.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: NYSDOT/Greenway funding
- (C: 11.0-12.0) Restore or reconstruct the various pedestrian bridges that connect to the community.
   These important linkages tie the park to its neighborhood users.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Consultant/Greenway funding



Existing trails on Ellicott Island



Comfort station and former concession stand on Ellicott Island



Shoreline conditions need to be addressed on Ellicott Island Bark Park





Tennis court parking area



Casino



Casino signage

- (A: 12.0) Restone or pave parking lot near tennis courts. Repair pot holes leading to parking area.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 14.0) Improve safety and functionality of parking lot 12 (off main road near soccer fields); reduce size of the lot, provide asphalt surface, striping, and accessible parking spaces.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Contractor/Greenway funding
- (C: 16.0) Improve functionality and organization of Casino parking area.
  - Possibly reduce size of lot to increase green space.
  - Provide possible rain gardens to capture runoff before it enters the creek and to divert it from Casino building.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House

### Connectivity/Signage:

- (A: 7.0-7.4) Establish minor gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the park at the following locations:
  - Old Niagara Falls Blvd.
  - Ellicott Creek Road, kayak launch parking.
  - Ellicott Creek Road, pedestrian bridge near Thistle Avenue
  - o Creekside Drive
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Greenway funding
- (A: 8.0-8.2) Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park:
  - Provide directional signs to various points of interest.
  - Provide overall park maps showing park features, comfort stations and shelters.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

- (A: 9.0-9.4) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - Advance signage on Niagara Falls Blvd, both north and south of the main entrance.
  - Intersection of Creekside Drive and Niagara Falls Blvd.
  - Intersection of Young Street and State Street (Tonawanda Rails to Trails)
  - Twin Cities Highway at E Niagara Street exit
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 1.0-1.2) Establish more dominant gateway features for the park, including upgraded entrance signs, enhanced landscaping with seasonal interest, etc. at the following locations:
  - Niagara Falls Blvd.
  - o Creekside Drive
  - At Thistle Ave and Ellicott Creek Drive pedestrian bridge
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House/Greenway funding
- (C: 2.0-2.4) Provide new interpretive signage and informational kiosks that tie the park better "into the mix" with other local cultural and historical attractions.
  - Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's history, i.e. How and when the park was developed?; What is the history of the Erie Canal through this area?; When was the flood control system established?; What's the history behind the 3-mile island? What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?;
  - Provide interpretive signs or markers at key historic and natural sites, such as at the site of the old boathouse, etc.
  - History of WPA structures?
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House/Greenway funding
- Promote the recreational trail system along the Erie Canal / Tonawanda Creek, including new interpretive signage and wayfinding signage.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Greenway funding



WPA Pump Shelter



Typical entry signage



Ellicott Creek Trailway



### Recreation:

- (A: 6.1) Continue to improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
    - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 16.0) Work with Niagara Region Disc Golf (NRDG) to repair and restore degraded areas around Disc Golf Holes.
  - Explore the possibility of updating hole locations, such that they can be easily pulled up from their location and moved to a different nearby area. (Like on a typical golf course)
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Niagara Region Disc Golf
- (P: 17.0) Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to promote and improve recreational opportunities at Ellicott Creek Park. Ellicott has diverse recreational activities including Cricket and Pickleball. Continue to promote these unique recreational attractions.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Visit Buffalo Niagara
- (C: 17.0) Provide possible trail/path on south side of Ellicott Creek.
  - Remove invasive species and design safety buffers on new trail from road.
  - Provide possible overlook and areas with benches to look out at the creek;
  - o Path can tie into pedestrian bridge at Thistle Ave.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Greenway funding/In-House

- Continue to promote winter activities within the park.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- (A: 6.2) Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of the wheel barrow or other "legacy" pieces of equipment
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- (A: 5.0) Improve fishing access and opportunities to the edge of the canal and creek (s). This also includes the inner pond area within the Ellicott Creek floodway zone.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House



Disc Golf is causing damage to the landscape in many cases



Sled hill at the park

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK

- (P: 18.0) Remove any remaining existing ball diamond backstops or repurpose ball diamonds. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara and usergroups/stakeholders to maintain diamonds if there is interest in the use of these amenities.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Visit Buffalo Niagara/Community groups

### **Environment:**

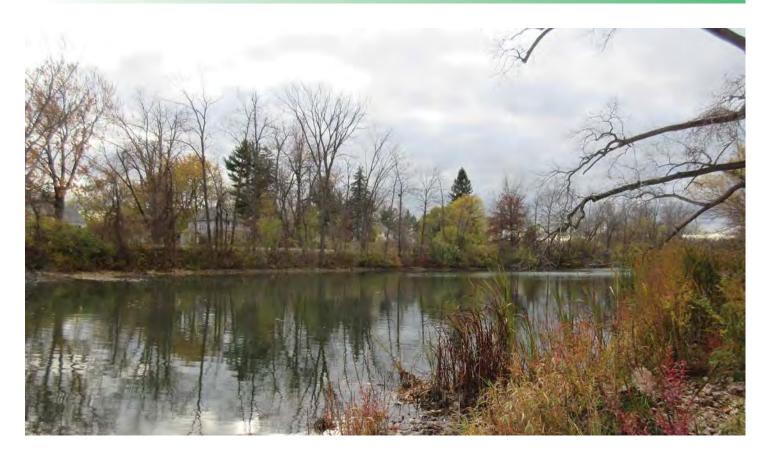
- (A: 4.1-4.3) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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: 12.0) Stabilize the slopes on Ellicott Island; several
  areas due to high usage by dogs accessing the water are
  losing vegetation and thus exposing the soil resulting in
  the slopes eroding into the creek.
  - Continue coordination with Friends of Ellicott Island Dog Park to identify problematic areas and engage consultants to implement methods of stabilization and protection of critical areas.
  - It is recommended to undertake a large scale shoreline restoration project. Provide alternative access points to reduce erosion and the recurrence of future problems while mitigation efforts take place.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Friends of Ellicott Island Dog Park
- (P: 19.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
  - The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House



Erosion off the southern tip of the island





- (P: 20.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD
- (P: 12.0) Improve the health of Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Waterkeeper, Soil and Water District and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continue coordination with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper on "expanding" Living Shoreline along Ellicott Creek, along with additional site specific projects as needed.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the creek and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC

- Improve overall shoreline accessibility, amenities, and features. Although the park is heavily used, most of the park's activity is not waterfront related. Ideas would include:
  - Improving fishing access by providing access points to the water's edge. Selective vegetation pruning or removal and creation of fishing 'platforms' which may not need to be more than a compacted stone area to prevent erosion of the shoreline.
  - Enhancing areas for viewing the creeks and canal through selective vegetation pruning or removal.
  - Promote the heritage and recreational relationship between the park and the Erie Canal through visual connections and overlooks, as well as a series of interpretive signs and historical markers.
  - Ellicott Creek Park needs to maximize nearly 17,500 feet of shoreline. Approximately 10,000 feet along Tonawanda Creek, a mile of which is along the navigable channel of the Erie Barge Canal, and 7,500 feet along Ellicott Creek.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Greenway funding/In-House

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	2.0	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А	3 1	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А		overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
А	4.1	throughout the park. The overall age	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	4.3	throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is	Prune trees away from the falling structures to prevent additional damage: WPA Era Comfort Station #1, WPA Era Comfort Station #3, WPA Era Creekside Station	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Forestry
A	6.1		Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
A		the park.	Coordinate with the Town of Tonawanda, Parks & Trails NY, NYS Canal Corporation and NYSPRHP to promote Erie Canalway Trail project from City of Tonawanda line along Creekside Dr to the park	High	Ongoing	NA

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	3.0	Prevent further deterioration of the Casino - including minor roof repairs, gutter replacement, soffit repair, exterior doors, window glass repair, window sill repair. Design and construct improvements to manage storm water on the north side of the structure.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to perform repairs and storm water mitigation	High	3-5 Years	\$22,000
С	4.8	Shelter #33 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	1-2 Years	\$10,000
С	5.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Creekside Station. Replace missing section of roof on south side of concession stand including replacement of deteriorated footing and missing column	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	1-2 Years	\$25,000
С	6.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station #1. Repair roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	3-5 Years	\$7,500
С	7.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station #3. Repair roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	3-5 Years	\$7,500
С	10.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following picnic shelters:	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	3-5 Years	Х
С	10.1	Shelter #14 - Potential structural issues	Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.	High	1-2 Years	\$10,000
Р	12.0	Several areas along the shoreline of Ellicott Island are heavily used by dogs to access the water, the vegetation in these areas has been destroyed exposing the soil resulting in the slopes	Coordinate with bark park users to determine the methods, i.e. geotextile fabrics or terracing, to be implemented to stabilize the slopes considering the primary users are dogs. Restrict access on a rotational basis to eroded areas through fencing allowing areas to regenerate.	High	Ongoing	\$35,000

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	14.0	Ellicott Island. Park is heavily used and needs to be monitored to provide a safe	Coordinate with Bark park group to close park when necessary to perform repairs and improvements to structures, trails, and other features.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	16.0		Coordinate with Niagara Region Disc Golf	High	1-2 Years	\$10,500
Р	19.0	of sensitive ecological areas; Propose	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р		_	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	4.2		Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	ı		Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
A	7.1	_	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	l		Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	7.3	Ellicott Creek Road, pedestrian bridge near Thistle Ave	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.4	Creekside Dr	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	1	Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	8.1	Provide directional signs to various points of interest.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	1	Provide overall park maps showing park features, comfort stations and shelters	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park maps	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А		Advance signage on Niagara Falls Blvd, both north and south of the main entrance	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	9.2	Intersection of Creekside Dr and Niagara Falls Blvd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.		6-10 Years	In-House
А	9.3	Intersection of Young St and State St (Tonawanda Rails to Trails)	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	9.4	Twin Cities Highway at E Niagara St exit	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.		6-10 Years	In-House

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	12.0	Restone or pave parking lot near tennis courts. Repair pot holes leading to parking area.	Coordinate with Parks and DPW	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С	2.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the	Medium	Ongoing	Х
С	I	Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	4.1	Shelter #4 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.10	Shelter #35 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.2	Shelter #7 - Replace concrete slab	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.3	Shelter #8 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.4	Shelter #9 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.5	Shelter #26 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.6	Shelter #28 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.7	Shelter #31 - Replace concrete slab	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$6,600
С	4.9	Shelter #34 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С		Prevent Further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #1 (near Niagara Falls Blvd). Repair or replace roof.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	Ongoing	\$7,500

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	9.0	Prevent Further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #2 (on island). Repair or replace roof.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	Ongoing	\$7,500
С	10.2	Shelter #25 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	12.0	Improve safety on pedestrian bridge over Ellicott Creek near flume area. Replace bridge decking, replace railing system, reconstruct bridge approaches to comply with ADA	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$22,000
С	14.0	Improve safety and functionality of Parking Lot 12, reduce size of lot, provide asphalt surface, striping, accessible parking spaces	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$33,000
Р	1.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters:	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	Х
Р	1.1	Shelter #6 - Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1.2	Shelter #7 – Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Creekside Station. Repair loose and missing stones, repoint stonework.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р	3.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station #1. Remove vines from stones and siding, repoint mortar, replace rotting wood timbers	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р	4.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station #3. Repoint mortar, reconstruction fountain on front side of structure	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р		Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station #5. Repoint mortar, replace rotting wood timbers	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р			Continue coordination with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper to develop additional projects along the banks of Ellicott Creek.	Medium	Ongoing	\$75,000
Р		Improve pedestrian safety and visibility along main road(s), particularly the trail crossing at Creekside Drive; possible reduction in speed.	Coordinate with the Town of Tonawanda and NYSDOT	Medium	3-5 Years	\$5,000
Р	170	Promote and enhance recreational opportunities	Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara	Medium	Ongoing	Partner
А		National Register of Historic Places	Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer assigned to Erie County to complete the required nomination forms and submit to a State review board.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А			Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
А	5.0	Improve safety and access for anglers along Tonawanda Creek and Ellicott Creek by providing stable areas of either crushed stone or asphalt millings along the shoreline.	Utilize parks staff to perform improvements	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	6.2		Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of the wheel barrow or other "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House
С			Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	Х

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	1.1	Niagara Falls Boulevard	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	1.2	Creekside Drive	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	2.1	Casino on Ellicott Creek	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.2	Boathouse on Ellicott Island	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.3	Creation of Ellicott Island as part of Erie Canal	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.4	History of WPA structures	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	11.0	Improve safety on pedestrian bridge over Ellicott Creek near Thistle Ave.	Engage a consultant to determine if existing railings can be modified to be brought into compliance, or if a new railing system is required. Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,500
С	13.0	Reconstruct Grill #2 (near Shelter #26)	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	1	Consider enhancements to the Friendship Center on Creekside Road; Enhancements could include introducing stone work with 'earth-tone' façade treatments to 'fit' better into the appeal of the County Parks structures and facilities.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000

2.4 ELLICOTT CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### **ELLICOTT CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	16.0	of Casino parking area. Possibly reduce	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$22,500
С	17.0	side of Ellicott Creek. Provide possible	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р	1		Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$32,000
Р	1	Shelter #9 - Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$9,000
Р	ı	Shelter #28 - Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000
Р	ı	Shelter #31 -Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$26,000
Р	6.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era grill #1 (near Niagara Falls Blvd). Replace missing stones, repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,000
Р		Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #1 (near Niagara Falls Blvd). Repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$9,000
Р		Prevent Further deterioration of WPA Era Pump Shelter #2 (on island).Repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



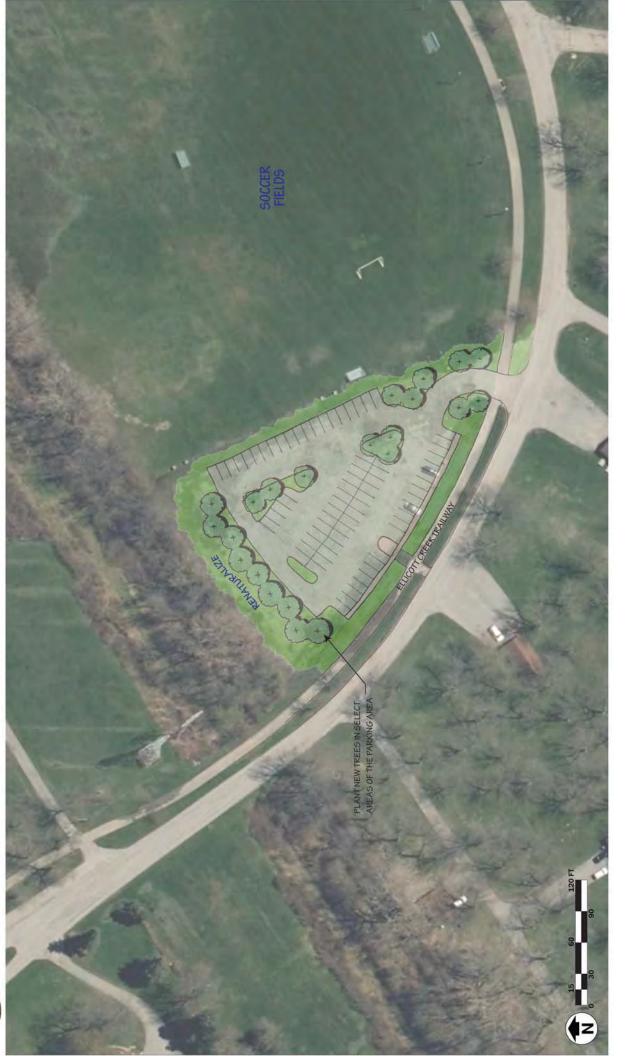
VOLUME 2

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	9.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era drinking fountain near Thistle Ave bridge. Replace missing stones, repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
Р	10.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era drinking fountain near shelter #25. Replace missing stones, repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
Р	1	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era gazebo shelter on northern side of Ellicott Island. Repair loose stones, clean and repoint mortar, and repair roof.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,000
Р	18.0	Remove existing ball diamond backstops or repurpose ball diamonds.	Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.

# SCHEMATIC PLAN ELLICOTT CREEK PARK - CASINO PARKING LOT



## SCHEMATIC PLAN ELLICOTT CREEK PARK - SOCCER FIELDS LOT



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

### **EMERY PARK**

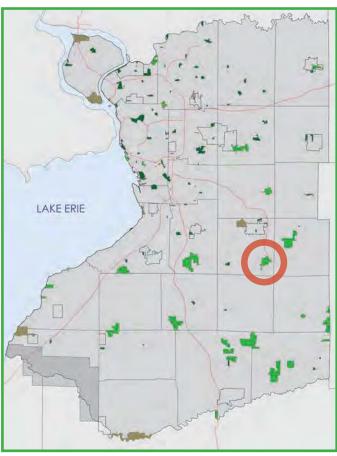
### **DESCRIPTION**

Emery Park is one of the oldest five parks in the County System, being acquired in 1925. This 457-acre Heritage park is a multipurpose recreation site, however much of the park is wooded and left to passive recreational pursuits. The most notable feature and asset in Emery Park is the ski-slope and lodge right off of Emery Road. The park also features many unique passive and natural areas including multi-purpose trails, waterfalls, large wooded areas, and scenic views. Increasing in popularity as of late at Emery Park is the 18-hole Black Diamond Disc Golf Course constructed by the Niagara Region Disc Golf Association (2008).

A major ravine cuts through the park from the southwest to northeast corners of the park, which helps to define the park's impressive sloping topography and rugged, natural character. This tributary flows into Cazenovia Creek, which cuts through the northeastern corner of the park property. The northeast section is an undeveloped forested area, a natural buffer against the acoustical and visual problems associated with the adjacent Route 400 (a four-lane expressway). The Richardson Cottage, a well-known picnic site, is located on the opposite side of Cazenovia Creek, and is accessed separately off of the Route 400 / NY16 split. The natural character of Emery Park is some of the County System's most beautiful and finest.



WPA era historic pump shelter



Park Location Map: Emery Park is located in the Town of Aurora off of Emery Road

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and enhance Heritage areas and special park features, including; Repoint/clean stonework where needed, replace missing stones, replace or repair roofs, make improvements to concrete/asphalt floors, etc. to all historic structures and facilities, specifically many shelters on the southern side of the park.
- Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use, little-trafficked areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures.
- Potential relocation of Disc golf holes to prevent continuous damage to natural areas and wildlife from excessive foot traffic.

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

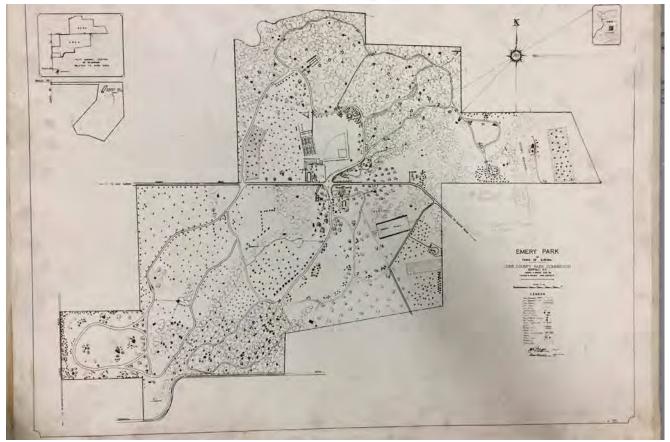
The Emery Inn and barn structures were part of the original Josiah Emery Farmstead. The Emery family lived on and worked on this land for over one hundred years since the early 1800's. In 1925, the Parks Commission of Erie County purchased the land from Helen B. Emery, forming Emery Park. Many of the original park structures and features still remain from the early development years of the late 20's and early 30's when WPA crews worked to establish this unique park. The historic Emery home was converted to a museum and restaurant after 1926, and has unfortunately fell into disrepair and was taken down.. Despite this, Emery Park has evolved into a 490-acre park of unmatched natural beauty.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Emery Park is located in the Town of Aurora adjacent to the hamlet of South Wales. It is located approximately 18 miles south of Downtown Buffalo and is just a few miles south of the Village of East Aurora. The area surrounding Emery Park is largely rural in character with only a scattering of residences throughout the countryside, with the exception



Local context map



1940's master plan







of the thickly settled hamlet of South Wales. One of the area's notable institutions, the Gow School, is only a short walk away from the park. The Park is easily accessed from the end of the Route 400 Expressway where it transitions to Route 16 in South Wales. Direct access to the park is via Emery Road, which bisects the park in an east-west direction.

### **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

Emery Park is situated in a relatively rural setting, with few other recreational facilities around. However, given the low population in the area, the recreational demand is not as high as the more urban facilities, and much of the focus of Emery Park has remained passive in nature.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Emery Park is characterized by a combination of gently rolling grassy areas, forested slopes, and steep rocky gorges. Streams and waterfalls are major natural assets of the park. The park's relatively remote location lends itself well to an emphasis on naturalization and passive recreation. More central areas, nearer to major park buildings, are currently most used. It may be possible over time to consolidate park shelters so that maintenance becomes simpler, and mowed clearings less needed.

Some park roads, particularly in the north section of the park, have already been closed to vehicles. It may be possible to transform more roads into nature trails, thereby increasing recreational value and reducing environmental impacts, including those related to road maintenance. If possible, unneeded pavement should







be removed so as to reduce erosion due to runoff. Throughout the park, there are areas of lawn that can be converted to natural forest or meadow habitat. Many of these are small roadside pockets that serve no current purpose. Invasive species are not a serious issue at Emery Park at this time. Careful surveillance response is important in preventing non-native establishment and maintaining the high quality of the park's natural spaces. There are significant areas of erosion and soil compaction in the north forest section associated with disc golf holes.

### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / **IMPROVEMENTS**

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Emery Park totaled \$1,762,760. Recent projects included:

- Stohrer's Lodge Replaced roof, windows and doors, painting and associated carpentry.
- Maintenance Buildings Replaced two roofs (including abatement) and windows on building.
- General repair/improvements to parking lots and roadways.
- Shelter #12 WPA Era Stone Structure renovated utilizing existing stone ends, including new roof and concrete floor.
- Building demolition 5 structures removed
- Demolished and removed Emery Inn.
- 6 Shelters Complete roof tear-offs, creation of suitable parking areas, masonry/concrete work, new truss's, etc.
- Richardson Cottage and Shelter New roofs, extensive foundation repairs on cottage, complete remodel inside and out, new blacktop road and parking area installed.
- Japanese Garden Shelter repurposed into pergola.
- Improvements to Storage Building.
- New guardrails installed near Ski Lodge.
- Installing magic carpet at Emery Park ski lift (2018)



Emery Ski Lodge



Pump shelter with hole in the roof



Old set of swings in the woods



WPA Pump Shelter

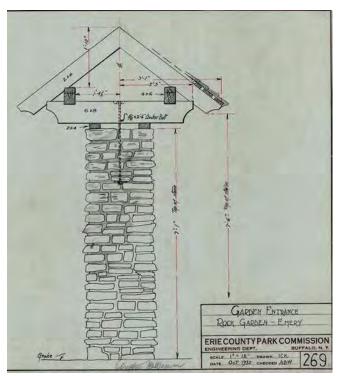


### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The park is showing deterioration in its older, historic stone structures.
- There is a lack of directional and interpretive signage highlighting the wonderful park structures and natural features.
- Currently, most of the open space in the park is mowed, including areas that are beyond the recreational use areas.
- Better linkages should be made within the park between the northern and southern sections of the park, on either side of Emery Road.
- There is an apparent underutilization of some of the park facilities.
- There are numerous outdated play structures that do not meet current safety or accessibility codes.
- Many shelters on south side of the park are seeing deterioration and vandalism.
- Erosion concerns along creeks.
- All shelters should be numbered. Many are missing numbers.
- Many Disc Golf holes are causing damage and issues in natural wooded areas of park.
- Lack of additional recreational opportunities.
- Difficult to find/locate trails; Lack of formal trailheads
- Tennis courts are showing wear
- Emerging invasive species



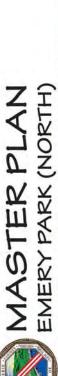
Repurposed pergola structure





Original drawing for the Garden Entrance at the Rock Garden; The same structure is photographed on the right

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE













## TOTAL PARK MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 12.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 3 acres Wildflower Meadow: 5 acres

## TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

wildflower seeds can be planted to regeneration areas are adjacent to existing forest, and serve to cease altogether, and woody plant to speed natural reforestation, and In these areas, which are currently mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most replace lawn until the tree canopy neighboring forest can be planted expand continuous forest habitat non-native species. Young native trees of species found in within the parks. Mowing will removal will be limited to native meadow grass and cases, suggested natural Natural Regeneration

infrequently to prevent woody plans from establishing. Within the "low-mow" management category, there exists flexibility for talloring management to a potentially see different use in the future, and are not intended to be reforested. They would be mowed These are areas that may particular park or zone.

### 3 Wildflower Meadow

visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the In locations with low use but high wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest than simple mowing reduction. addition of significant native



### RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURALIZATION

Lawn Reduction

The northern portion of Emery Park is recreation opportunities and natural habitat. The majority of lawn reduction in this area will be Natural mainly forested, providing valuable Regeneration.

visitor opportunities for enjoyment of connection between forest sections. northernmost road loop within the park into a foot trail could increase the forest while also improving Transforming the little-used

active zone can be converted to Low Mow or Wildflower Meadow without compromising flexibility for the Select areas surrounding the more

Tree Planting

Planting young native trees in select areas can begin a process of The natural forest area is one of the increasing this valuable forest area main attractions of Emery Park.

Forest Floor Restoration

sensitive areas will allow a process of restoring the high quality habitat that suffering from significant soil erosion understory vegetation due to heavy foot traffic. Redirecting activities On the north side of Emery Park, certain areas of forest floor are soil compacction, and loss of away from steep or otherwise has been lost to begin.

Water Quality Protection

Cazenovia Creek runs through the northeast part of the park, and suffers Relocating the nearby disk golf hole away from the creek may significantly from localized bank erosion and disturbance due to foot traffic. educe this issue.

impact at Emery Park, compared with many public parks. It is important to keep monitoring for changes so that the current level of quality can be Aggressive non-native plants are currently having a relatively low Invasive Species Management

protected.

---- Park Boundary ---- Existing Trail

Low-Mow Meadow Area Nature Trail

0

 Natural Regeneration Area Wildflower Meadow Area







poppopopo Existing Park Trails

Legend:
Potential Major and Minor Park
Gatewoy/Locations
WAP Park Heritage Feature/
Destination
Matural Features





## TOTAL PARK MOWING REDUCTION:

Natural Regeneration: 12.5 acres Low-Mow Meadow: 3 acres Wildflower Meadow: 5 acres Total: ~20.5 acres

TREATMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

wildflower seeds can be planted to regeneration areas are adjacent to existing forest, and serve to within the parks. Mowing will cease altogether, and woody plant to speed natural reforestation, and non-native species. Young native trees of species found in neighboring forest can be planted replace lawn until the tree canopy In these areas, which are currently expand continuous forest habitat mowed lawn, natural forests will be allowed to develop. In most removal will be limited to native meadow grass and cases, suggested natural Natural Regeneration

potentially see different use in the future, and are not intended to be reforested. They would be mowed the "low-mow" management category, there exists flexibility for infrequently to prevent woody plants from establishing. Within tailoring management to a O Low-Mow
These are areas that may particular park or zone.

visibility, such as near park entrances, the Low-Mow Meadow treatment can be modified by the wildflower planting efforts. This will create a higher level of biodiversity and visual interest than simple mowing reduction. addition of significant native

## Wildflower Meadow In locations with low use but high



### RECOMMENDATIONS: NATURALIZATION

Lawn Reduction

currently mainly forested. The majority of lawn reduction in this area The southern portion of Emery Park is little used into new forest habitat can begin a process of enhancing what is are many small roadside areas within mowing can be reduced, and native will be Natural Regeneration. There trees reintroduced. In some areas, transforming open spaces that are one of the park's main attractions. this section of the park where

Meadow can be created in order to increase natural habitat area without compromising flexibility for the In select areas surrounding the more active zones, Low Mow or Wildflower

### free Planting

of the main attractions of Emery Park Planting young native trees in select areas can begin a process of The existing natural forest area is one diversifying and adding resilience to this valuable forest resource.

### Water Quality Protection

Small headwater creeks run through protecting these important parts of Emery Park. Increasing natural habitat area can contribute to the watershed.

impact at Emery Park, compared with many public parks. It is important to keep monitoring for changes so that the current level of quality can be protected. Aggressive non-native plants are currently having a relatively low Invasive Species Management

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

### 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

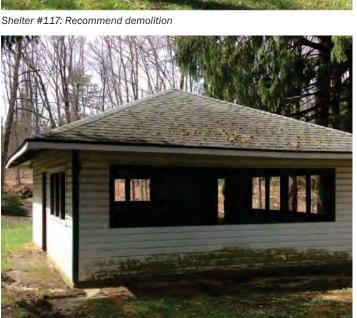
C - Capital project

### Historic Structures/WPA/Other Structures:

- (C: 4.0-5.0, P: 1.0-6.0) Preserve and enhance "Heritage" areas and special park features, including;
  - Old Japanese Rock Garden, etc.
  - Restore historic stone structures, shelters, buildings and stone arch bridge, stone gateways, steps and bridges, old stone incinerators, etc.
  - Restore old stone picnic shelters and structures

- before building new picnic shelters and structures. (Consider the heritage "value" of these old park features for future tourism and visitor appreciation).
- Preserve and enhance stone shelters adjacent to tennis courts. Repurpose as potential interpretive stations highlighting park history and the ecology of the park.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: PBN/UB/In-House
- (A: 13.0) Remove shelters which are in poor condition, or are very rarely rented out. Many on the south side of Emery Park are very isolated or in disrepair. Shelters that are recommended to be removed include shelter 11, 24, and 117.
  - Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House





Shelter #11



Shelter #13: Recommend demolition



WPA round comfort station



- (C: 2.0-2.5) Provide interpretive signage in the park: Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's geological and post-settlement history;
  - i.e. How and when the ravines were formed?;
     When was the area first settled?; What's the history behind the Emery Inn and the farm structures? What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?; When were the old stone structures built?; etc.
  - Harrigan's Circle; i.e. How did it get the name?
     Who is Harrigan?; Hard to interpret exactly where Harrigan's Circle is for average park user.
  - Geology and ravine formation
  - History of the Emery Family
  - o History of WPA structures

- Develop framework/design guidelines for the future construction and restoration of picnic shelters. Many shelters are of different colors, building materials and form, making for a collection random architecture/ building types. Some do not fit in with historic WPA essence of the park.
  - Develop more shelters like the recent renovations of Shelter #12, by maintaining WPA stone work, earthtone colors, and timber materials.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House





Stohrer's Lodge: During construction and present day facility

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

- (A: 1.0) Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House

### Maintenance/Safety:

- (A: 2.0-3.3) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use, little-trafficked areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring older park structures.
  - One significant area to begin the naturalization process would be west of the Maintenance facilities behind the tennis courts.
  - Establish select zones of 'no-mow' naturalized areas where excess lawn is being mowed. There are large areas of mowed lawn which have no active recreation; these areas, especially those which abut wooded areas can transition into no-mow areas with potential meadows and wildflowers.
  - Include signage like "Regeneration Area", or "No-Mow Zone" to engage park users to learn about
    the landscape management technique. Include
    potential benefits of the practice being used; i.e.
    Increasing habitat for insects and wildlife; Saving
    energy and reducing CO2 emissions by not using
    mowers and equipment; Promoting sustainable

landscapes; Improves water quality by filtering pollutants such as fertilizers and pesticides that would have otherwise entered the water; Slows stormwater runoff; Encouraging native plant growth; Providing an environment for observation; etc.

- Priority: HighPartner: In-House
- (A: 5.0) Improve awareness of steep slopes, uneven terrain, etc. for park patrons through signage.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 15.0) Undertake roadway repairs and repaving throughout the park. Improve ditches and culverts wherever necessary.
  - If roads are deemed 'not needed' due to shelter removal, etc., they can be maintained as 'trail only' path. Some are already blocked off like this.
  - For abandoned roadways, remove existing blacktop surface and replace with natural landscaping treatments. Or just let them naturalize on their own.
    - Priority: MediumPartner: In-House



Large expanse of lawn at Emery





Parking near gazebo structure



Drainage issues on the northern ravine trail

- (C: 9.0-9.4) Improve and formalize key parking areas; Reduce parking lot surface and increase green space if possible. If drainage concerns exist, provide potential rain gardens to capture stormwater and thus improve nearby streams and creeks. Potential parking areas include;
  - Ski Lodge parking lot
  - Ski Lift parking lot
  - Parking area at Arbor Garden
  - Stohrer's Lodge Lot
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House
- At all designated park trails, trail safety improvements should be made. (In addition to proper signage of potential hazards and user difficulties) This may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations can present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example, designing sports fields/ courts for greater accessibility and seating, improved accessibility/updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people with mixed abilities.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House



Scenic waterfall on the north side of the park

 (C: 10.0) Repair/replace guardrail west of tree roundabout.

■ Priority: Medium

- Partner: In-House/DPW
- (C: 12.0) Improve/repair or replace fences along Emery Road - Repair or replace entrance gates.

Priority: MediumPartner: In-House

- (C: 13.0) Improve safety along northerly gorge/ravine trail system, i.e. setbacks and permanent railings.
   Provide new scenic overlook at falls;
  - Improve and enhance nature trail system throughout the park with new interpretive signage and new trail connections, including providing a looped trail near the ski lodge and future connection to South Wales.
  - Provide new park benches along the nature trails in strategic locations.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 11.0) Enhance viewing opportunities to many of Emery Park's scenic, historic and natural features, including the impressive ravines and remote rugged terrain. Provide possible new "strategically-placed" overlook platforms and viewing areas to these features with adequate methods of pedestrian safety to give the park more exposure to the public.
  - Provide ADA access wherever possible to important and scenic vista locations.
  - Provide access to waterfall area off of Richardson Road.
    - Install staircase and railing to allow access to creek and potential overlook area.
    - Provide secondary overlook at the top of the gorge. Potentially clear brush/branches to provide scenic view of waterfall and ravine.
       Provide railing.
      - Priority: Low
      - Partner: In-House/Grants

### Connectivity/Signage:

- (A: 7.0-7.5) Establish minor gateways, welcome sign and rules, for the following park locations:
  - Richardson Cottage
  - East park border along Emery Road
  - West park border along Emery Road
  - South park border along Cornwall Road
  - o Stohrer's Lodge entrance off of Cornwall Road

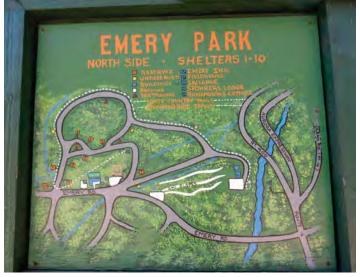
Priority: MediumPartner: In-House



Emery Park entry



Existing signage



Existing signage



- (A: 8.0-8.4) Provide consistent wayfinding signage and directional signage within the park:
  - Provide directional signage to various points of interest
  - Provide overall park maps showing park features, comfort stations and shelters
  - Elizabeth Grove Trail
  - XC Ski Trail
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 9.0-9.3) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - o Intersection of Olean Road and Emery Road
  - Intersection of Center Street and Emery Road
  - Intersection of Olean Road and Richardson Road
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (A: 8.5) Provide and install a large trail map, identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, and user difficulties.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 10.0) Although Emery Road cuts the park in half, establish a smoother, "seamless" transition between the north side and the south side of the park.
  - Pedestrian trails should link across the road in a visible and safe fashion;
  - "traffic-calming" measures should be considered for traffic along Emery Road.
  - Lower the speed limit of Emery Road within the park.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House



Waterfall near Emery Road

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

- (C: 1.0-1.1) Establish enhanced gateways for the park at the following locations:
  - Main park entry roads along Emery Road

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

 Establish a stronger linkage between Emery Park and the hamlet of South Wales, including the Gow School, through wayfinding signage, maps, etc.; Provide clear linkages from Emery Park to area bicycle routes and trails.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

### Recreation:

- (A: 6.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 7.0) Potential relocation of Disc golf holes to prevent continuous damage to natural areas and wildlife.
  - Possibly shift some holes away from wooded/ forested areas into existing mowed lawn areas.
     Disc golf at Ellicott Creek Park and Como Lake

Park is played across their mowed lawn areas, and result in far less damage to the landscape. Work with Niagara Region Disc Golf to redesign the course into less environmentally sensitive areas. Provide alternate hole locations to reduce compaction.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: Niagara Region Disc Golf

- Continue progress with expansion, enhancements, and connectivity to park trails.
  - Consider the design of some ADA accessible trails where possible.
  - Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife.

Priority: MediumPartner: In-House

- (C: 6.0) Tennis courts should be resurfaced and restriped.
  - There are currently 6 tennis courts; Explore the potential to provide additional recreational opportunities like a multipurpose sports court for basketball and pickleball.
  - Consider dual-striping a court or two to provide additional recreational opportunities like Pickleball.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Contractor/In-House



Disc golf usage and foot traffic causing damage to the surrounding landscape





Old metal slide



Existing baseball diamond located near maintenance buildings



Shuffleboard and Gazebo

 (A: 6.2) Improve playground facilities throughout the park. Remove and replace oldest, non-compliant structures with newer equipment. Consider earthtone colors in the Heritage park setting rather than bright, primary colors. Refer to system wide playground recommendations.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 9.0) Repurpose or restore baseball diamond based on usage and partnership opportunities. Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara to explore tournament and recreation prospects.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Visit Buffalo Niagara
- Improve fishing access and opportunities to the edge of Cazenovia Creek and possibly the old park reservoir.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- Consider the safety conditions at the existing ski facility;
  - In the future transition the existing ski hill into a snow- board and sledding facility. Future safety improvements may be needed to provide the optimal conditions for these desirable winter activities.
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 14.0) Utilize skating area as available at the Stohrer Lodge; Limited park staff and/or public participation may limit the need for this.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 8.0) Restore old brick walkway, shuffleboard courts, and white pergola with garden plantings near the site of the former Emery Inn.
  - Utilize partnerships and volunteer groups to restore/preserve unique area of the park.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Private Businesses/Community Groups
- (P: 10.0) Potential mountain biking/shared trail systems could be established with proper studies, usergroup funding/support, and if deemed appropriate (does not conflict with other park uses).
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Usergroups/WNYMBA

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

### **Environment:**

- (A: 4.1-4.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new native tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges (Consult County Forester and local experts to determine appropriate species to benefit wildlife).
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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

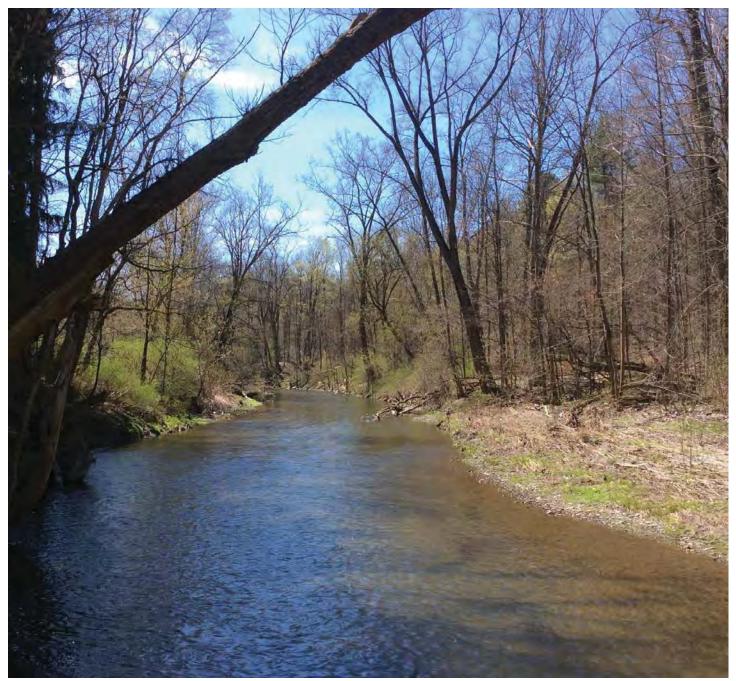
- (P: 11.0) Address and remove threatening invasive species like Common Buckthorn, Garlic Mustard, Chinese Privet, Purple Loosestrife, and Poison Ivy which are starting to gain ground in many areas of the park.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism
- (P: 12.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize native pollinator friendly plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;



Scenic trail off of the Elizabeth Grove Trail



- The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Improve the health of creeks/waterways. Work with NYSDEC and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the waterways and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Waterkeeper/In-House



Cazenovia Creek

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
	Areas" to reduce overall maintenance	_	High	1-2 Years	In-House
II .	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
	overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
4.1	throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
5.0	uneven terrain, etc. for park patrons	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	High	1-2 Years	In-House
6.1	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
3.3			High	1-2 Years	\$15,000
6.0	WPA Era Stone Bridge. Reconstruct	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	High	3-5 Years	\$20,000
1		Coordinate with Niagara Region Disc Golf regarding a new course layout. Accommodate alternative hole positions to reduce compaction / erosion from repetitive foot traffic.	High	1-2 Years	\$17,500
	# 2.0 3.1 3.3 4.1 5.0 6.1	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings  Improve awareness of steep slopes, uneven terrain, etc. for park patrons through signage.  Improve playground safety  6.1  Shelter #8 - Potential structural issues 3.3  Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Stone Bridge. Reconstruct portions of failed bridge.  Reconfigure the disc golf route to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.	Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat  Establish "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.  Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings  Improve awareness of steep slopes, uneven terrain, etc. for park patrons through signage.  Improve playground safety  Improve playground safety  Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" identified on the Master Plan widentified on the Ma	# Recommendation   Implementation Strategies   Priority    Establish "Natural Regeneration   Areas" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat    Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat   High    Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat   High    Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat   High    Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat   Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.    Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings    Improve awareness of steep slopes, uneven terrain, etc. for park patrons through signage.    Improve playground safety   Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.    Shelter #8 - Potential structural issues   Engage a consultant to review the structure and determine a course of action.    Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Stone Bridge. Reconstruct portions of failed bridge.   Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.    Brevent further deterioration of WPA Era Stone Bridge. Reconstruct portions of failed bridge.   Coordinate with Niagara Region Disc Golf regarding a new course layout. Accommodate alternative hole positions to reduce compaction / High High   High	# Recommendation   Implementation strategies   Priority   Term

#### KEY:

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

#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	11.0	Address and remove threatening invasive species like Common Buckthorn, Garlic Mustard, Chinese Privet, Purple Loosestrife, and Poison Ivy which are starting to gain ground in many areas of the park.	Work with WNY Prism and other partners to remove and address issue	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	1 7 7 7 1	Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;	pollinator plant gardens to promote	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	4.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	7.0	Establish Minor Gateways, welcome sign and rules,for the park at the following locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.1	Richardson Cottage	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.2	East park border along Emery Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.3	West park border along Emery Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.4	South park border along Cornwall Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	7.5	Stohrer's Lodge entrance off of Cornwall Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A		Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park: including large park trails map at main trailheads	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Provide directional signs to various points of interest.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Provide overall park maps showing park features, comfort stations and shelters	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park maps	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	8.3	Elizabeth Grove Trail	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	8.4	XC Ski Trail	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A		Provide large trail map showing all trails at main trailheads	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	10.0	Improve pedestrian safety, between the north and south portions of the park, along Emery Rd	Reduce the speed limit on Emery Rd to 15 MPH within the park boundary	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А		Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А		condition, or are very rarely rented	Shelters that are recommended to be removed include shelter 11, 24, and 117.	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
А	15.0	Undertake roadway repairs and repaving throughout the park. Improve ditches and culverts wherever necessary.	For abandoned roadways, remove existing blacktop surface and replace with natural landscaping treatments. Or just let them deteriorate on their own.	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
С		Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters	Engage contractor to perform repairs		3-5 Years	X

#### KEY:

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



#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	3.1	Amphitheater Shelter - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.2	Shelter #105 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs		3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.4	Shelter #16 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.5	Shelter #23 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Quoit Bed Shelters, 5 structures. Replace roofs	Engage contractor to perform repairs		3-5 Years	\$12,500
С	6.0	Seal and stripe (6) tennis courts	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,800
С	1	Emery Rd. Construct high visibility	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$5,700
С	8.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following picnic shelters:	Engage contractor to perform repairs		3-5 Years	Х
С	8.2	Shelter #11 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs		3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	8.3	Shelter #13 - Replace concrete slab	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	8.4	Shelter #20 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	9.0	areas; Reduce parking lot surface	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	Х
С	9.1		Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$30,000

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	9.2	Ski Lift parking lot	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
С	9.3	Parking area at Arbor Garden	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$10,000
С	9.4	Stohrer's Lodge Lot	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$15,000
С	10.0	Repair/replace guardrail west of tree roundabout on south side of park	Engage a contractor to perform the repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	\$1,000
А		Consider park for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places	Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer assigned to Erie County to complete the required nomination forms and submit to a State review board.	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А		Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
А	6.2	Continue to improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А	9.0	Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	1	Directional signage - Intersection of Olean Rd and Emery Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House

#### KEY:

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



#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	9.2	Center St and Emery Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	9.3	Directional signage - Intersection of Olean Rd and Richardson Rd	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
A	11.0	Reduce damage to turf areas and reduce erosion by providing a resilient surface, such as crushed stone or millings at each shelter location.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Low	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	14.0	Utilize skating area as available in the park at the Stohrer Lodge; Perform necessary improvements	Limited park staff and/or public participation may limit the need for this.	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
С	1.0	I	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	Х
С	1.1	Main park entry roads along Emery Rd	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$53,400
С	2.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Low	Ongoing	Х
С	2.1	Geology and ravine formation	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.2	CCC and its relationship with the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.3	History of the Emery's	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

2.5 EMERY PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	2.4	History of Harrigan	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.5	History of WPA structures	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	ı	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era "Round" Comfort Station. Repair roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Low	6-10 Years	\$12,500
С	11.0	Provide access to waterfall area off of Richardson Road. Install staircase and railing to allow access to creek and potential overlook area. Provide secondary overlook at the top of the gorge. Potentially clear brush/branches to provide scenic view of waterfall and ravine. Provide railing.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$100,000
С	120	Improve/repair or replace fences along Emery Road - Repair or replace entrance gates.	Engage a contractor to perform the repairs	Low	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С	13.0	Improve safety along northerly gorge/ ravine trail system, i.e. setbacks and permanent railings. Provide new scenic overlook at falls	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
Р	ı	Prevent further deterioration of the following WPA Era picnic shelters:	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	Х
Р	ı	Amphitheater Shelter - Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р		Shelter #105 – Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1	Shelter #108 - Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000

#### KEY:

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



#### **EMERY PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	1	Shelter #21 – Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1.5	Shelter #22 - Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1	Shelter #23 - Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Elizabeth Grove Cottage. Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Incinerators. Replace missing stones, reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	1	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era "Round" Comfort Station. Reset loose stones, clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	5.0	Prevent further deterioration of WPA Era Comfort Station A. Clean and repoint mortar	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
Р	8.0	Restore old brick walkway, shuffleboard courts, and white pergola with garden plantings near the site of the former Emery Inn.	Partnership opportunity with local schools, private businesses, and other local stakeholder groups	Low	3-5 Years	\$10,000
Р	9.0	Repurpose or restore baseball diamond based on usage	Coordinate with Visit Buffalo Niagara	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
Р		Potential mountain biking/shared trail systems could be established with proper studies, usergroup funding/support, and if deemed appropriate (does not conflict with other park uses)	Work with potential partner	Low	3-5 Years	Partner



#### 3.0 WATERFRONT PARKS

- 3.1 Isle View Park
- 3.2 Black Rock Canal Park
- 3.3 Tow Path Park
- 3.4 Wendt Beach Park
- 3.5 Bennett Beach Park

#### **ISLE VIEW PARK**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Isle View Park is a magnet for people on a warm summer evening. This 39-acre linear County-owned park in the Town of Tonawanda, is part of the Shoreline Trail System/Riverwalk and heavily used by bikers, joggers, walkers, roller-bladers and many others. A pedestrian bridge connects Isle View Park to Niawanda Park and is adjacent to the Two-mile Creek Greenway, forming an extensive linear park system along the banks of the Niagara River. Park features include boat launching ramps, a paved path (part of the ShorelineTrail), a large gazebo available for renting, a small playground, and numerous passive areas to view the Niagara River. The park also features a Tribute Garden, which is a special place of hope, healing, and awareness for lives impacted by domestic violence, managed by the County's Commission on the Status of Women.

#### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

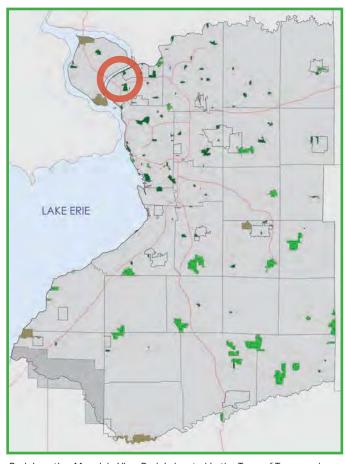
The park was acquired by the County in 1959, and is located on the site of the abandoned Erie Canal and towpath.

#### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

This popular linear park is located within the Town of Tonawanda, adjacent to the Niagara River. The Shoreline Trail travels through Isle View park in a north-south direction, linking to Niawanda Park at its northern end. This linear site is somewhat isolated from any major residential areas given that it is at the foot of a bluff overlooking the Niagara River.



Sunset over the Niagara River



Park Location Map: Isle View Park is located in the Town of Tonawanda along the Niagara River

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Maintain and improve Shoreline Trail/ Riverwalk; Provide safe pavement surface, easily identifiable trail striping, and proper signage.
- Remove and manage invasive species within the park, as well as planting native plants and pollinators to increase and protect birds and insects.
- Continue to support and coordinate with 'County Commission on the Status of Women' in regards to the Tribute Garden. Enhance and respect the space as a major asset of the park.



Local context map

#### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Isle View Park totaled \$217,399 and included the following projects:

- Construction of Domestic Violence Tribute Garden
- Concession Building Updates and repairs to plumbing system.
- Parking lots and drives Various paving repairs and reconstruction.
- Maintenance Shop Replaced roof
- Future Improvement Grant in place to remove dead dying ash trees and replace with new trees

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Many picnic tables and benches are in disrepair, falling apart, and in some cases pose safety concerns.
- Main entrance is in need of updating. Center median is not maintained and stone columns near the street are missing lights.
- ADA access to decks and platforms is a major concern in many areas of the park.
- Path needs repaving and restriping. (Grant in place to have this work done at a later date, also going to be widening the trail)
- Cracking and deterioration of asphalt entry at main entrance.
- Overlook areas off of trail are in rough shape; brick pavers are being displaced or sunken in due to natural effects.
   Railings are seeing wear and tear.
- Isle View Riverdogs building is not functional and vacant
- Many areas along the water are starting to become overgrown with vegetation



Overlook area: Restore/repair pavement



Several picnic tables throughout the park resemble this one, and should be replaced



Section of asphalt path missing









# MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: Specific Action Items - Ex. (A: 1)

- ① (A: 3.0, C: 2.0-3.0) Replace and repair the many dilapidated picnic tables and benches scattered throughout the park. Place new benches in areas where they have been previously removed (if the concrete pad remains)
- (C: 9.0) Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.
- 3 (A: 4.0) Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area
- updating: leveling of pavers, ramps/access improvements, railing upgrades, interpretive signage opportunities, etc. (C: 10.0) Small overlook areas off of trail are in need of general repairs and
- (C: 11.0) Place additional new playground equipment towards south end of © (A: 5.0) Maintain and enhance parking islands; Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens) Replace any damaged curbing
- park. Equipment can be placed closer to parking area making it easier for parents with small children to access play area.

(A: 6.0) Cut back, remove, and maintain overgrown vegetation, especially

- ⑤ (C.7.0) Replace lighting fixtures at stone columns at main entrance of park. Restore and repoint columns as necessary.
- (P: 3.0) Long term improvements could include providing additional (signature) overlooks; Overlooks could include 'donor' pavement areas,
- (0) (P: 1.0) Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and repair buildings at main entrance as necessary.
- $\overline{\mathbb{O}}$  (C.8.0) Maintain and enhance paved Shoreline (Riverwalk) Trail. Make necessary improvements at all times to ensure the safety of all types of trail

## MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- (P: 2.0) Continue to support and coordinate with 'County Commission on the Status of Women' in regards to the Tribute Garden. Enhance and respect the space as a major asset of the park.
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
- (C: 1.0) Engage consultant to establish enhanced gateways for the park at
- (P-4.0) NYSDOT through Great Lakes Scenic Byways has identified sle View Park as a priority location for new information support facility to include heritage related material.



#### **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

#### Structures:

 (P: 1.0) Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and repair buildings at main entrance as necessary.

o Restore Isle View Riverdogs structure to shelter.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 7.0) Replace lighting fixtures on stone columns at main entrance of park. Restore and repoint columns as necessary.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Greenway funding/In-House



Isle View Riverdogs: Restore and revert to shelter



Parks office and maintenance building



#### Maintenance/Safety:

- (P: 2.0) Continue to support and coordinate with the County's Commission on the Status of Women in regards to the Tribute Garden. Enhance and respect the space as a major asset of the park.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: County Commission on the Status of Women/Greenway funding
- (A: 3.0, C: 2.0-3.0) Replace and repair the many dilapidated picnic tables and benches scattered throughout the park.
  - Place new benches in areas where they have been previously removed (if the concrete pad remains)
    - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 8.0) Maintain and enhance paved Shoreline Trail/ Riverwalk. Make necessary improvements at all times to ensure the safety of all types of trail users (i.e. bikers, joggers, walkers, etc.)
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House



View towards the Tribute Garden



Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk within the park



Former location of a bench which was removed; Replace with new bench

- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations like improvements to overlooks and decks should be ADA accessible with railings and ramps where necessary.

■ Priority: Medium
■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 9.0) Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.

Priority: MediumPartner: Contractor

 (A: 4.0) Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Contractor/In-House

 (C: 10.0) Small overlook areas off of trail are in need of general repairs and updating; leveling of pavers, ramps/ access improvements, railing upgrades, interpretive signage opportunities, etc.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Greenway funding/Contractor



The trail at Isle View Park is very popular over the summer



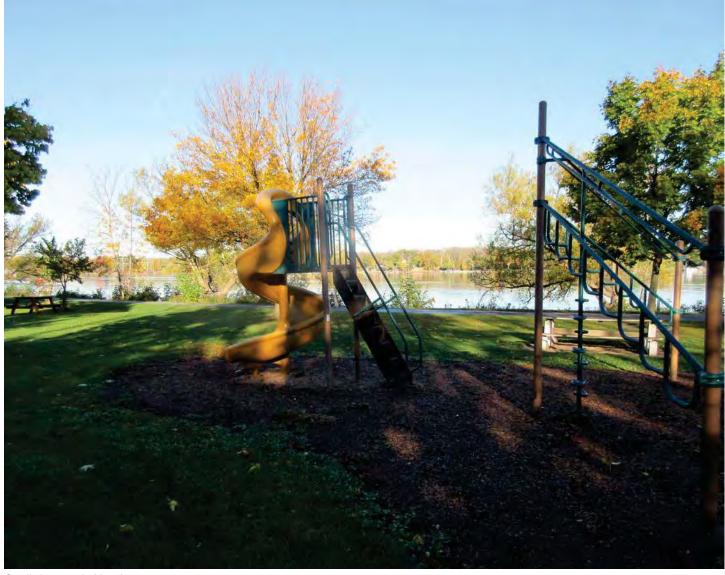
- (P: 3.0) Long term improvements could include providing additional (signature) overlooks;
  - Overlooks could include 'donor' pavement areas, viewing binoculars, and interpretive signage.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Greenway funding/Stakeholders
- (A: 5.0) Maintain and enhance parking islands;
  - Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens)
  - Replace any damaged curbing
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House

#### Recreation:

- (A: 2.0) Continue to improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House
- (C: 11.0) Place additional new playground equipment towards south end of park. Equipment can be placed closer to parking area making it easier for parents with small children to access play area.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Greenway funding/Consultant



Overlook with benches



Small playground with swings

#### Signage:

- (C: 1.0) Establish enhanced gateways for the park at the main entrance and secondary entrance on south side of park off of River Road.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- (P: 4.0) NYSDOT through Great Lakes Scenic Byways
  has identified Isle View Park as a priority location for
  new information support facility to include heritage
  related material. Work with NYS Scenic Byways Program
  and NYSDOT to coordinate and implement possible
  opportunity for park.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: NYSDOT/Great Lakes Scenic Byways

#### Connectivity:

- (C: 12.0) Design/create possible gateway areas at south and north end of Shoreline Trail.
  - This can be a small node with decorative pavement, landscaping elements, and seating areas, etc.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Greenway funding
- (C: 13.0) Long term improvement to consider land acquisition to the south to expand Isle View Park to the Grand Island Bridge.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Greenway funding

#### **Environment:**

- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - o Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - o Provide new tree plantings throughout the park.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - Apply for funding from NYSDEC or partner with the Erie County Soil and Water District for example, for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry



Bridge from Isle View to Niawanda Park



Shoreline Trail signage as you enter the Isle View Park

- (P: 6.0) Systematically remove most or all of the mature, non-native, invasive Norway Maple Trees that were planted in a large portion of the park, and replace with native trees and shrubs.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC, ECSWD
- (A: 6.0) Cut back, remove, and maintain overgrown vegetation, especially identified invasive species near shoreline edge to enable better views of the Niagara River and to ensure environmental stability.
  - Remove/control non-native invasive species, including Phragmites.
  - Add native low-growth riparian vegetation along the extent of the shoreline. Engage consultants for recommended species and design.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Waterkeeper/WNY Prism/In-House
- (P: 7.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; Park is a Niagara International Bird Area (Niagara IBA) designation.
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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
- (P: 8.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/ early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (P: 5.0) Improve the health of the Niagara River. Work with Erie County Soil and Water District, NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include river bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: ECSWD, NYSDEC, Waterkeeper



Shoreline conditions



Shoreline conditions



Natural area within the park



#### ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	2.0	Continue to improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
С	6.0	Provide required accessible parking in all parking lots, including signage, pavement symbols and aisle striping.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to perform construction	High	1-2 Years	\$3,500
С	8.0	Maintain and enhance paved Shoreline (Riverwalk) Trail. Make necessary improvements at all times to ensure the safety of all types of trail users	Provide trail resurfacing, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire corridor. Work with Niagara River Greenway Commission	High	1-2 Years	\$20,000
Р	2.0	Enhance and maintain Tribute Garden	Continue to support and coordinate with the County's Commission on the Status of Women	High	1-2 Years	In-House
Р	6.0	Systematically remove most or all of the mature, non-native, invasive Norway Maple Trees that were planted in a large portion of the park, and replace with native trees and shrubs.	Coordinate with NYSDEC, ECSWD, and County Foresters.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	7.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; Park is a Niagara International Bird Area (Niagara IBA) designation.	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner

#### KEY:

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

#### **ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р		Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
A	3.0	Repair damaged bench slats throughout the park	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	4.0	Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
А	5.0	Maintain and enhance parking islands; Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens) Replace any damaged curbing	Utilize parks staff and volunteer groups to perform repairs and enhancements	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
A	6.0	Cut back, remove, and maintain overgrown vegetation, especially identified invasive species near shoreline edge to enable better views of the Niagara River and to ensure environmental stability.	Utilize parks staff, usergroups and volunteers to perform improvements	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
С	2.0	Replace damaged benches throughout park	Engage a contractor to remove damaged benches and provide new benches	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,800
С	3.0	Replace missing benches throughout the park	Engage a contractor to provide new benches	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,800
С	4.0	Replace damaged gutters and fascia on Comfort Station near Gazebo	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	\$5,000
С	9.0	Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	\$8,000

#### ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	10.0	Small overlook areas off of trail are in need of general repairs and updating; leveling of pavers, ramps/access improvements, railing upgrades, interpretive signage opportunities, etc.	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$25,000
Р	1.0	Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and repair buildings at main entrance as necessary; specifically Isle View Riverdogs building	Revert Isle View Riverdogs structure to shelter	Medium	3-5 Years	\$75,000
Р	5.0	Improve the health of the Niagara River	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
С	1.0	Establish Enhanced Gateways	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	17,800
С	5.0	Reconstruct concrete revetment, appears to be undermined	Engage a consultant to develop plans and specifications, engage a contractor to perform repairs or reconstruction	Low	6-10 Years	\$74,000
С	7.0	Replace lighting fixtures on stone columns at main entrance of park. Restore and repoint columns as necessary.	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Low	1-2 Years	\$10,000

#### KEY:

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

#### **ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	11.0	Place additional new playground equipment towards south end of park. Equipment can be placed closer to parking area making it easier for parents with small children to access play area.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to perform construction	Low	6-10 Years	\$30,000
С	12.0	Design/create possible gateway areas at south and north end of Shoreline Trail.	This can be a small node with decorative pavement, landscaping elements, and seating areas, etc. Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to perform construction	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000
С	13.0	Long term improvement to consider land acquisition to the south to expand Isle View Park to the Grand Island Bridge.	Coordinate with landowners and partners	Low	6-10 Years	NA
Р	3.0	Long term improvements could include providing additional (signature) overlooks; Overlooks could include 'donor' pavement areas, viewing binoculars, and interpretive signage.	Coordinate with Niagara River Greenway Commission and other potential usergroups/investors	Low	6-10 Years	\$60,000
Р	4.0	Work with NYS Scenic Byways Program and NYSDOT to coordinate and implement possible opportunity for park.	NYSDOT through Great Lakes Scenic Byways has identified Isle View Park as a priority location for new information support facility to include heritage related material.	Low	6-10 Years	Partner

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

#### **BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

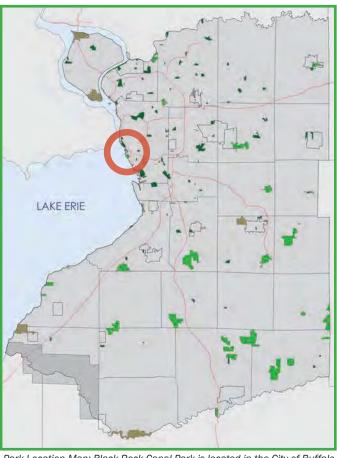
Black Rock Canal Park formerly known as the Ontario Street Boat Launch and Cornelius Creek Park, before becoming a combined park in 2013. Part of the recreational Shoreline Trail system, the park attracts a wide range of park users including fisherman, boaters, dog owners, and casual park-goers. The 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.



Entry plaza



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

#### 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 parks 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)

#### **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



Local context map



Promenade on a warm sunny day











View towards the Niagara River



Frequent maintenance issues at the Bark Park

#### 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.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse 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.
  - o Revert to open lawn area for passive park usage.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Dog Park Group/In-House

- (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 onroad bike lane connection to Niagara Street.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: City of Buffalo

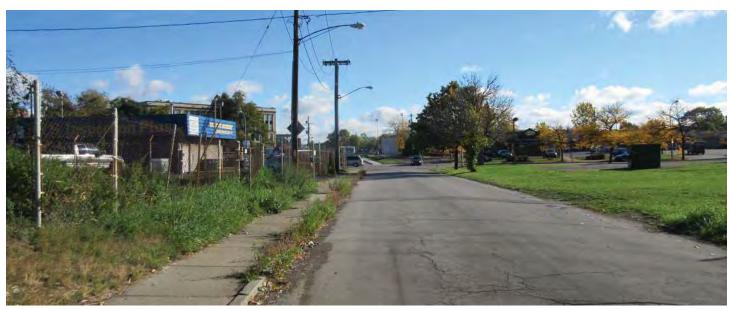
- (P: 7.0) Coordinate with community groups and stakeholders to create 'community gardens' within maintained lawn areas of the park. Would be a volunteer based opportunity, could reduce some of the mowing maintenance needed, and would provide a great sense of community stewardship.
  - Priority: Medium
  - 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
А	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
Р	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
Р	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
Р	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
Р	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
Р	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
Р	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
С	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
Р	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
Р	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

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

C: Capital Project



Meandering path at the waterfront



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

3.3 TOW PATH PARK FINAL PLAN

### **TOW PATH PARK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

A hidden gem at the foot of Hertel Avenue along the shoreline of the Niagara River, Tow Path Park offers excellent westerly views of the Niagara River and adjacent Rich Marina. Tow Path Park is a small, 5-acre County-owned park, which is appropriately named for the historic towpath, which once passed through this area following beside the Erie Canal. The small "pocket-park" is primarily passive in nature and is popular for fishing, picnicking and as a resting area along the Shoreline Trail system.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

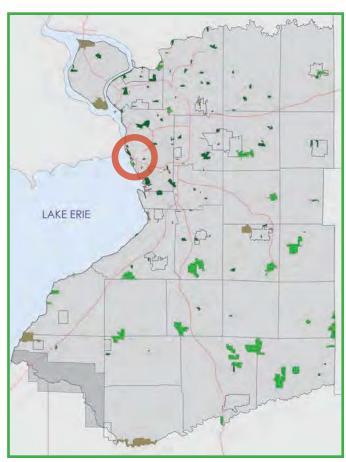
Tow Path Park is a waterfront park within the City of Buffalo. The park lies along the Shoreline Trail which connects bikers, joggers, and walkers to a variety of waterfront destinations along the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers.



Local context map

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- One portable toilet, no formal restrooms at park.
- Lack of connection/transition to community/neighborhood.
- I-190 separation
- Railing along waterfront is starting to exhibit rust and deterioration.



Park Location Map: Tow Path Park is located in the City of Buffalo off of Niagara Street

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Install security camera system tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
- Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds; Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
- Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.







- Overgrown vegetation blocking Park's sign of Tow Path Park.
- No sign and lack of awareness that park exists on the either side of the I-190 from Niagara Street.

### **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.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse 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



Promenade



Pathway leading to the waterfront

3.3 TOW PATH PARK FINAL PLAN



Tow Path Park sign and interpretive signage

- (P: 1.0) Install security camera system tie into City of **Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera** system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to have more of an on-site presence.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo
- (P: 6.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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

- (P: 7.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (A: 3.0) Provide a parks rules sign near entry signage.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House
- (A: 4.0) Install signage at intersection of Hertel Avenue and Niagara Street to provide wayfinding and awareness of the park.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House



 (P: 2.0) Explore possible partnership opportunities with Niagara River Greenway to provide further enhancements and amenities to Tow Path Park (i.e. additional landscaping/planting areas, viewing binoculars, etc.)

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Niagara River Greenway

 (P: 3.0) Work with City of Buffalo to improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Hertel Avenue from Niagara Street. Improvements could include additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: City of Buffalo

 (P: 4.0) Improve I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Albright Knox Public Art Curator/ Buffalo Arts Studio/Private Businesses • (A: 2.0) Clean, prime, and paint railing near shoreline; starting to show rust and deterioration.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 1.0) Upgrade or enhance park gateway sign to coordinate with other parks in the system.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 (P: 5.0) Possible partnership and long-term opportunity to design and build small facility within park; featuring restrooms, possible concessions, and additional small area to keep park maintenance equipment. Park is in strategic location along the Shoreline Trail to feature such a facility.

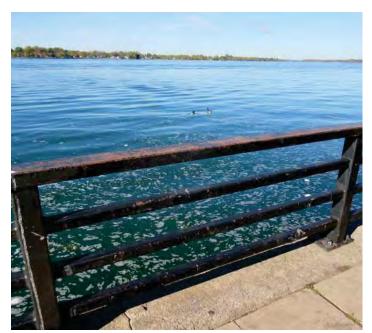
■ Priority: Low

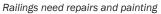
■ Partner: Greenway funding/Empire State Trail funding



Promenade - View towards Niagara River

3.3 TOW PATH PARK FINAL PLAN







Bench facing the River



Portable restroom at the park

### **TOW PATH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А			Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House
С	2.0	Provide required accessible parking in all parking lots, including signage, pavement symbols and aisle striping.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to perform construction	High	1-2 Years	\$3,500
Р	1.0	Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to have more of an onsite presence.	High	1-2 Years	City of Buffalo
Р	6.0	resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	7.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear- winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
А	$\sim$	Prevent corrosion of the waterfront railing.	Clean, prime and paint railing	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	3.0		Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	4.0		Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

3.3 TOW PATH PARK FINAL PLAN

### **TOW PATH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р		Provide further enhancements and amenities to Tow Path Park (i.e. additional landscaping/ planting areas, viewing binoculars, etc.)	Possible partnership opportunity with Niagara River Greenway	Medium	3-5 Years	\$5,000
С	1.0	Establish enhanced gateways	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
Р		ŗ.	Coordinate with the City of Buffalo on improvements which could include additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.	Low	3-5 Years	\$100,000
Р	4.0	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	\$5,000
Р	1		Coordinate with Niagara River Greenway Commission and Empire State Trail agencies	Low	6-10 Years	\$270,000

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

### **WENDT BEACH PARK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Wendt Beach is a 164-acre, multi-purpose park with both beach-related, passive activities and active recreational offerings. The park features the historic Wendt Mansion, a stony beach (none to little sand), and vegetated bluff and numerous soccer fields. The park has two distinct characteristics; one is the expanse of mowed soccer fields and open lawns upon entering at the eastern, street-front edge of the park; the other is the more natural heritage setting near the Lake, with the historic Mansion, outbuildings, natural shoreline and large wooded areas. Each serve different user types and activities. A park roadway bisects the park from east to west.

Just inland from the south end of the beach is a forested wetland area with protected plant species such as Trillium. Roughly half the park is forested, mostly on the south side. A bluff approximately 15 feet high runs the entire inland edge of the beach.

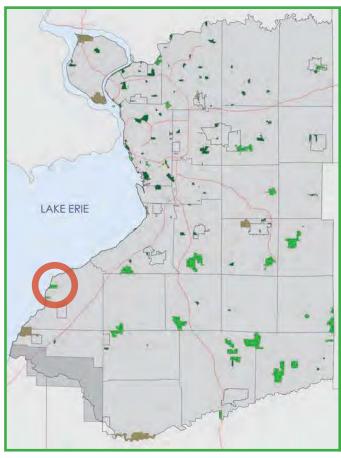
### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

The Wendt beach property has a long and storied history. The Park sits on the old estate of Henry W. Wendt, Jr., which the family later renamed "The Ridgewood." The existing historic Wendt Mansion, with outbuildings and old stable structure, is reminiscent of an earlier era of influence, when the wealthy families of Buffalo recreated along the lakeshore during the summer months. The structure was built in the 1800s along the top of the dune and later moved to its current location. The interior of the main house is made up of beautiful hardwood floors, a spiral staircase and railings of dark wood, window seats and bay windows, many of which overlook the Lake and beach areas.

Some of the outbuildings were part of the earlier estate. This includes the log cabin (once a playhouse and guest house), a caretaker's cottage, a garage with chauffeur's quarters, horse stables (now public restrooms), and the old pump house, where water brought in from the Lake was stored in a large tank and pumped through pipes to outside spigots for watering the gardens.



Beautiful views of Lake Erie



Park Location Map: Wendt Beach is located in the Town of Evans, a short distance away from Bennett Beach off of Lakeshore Road

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Restore the historic Wendt Mansion. Identify potential adaptive re-use that compliments the park uses.
  - Consider a public/private partnership when redeveloping this historic structure.
  - Develop / restore a gracious landscape setting around the historic mansion with formal lawn, gardens, strolling paths, tree lined entrance road.
- Formalize and repair large parking area near mansion and other buildings. Size of parking area may be excessive; there may be opportunities to reduce pavement by introducing rain gardens and planting medians to capture runoff and reorganize lot.

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN



Local context map

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Located in the Town of Evans approximately 20 miles south of Downtown Buffalo, Wendt Beach is less than one mile north of Bennett Beach and is accessible via Old Lakeshore Road. The Wendt Beach property marks a transition point along Old Lakeshore Road with the larger properties and estates to the north towards Sturgeon Point and the smaller seasonal cottage properties to the south towards the center of Evans and hamlet of Lake Erie Beach. Most of the area is rural in character.

### **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

Wendt Beach has a distinct and historic Mansion setting, which overlooks a stony beach (non-sand). Swimming is currently not allowed due to natural conditions (rocky beach, undertows) and limited staffing. Visitors must drive through a wide-open field area that is used primarily for the local soccer clubs.

Bennett Beach Park is another County-owned passive-oriented park, offering no structured playing fields or courts one mile to the south of Wendt Beach and is accessible via the Shoreline Trail.



Historic Wendt Mansion is boarded up and is not accessible



Drainage issues at parking lot



Rough rocky shoreline and limited staff prevents swimming here

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- The Mansion is in need of extensive updating and repair if it is to be fully useable.
- The maintenance facility location detracts from the Heritage setting around the Mansion.
- There is no appropriate "gateway" feature for such a beautiful park setting.
- The entrance to the park (through the mowed athletic fields) gives no indication that this is actually a "beach" park.
- The parking lot near the beach is in very poor condition, especially near its entrance. Frequent ponding occurs.
- Frequent ponding also occurs in stone parking areas near the soccer fields.
- Poor playground location.
- Current storage sheds for soccer equipment are an eyesore and are out of character for the park.
- Large areas of lawn are mowed between the main parking lot and the soccer fields.
- 1 restroom near Mansion serves the entire park. A restroom may be better served near soccer fields.
- Old dilapidated picnic tables in junk pile off of trail should be removed and discarded.
- · Beach is very rocky and not maintained

### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

- Wendt Mansion Study Consultant hired to evaluate overall current conditions and cost to refurbish using today's codes and cost.
- Turned block building into lifeguard reporting area, storage area, office space, and restroom facility.
- Electrical fuse panel upgrade at residence.
- New waterline to the residence.
- Shoreline Trail is being constructed through park. Park will feature an elevated boardwalk through portion of forested area, and will be paved and at-grade through the remainder portion of the park.



Some scattered picnic tables throughout the park

# ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

### MASTER PLAN WENDT BEACH





### 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

### Beach/Heritage Area (West Section):

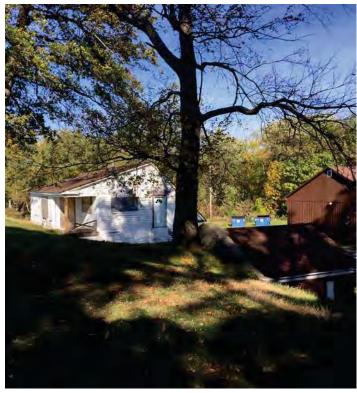
- (P: 1.0) If feasible (significant investment required), restore the historic Wendt Mansion. This is a very important "heritage" area within the County parks System. Identify potential adaptive re-use that compliments the park uses.
  - Secure National Register of Historic Places status for the house and setting.
  - (Refer to Wendt Mansion Study) Potential uses include a wedding/ conference facility, restaurant

- or tea room, meeting facility, etc.;
- Explore potential partner with local news station (Channel 2/4/7) to establish small 'weather station'/education center utilizing the mansion's strategic location overlooking Lake Erie;
- Pursue a public/private partnership when redeveloping this historic structure.
- Develop / restore a gracious landscape setting around the historic mansion with formal lawn, gardens, strolling paths, tree lined entrance road;
- The entire structure should be decorated with "period" furnishings. This authentic restoration could provide a "museum-like" setting, with photos and documents of the park's history, the earlier history of the Wendt Homestead and Farm, etc. A small gift shop could be provided to sell local park-related items, historical maps, etc.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Investor/PBN/VBN/Wendt Foundation



Wendt Mansion restoration would require significant investment, and partnership opportunities

- (C: 2.0) Formalize and repair large parking area near mansion and other buildings. Size of parking area may be excessive; there may be opportunities to reduce pavement by introducing rain gardens and planting medians to capture runoff and reorganize lot.
  - Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 2.0) Possible adaptive reuse of barn structure/horse stable to open up to the arts community or other local stakeholder groups. May be able to rent out space for weddings and large gatherings.
  - Conduct formal study and analysis of horse stable building and others like the 2013 Mansion Study.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Investor/PBN/Wendt Foundation
- (P:3.0) Prevent further deterioration to remaining outbuildings in the 'heritage' area: Identify adaptive reuse opportunity.
  - Conduct formal study and analysis of remaining out-buildings like the 2013 Mansion Study.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Investor/PBN
- (P: 8.0) Actively manage and protect the potential for grassland habitats which provide grassland birds protection and assistance.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/ECSWD



All buildings at Wendt need improvements and repairs



Horse Stable building



Need to reorganize and reduce large parking area

- (P:9.0) Remove and address invasive species.
  - Plant and provide pollinator friendly (native) plants, including nectar sources for migrating Monarch Butterflies.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/ECSWD
- (C: 3.0) Undertake dune restoration; although Wendt Beach is actually a very rocky beach, it still has a use and charm that is very attractive.
  - Engage consultant to perform studies and analysis of existing dunes and provide procedures for restoration/protection;
  - Maintain current access point through dunes to the beach off the trail. Enhance access point with signage to encourage usage.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: Consultant



View towards the beach

 (C: 4.0) Relocate maintenance facility away from historic mansion and to a more inconspicuous spot adjacent to the superintendent's house (off the back of the parking lot); (2003 Plan)

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 5.0) Reorganize roadway and pedestrian zones to separate future "mansion" functions from public beach area (2003 Master Plan).
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Consultant
- Develop and enforce west side of park as passive beach zone, i.e. picnicking, walking a dog, reading a book, etc.
  - Provide Adirondack chairs along the beach similar to Wilkeson Pointe and the Outer Harbor;
  - Introduce small parking/ picnic areas south of the mansion along the driveway, with turn-around loop;
  - relocate current boat storage to a more inconspicuous location, still allowing for easy access to the beach.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Many people still use the beach for long walks along the water

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN



Cabin is featured overlooking the Lake



Much of the park is mowed



Soccer fields which are used by Lakeshore Youth Soccer

- (C: 1.0) Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's local history, i.e. How and when the property was first developed?; When was the area first settled?; What's the history behind the Wendt mansion and the farm structures?; Did Lakeshore Road once pass through the site near the dune area?; Was there a polo field on the site?; What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?; etc. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Coordinate with local historians and town agencies to gather historic data, photos, maps, etc.
  - Provide signs and interpretive plaques in key areas of the heritage section of the park.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House/Hamburg Historical Society

### **Active Recreation (East Section):**

- (P: 7.0) Maintain and enhance soccer fields; partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer to adequately provide safe playing fields/conditions.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Lakeshore Youth Soccer
- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying, or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff, and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree and native planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural character of the park.
  - 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

- (A: 2.0-2.1) Reduce mowing in non-recreational areas between beach and soccer fields. Expand no-mow areas and provide wildflowers and meadows; Install interpretive signage emphasizing the ecologic benefits.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 6.0) Provide formalized trails in wooded areas of park especially south of the main park road.
  - Tie new trails into Shoreline Trail. New park trails can form loops from the Shoreline Trail to provide added interest and opportunities for park users.
  - New trails would have to be sensitive to wetland areas, and would need to be an elevated boardwalk like the Shoreline Trail portion.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- Enhance opportunities for winter activities at Wendt beach. The park is a perfect setting for numerous crosscountry ski trails, etc. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 4.0-5.0) Provide larger formalized, "structured" parking opportunities (stone or asphalt lots) and a support facility (i.e. permanent restrooms, concessions, storage) for the very large soccer crowds.
  - Parking areas should be restricted to the north side of the park road due to construction of the Shoreline Trail.
  - Coordinate with Lakeshore Youth Soccer for funding and planning for these expanded features
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Lakeshore Youth Soccer
- (A: 4.0-4.2) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - Intersection of Sturgeon Point Road and Erie Road
  - Lakeshore Road and Sturgeon Point Road
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

No-mow/low-mow areas can be extended from the tree edge towards the road

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

 (C: 7.0) Establish picnic groves in areas of the park not conflicting with soccer fields and heritage area; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 8.0) Enhance park entrance and identity at Lakeshore Road, with entrance feature. Provide a distinct transition zone between the two park sections and distinctive entrance to the heritage area of the site, i.e. possibly establish a secondary entrance feature past the soccer fields which would lead people towards the historic mansion and lake;
  - Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 9.0) Possibly expand and enhance small playground currently featured near the soccer fields.
  - Provide additional equipment suitable for all ages and abilities
  - Relocate existing playground near horse stable building to new location near soccer fields.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



Small playground area near soccer fields



Gateway sign near Lakeshore Road



### WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees. Develop an annual tree planting program.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А		Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Expand no-mow areas and provide wildflowers and meadows	High	3-5 Years	In-House
А		Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
А	3.0	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
С	3.0	Undertake dune restoration; Engage consultant to perform studies and analysis of existing dunes and provide procedures for restoration/protection	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	6-10 Years	\$40,000
Р	1.0	Prevent further deterioration and restore Wendt Mansion; Identify potential adaptive reuse that compliments park uses	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	\$2,400,000 (2013 Mansion Study)

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

### WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	2.0		Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	Recommended to complete formal estimate study and analysis
Р		remaining out-buildings in the	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	Recommended to complete formal estimate study and analysis
Р		Maintain and enhance soccer fields; partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer to adequately provide safe playing fields/conditions.		High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р		Actively manage and protect the potential for grassland habitats which provide grassland birds protection and assistance.	Consult with NYSDEC, ECSWD, and other professional experts.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	9.0	Remove and address invasive species.Plant and provide pollinator friendly (native) plants, including nectar sources for migrating Monarch Butterflies.	Consult with NYSDEC, ECSWD, and other professional experts.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
A		park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	4.1	and Erie Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House

### WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	4.2	Lakeshore Road and Sturgeon Point Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
С	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
С	2.0	Improve safety and functionality of main parking lot, reduce size of lot, provide asphalt surface, striping, accessible parking spaces, planting medians, and rain gardens	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$400,000
Р	4.0	Upgrade the east side of Wendt Park to include more formalized, "structured" parking opportunities (stone or asphalt lots)	Partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer	Medium	1-2 Years	\$50,000
С	4.0	Relocate maintenance facility away from historic mansion and to a more inconspicuous spot adjacent to the superintendent's house	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$200,000
С	5.0	Reorganize roadway and pedestrian zones to separate future "mansion" functions from public beach area	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$75,000
С	6.0	Provide formalized trails in wooded areas of park especially south of the main park road. Tie new trails into Shoreline Trail.	New trails would have to be sensitive to wetland areas, and would need to be an elevated boardwalk like the Shoreline Trail portion.	Low	6-10 Years	\$500,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

3.4 WENDT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

### WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	7.0		Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$200,000
С	8.0	at Lakeshore Road, with entrance feature. Provide a distinct transition	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,600
С		I	Engage a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$60,000
Р	5.0	'' '	Partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer	Low	3-5 Years	\$350,000
Р	6.0	station. This facility could be	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	Low	6-10 Years	\$500,000

# SCHEMATIC PLAN WENDT BEACH - HERITAGE AREA



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

### **BENNETT BEACH PARK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Bennett Beach is a special place along the eastern shoreline of Lake Erie, having one of the last remaining natural sand beaches and dunes. This unique lakefront park is approximately 50 acres in size and is located in the Town of Evans. Lakeshore Road splits the park into two halves, with the western half as "beach-related" open space and the remainder as an undeveloped natural wooded area. The park is also bisected from the northwest to the southeast by Big Sister Creek, which is an attractive fishing spot. A pedestrian bridge provides access from an existing parking area over to the beach. In general, the park is very flat, except for the large sand dunes and an 8'-high berm north of the bridge along the Creek.

Limited facilities exist at Bennett Beach, including a comfort station located at the parking area. The old Angola Water Treatment Facility, owned by the City of Buffalo, sits abandoned just to the south of the Bennett Beach property.

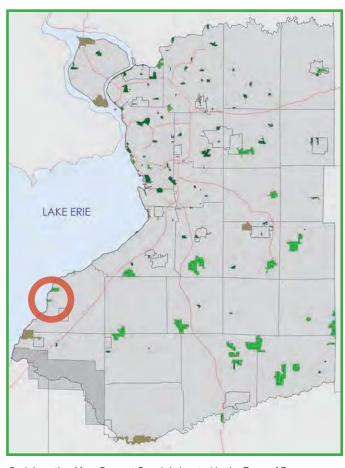
### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Bennett Beach sits on the site of the old Bennett Estate. The property was originally acquired by the City of Buffalo, and later on by Erie County. While most beaches along the eastern Lake Erie shoreline have either been destroyed, altered, or are under private ownership, Bennett Beach is one of the very few publicly held waterfront parks in Erie County. Bennett Beach still retains some of the historic landscape features that once were so common along the lakeshore, including a natural sand beach and impressive sand dunes. In addition, there are back-dune wetlands remaining and the natural dynamics of Big Sister Creek's outlet into the Lake.

It has been said that an "Old Growth" forest, with trees between 200 years and 500 years old, exists on the property immediately adjacent to the park to the north on the 'Pine Lodge Property'.



Nice sandy beach at Bennett Beach Park



Park Location Map: Bennett Beach is located in the Town of Evans, a short distance away from Wendt Beach off of Lakeshore Road

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Preserve and enhance overall dune environment;
   Protection of these unique natural features along the Lake Erie shoreline should be prioritized.
- Prioritize the protection of archaeological sensitive areas.
  - Determine specific areas of significance and provide proper protection;
  - Provide possible interpretive signage as warning of sensitive areas
  - Actively pursue any grants and funding available through federal agencies.

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

### LOCAL CONTEXT

Bennett Beach is located approximately 23 miles south of Downtown Buffalo, at the intersection of Old Lakeshore Road and Bennett Road. The beach-front properties to both the north and south of Bennett Beach are primarily single family residential, with most housing historically "summer" or "seasonal" cottages owned by people in the greater Buffalo area. Areas to the east of the park are generally low density, rural residential developments. South from Bennett Beach is the thickly settled hamlet of Lake Erie Beach (Evans), a popular summer resort area with a few seasonal commercial establishments. Recent years have seen more year-round residents, as residential lakefront property has become a very hot commodity. The lakefront area to the north of Bennett Beach along Old Lakeshore Road is traditionally comprised of larger estates, many dating back to the early 1900s.

### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

Bennett Beach is a passive park, offering no structured playing fields or courts. Wendt Beach is another Countyowned lakefront park situated only one mile to the north of Bennett Beach which is easily accessible via the Shoreline Trail along Lakeshore Road. However, Wendt Beach is of a much different character, with a distinct and historic mansion setting, stony beach (non-sand), and expansive soccer fields.



Local context map



Sunset over Lake Erie

### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / **IMPROVEMENTS**

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Bennett Beach totaled \$198,531 and included the following projects:

- Comfort Station Roof repair and plumbing
- Parking lot and roadway improvements Extended size and resurfaced with two types of stone
- Wall removed Removed old bath house, foundation
- Storage Building Built pole barn storage building
- Comfort Station Remodel Complete remodel

### **ARCHAEOLOGY PARTNERSHIP -**

Almost all of the parks under Erie County's jurisdiction are located within state designated Archaeological Sensitive Areas (ASAs). ASAs are established whenever a known archaeological site is located within a 0.50-mile radius. In several instances, there are known archaeological resources located within an Erie County Park.

At Bennett Beach Park, pre-contact Native American artifacts including, but not limited to projectile points, pottery shards, and fire pits have been unearthed. The quality of the artifacts being found at Bennett Beach has become an issue at Bennett Beach Park because of looting and, while digging in Erie County parks is strictly against the law, it is almost impossible to enforce/to prevent it from happening.

Extensive public education is one method of helping to prevent looting. An educated general public, with an awareness of how the law, goes a long way in helping keeping Parks staff aware of any looting that may be occurring within the parks.

The wealth of archaeological resources, especially at Bennett Beach, presents an excellent partnership opportunity with the University at Buffalo Department of Anthropology (which has specializations in archaeology).

Again, graduate and doctoral students from the program, under the guidance of their professors, could conduct public "dig days" at parks such as Bennett Beach. These "dig days" have proven to be highly successful at engaging, not only amateur/part-time archaeologists, but also families with children of all ages. The "dig days" have multiple benefits for everyone involved.

First, they are huge draw of interest and they bring increased visitorship to a given park. Second, they educate the public on the do's and don'ts of archaeology and make them aware of the intrinsic value of these irreplaceable sites. These members of the public often become your strongest allies in protecting the sites from looting. Finally, they provide the students with the opportunity to engage in hands-on, real-world archaeology, equipping with the experience and knowledge needed to go on to become registered professional archaeologists (RPA).

Significant finds, could be potentially be displayed with other community partners such as local historical societies or even the Buffalo History Museum or the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Apparent archaeological artifacts buried within much of the beach front property. No protection and security in place to prevent theft from these culturally significant areas.
- No protection of sensitive and unique dune areas.
- Bennett Beach does not appear to be maximizing its potential.
- The parking lot is poorly defined and in poor condition.
   Ponding frequently occurs.
- Small parking area on east side of Lakeshore Road does not have good connection to park.
- The walk from the parking area to the beach can be difficult for less-abled patrons.
- One small playground structure cannot accommodate the number of children during the summer.
- No formal access to the creek for fishing and aquatic recreation.



Parking area



Sandy entrance to the beach

## MASTER PLAN

### **BENNETT BEACH**





### 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

### Beach/Dunes:

- (C: 3.0) Preserve and enhance overall dune environment; Protection of these unique natural features along the Lake Erie shoreline should be prioritized.
  - Protect and inventory significant and rare plant species, as well as other ecological features.
  - Incorporate new beach grasses and vegetation on the waterfront side of the dune to assure longterm sustainability.
  - Engage dune/ecological expert to properly define dune environment and place fencing to protect these natural features.
  - Provide necessary signage to educate park patrons about sensitivity of the dune areas.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: ECSWD/NYSDEC

- (P: 1.0) Prevention of the theft of important artifacts and antiquities needs to be prioritized within archaeological sensitive areas. Engage consultant and local universities to undergo investigation of archaeological artifacts and historically significant features. Previous studies and reports have acknowledged the evidence of such remains and they are a unique component of the park.
  - Assess vegetation and wildlife before completing any work in these areas to reduce impacts.
  - Determine specific areas of significance and provide proper protection;
  - Provide interpretive signage as warning of sensitive areas;
  - Patrolling and security measures should be taken to provide additional protection of critical areas of the park:
  - Actively pursue any grants and funding available through federal agencies.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: University At Buffalo/Patrolling & Security/Penn Dixie/Evans Historical Society



Sensitive dune areas at Bennett Beach

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN



Pictured on the left is the existing sand trail to the beach at Bennett, and the picture on the right is of an accessible boardwalk system installed at Walnut Beach Park in Ashtabula, Ohio.

- (C: 4.0) Establish an ADA accessible boardwalk system/ or series of paths/trails through the existing "cut" in the natural sand dune to reduce further impacts and degradation to one of the last surviving natural sand dunes on the eastern Lake Erie Shoreline.
  - This new boardwalk would allow for dune reinstatement/restoration, and would prevent further water erosion and debris build-up following every major storm along the lake.
  - Provide appropriate access point to reduce potential harm to dune areas.
  - Establish nature trails and interpretive signage around dunes and wetland areas.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Soil and Water Conservation District



- Incorporate new backshore beach activities, i.e. first aid/ lifeguard station, and potential rentals (wind surfers, kayaks); Introduce volleyball courts (sand and/ or grass) and other beach-related activities into the recreational mix in partnership with user-groups and stakeholders.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Grants



View along the beach

- (C: 1.0) Provide interpretive signage and opportunities about the lakefront environment, harsh weather conditions, dune restoration, creek habitat, local history, Bennett House history, etc. An entire signage package should be developed, similar to that at Woodlawn Beach.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Historical Society
- Pursue a usergroup/local investor who can lease the existing water treatment plant adjacent to the park property. The UB Archeology program could use it as a field station and spur investment into the rest of the park.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: University at Buffalo

### Creek/Forested Areas:

- (P: 3.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD
- (P: 2.0) Improve the health of Big Sister Creek. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the waterways and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: NYSDEC/ECSWD/Waterkeeper



Existing sign with park information



Big Sister Creek

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN



Trail access to the Creek



Pedestrian bridge over Big Sister Creek

- Maintain area east of Lakeshore Road as nature reserve. Provide limited trail access through this natural area to offer access to the Creek.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House
- Increase and enhance fishing opportunities and access points along Big Sister Creek. Especially in the forested area to the east of Lakeshore Road.
  - Fish species include steelhead, brown trout, and smallmouth bass.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House
- Monitor and maintain health of trees to preserve natural beauty around Big Sister Creek.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Forestry/In-House
- Provide and enhance nature trails; include possible interpretive signage about local fauna/species/ecology of the area.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Cornell Cooperative Extension



### Park Area:

- (A: 1.1-1.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - o Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - 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
- Continue to develop Shoreline Trail System to link with other lakefront parks and nearby communities.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House/Grants
- (A: 3.0) Improve playground safety; Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House



Small playground area



Parking area should be formalized and enhanced

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

- (P: 4.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds:
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations
  - 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
- (P: 5.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/ early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (C: 2.0) Reorganize and improve parking area; Consider paving the lot.
  - Define boundaries and provide new tree plantings around the lot.
  - Define lot with possible planting buffers/medians
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- (C: 5.0) Possibly provide expanded playground **equipment** to replace existing play structure which is too small to accommodate a large number of children during the summer months.
  - It is recommended to have a play structure that appeals to both the younger (2-5 yrs) and older (5-12 yrs) children.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Consultant
- (A: 4.0-4.2) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - Intersection of Bennett Road and Dennis Road
  - Bennett Road and Erie Road
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House





Large open space area between Creek and parking lot



Ponding of water in parking lot



- (C: 6.0) Establish picnic groves on east side of Creek; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 7.0) Update and improve restroom facility; Retrofit building to include stone work and 'lakefront style' design to fit better in with County Parks System character.
  - Expansion of building could include area for concessions and expanded restroom/changing areas.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/In-House

 (C: 8.0) Relocate the park entrance road to the south for better site distances and safety; consider the unsafe conditions at the current entrance/ intersection.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/In-House

- Provide emergency access; Given the three distinct zones of the park (beach, back of dune to creek area, and between the creek and road),
  - provide emergency access through the water treatment facility area (Schwert Road) to the beach;
  - off Schwert Road for the back-dunes;
  - o and off Lakeshore Road for the main park area.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 9.0) Establish a more dominant gateway into the park from Lakeshore Road. Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible, especially within the walk to the beach.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House



Entry signage off of Lakeshore Road

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

## **BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		throughout the park. Develop a	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A		Continue to develop Shoreline Trail System to link with other lakefront parks and nearby communities.	Coordinate planning efforts with Town	High	Ongoing	Project specific
A	3.0	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
С	3.0	environment; Engage dune/ecological	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	6-10 Years	Conduct a formal study and cost estimates
Р	1.0		Partnership with University At Buffalo, Penn Dixie, Hamburg Historical Society	High	6-10 Years	Partnership
Р		Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	4.0		Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	5.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner

## KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



## **BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	4.0	Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	4.1	Intersection of Bennett Road and Dennis Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
А	4.2	Bennett Road and Erie Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
С	l	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Medium	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	2.0	Improve safety and functionality of main parking lot, reduce size of lot, provide asphalt surface, striping, accessible parking spaces, planting medians, and rain gardens	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$100,000
С	5.0	Provide expanded playground equipment to replace existing play structure which is too small to accommodate a large number of children during the summer months.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$40,000

## KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

3.5 BENNETT BEACH PARK FINAL PLAN

## **BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	6.0	Establish picnic groves on east side of Creek; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$100,000
С	4.0	Long-term goal to establish an ADA accessible boardwalk system/or series of paths/trails through the existing "cut" in the natural sand dune to reduce further impacts and degradation to one of the last surviving natural sand dunes on the eastern Lake Erie Shoreline.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$240,000
С	7.0	Update and improve restroom facility; Retrofit building to include stone work and 'lakefront style' design to fit better in with County Parks System character. Expansion of building could include area for concessions and expanded restroom/changing areas.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$100,000
С	I	Relocate the park entrance road to the south for better site distances and safety; consider the unsafe conditions at the current entrance/ intersection.	1	Low	6-10 Years	P.O.B.
С	9.0	Establish a more dominant gateway into the park from Lakeshore Road. Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
Р	2.0	Improve the health of Big Sister Creek	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Low	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## 4.0 SPECIAL PURPOSE PARKS

- 4.1 Elma Meadows Park
- **4.2 Grover Cleveland Golf Course**
- 4.3 Sprague Brook Park

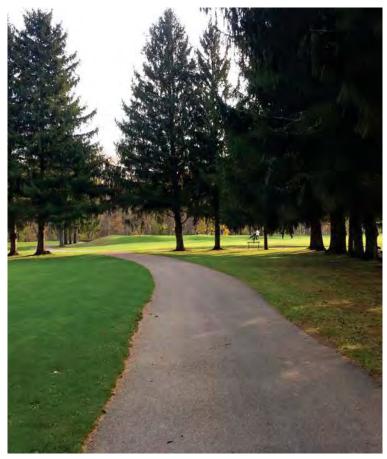
## **ELMA MEADOWS PARK**

## **DESCRIPTION**

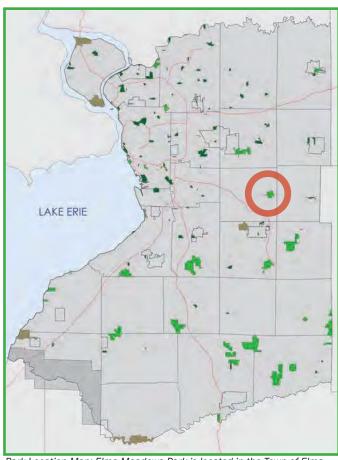
Elma Meadows is a 214-acre facility functioning primarily as an 18-hole par 72 golf course in the Town of Elma, but also has a secondary use as a picnic grove and passive recreation area. The picnic area occupies approximately 25 acres of land. The property has impressive topography with highpoints in the northwest to lowlands in the southeast. The golf course takes advantage of this change of elevation, and the large grassy slopes are heavily used in the winter for sledding. The east and north sides of the park border Buffalo Creek. Given its impressive topography and scenery, as well as reasonable rates, Elma Meadows has been a favorite with area golfers and among seasonal park users. Many from the community utilize the park during the winter for sledding and its groomed cross-country trails.

## PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Construction for Elma Meadows Park began in the fall of 1957. The winter sports component was ready in 1958 and the golf component was completed in the spring of 1959. Mrs. Frank C. Gervan of 61 Connection Dr. came up with the name "Elma Meadows" in July 1958. Prices per round of golf on weekdays were \$1.50 and \$2.50 on Saturdays, Sundays & holidays.



Pathway within the golf course



Park Location Map: Elma Meadows Park is located in the Town of Elma off of Girdle Road

## PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Provide the required number of accessible parking spaces, including signage and aisle striping.
- Prevent further deterioration of picnic shelters.
   Perform necessary repairs and renovation to keep shelters usable and safe.
- Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
- Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use areas; provide areas of wildflowers and meadows.

## **LOCAL CONTEXT**

This Park and Golf Course lies about 20 miles south and east of the City of Buffalo. It is on the east side of the Town of Elma, close to the Marilla Town line. It is also only minutes from the Village of East Aurora to the south. Access to the Park and golf course is easy from Route 400 from either the Jamison Road or Maple Street Exits, cutting over to Girdle Road to the park entrance.

## **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

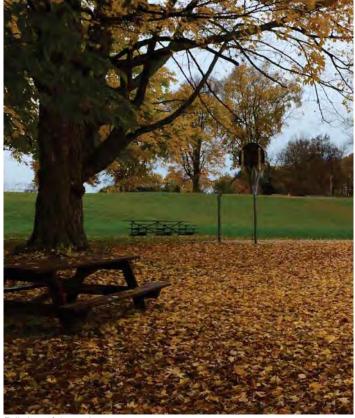
Elma Meadow's separate 25-acre park is unique when compared to the other County-owned golf course, Grover Cleveland. The park provides the surrounding communities an area for picnicking, passive recreation, and numerous playgrounds, in addition to the eighteen-hole golf course.

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

- New \$1.5 million irrigation system installed on golf course.
- Fairways completely re-seeded.
- Fairway on the 10th hole rebuilt to alleviate drainage concerns.
- Full replacement of domestic hot water system.
- Future Improvement: New tee boxes to be constructed (2019).



Local context map



Fall view of the park



Hole #1 tee box



Much of the park area remains mowed

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE







MASTER PLAN ELMA MEADOWS

## **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Park area does not have designated formal parking lot.
- Small basketball half courts remain in park.
- Old playground equipment remains.
- Entire park is mowed.
- Lack of signage.
- Maintenance office in park area is showing deterioration.
- Shelters are showing wear and are in disrepair.

## 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

## **Golf Course:**

 Monitor greens fees and consider adjusting to help offset its operations and maintenance of the course.
 Currently the greens fees appear low compared to other regional municipal courses, additionally the challenging play has made Elma Meadows one of the best golf values in Western New York.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (A: 6.0) Consider additional use of the clubhouse facility as a revenue generator, i.e. meetings and special events, etc.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

## Maintenance/Safety:

- (C: 5.0) Provide the required number of accessible parking spaces, including signage and aisle striping.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House
- (A: 7.0) Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring picnic shelters and other priority items.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 1.0-2.3) Prevent further deterioration of picnic shelters. Perform necessary repairs and renovation to keep shelters usable and safe.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House



Maintenance facility



View down the fairway at hole #1

- (P: 1.0) Provide traffic calming measures along the entrance road to reduce traffic speed.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Town of Elma
- (A: 8.0) Aesthetic improvements and repairs are needed at the park maintenance building. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 6.0) Install multi-purpose trail along Rice Road to extend to Girdle Road/Rice Road intersection, and additional tie-in to Fairway Drive.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Town of Elma

## Signage:

- (A: 3.0) Provide gateway and directional signage at "Y" between golf course and picnic grove.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 4.0-4.2) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations, including:
  - o Intersection of Jamison Road and Girdle Road.
  - Potentially signage on Route 400 in advance of the Jamison Road and Maple Road exits.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 1.0) Establish enhanced gateway for the park at intersection of Girdle Road and Rice Road.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House

## Recreation:

- (A: 6.1) Continue to improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
  - Replace timber edging around primary playground area.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Park signage off of Girdle and Rice Road



Old non-compliant metal slide





Existing basketball does not conform to any standards

- (A: 6.2) Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- Promote and expand/enhance four-seasons use of Elma Meadows, including sledding and cross country skiing, nature walks, picnicking and associated play areas, etc.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- Increase the seasonal attraction of the clubhouse, i.e. utilize the fireplace more often, promote more sledding, winter sports competitions, cross country-skiing, and seasonal events and tournaments, etc. (2003 Master Plan)
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 7.0) Remove small outdated basketball hoops and asphalt pads, and/or remove hoops and repurpose asphalt pad as hopscotch/shuffle board court, etc.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House



Existing playground

- Analyze use and recreation trends of the area to place additional sporting/leisure activities; i.e. shuffleboard court, splash pad, trails, universal fitness station, etc.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Contractor/In-House

## **Environment:**

- (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.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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: 3.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize native pollinator friendly plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (P: 2.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD



Many large trees within the park contribute to the tree canopy



## **ELMA MEADOWS PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.1	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	2.1	Continue to improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	7.0	Reduce lawn mowing to provide more natural setting in non-use areas, and help to shift park maintenance towards restoring picnic shelters and other priority items.	Create meadows and wildflower areas in highly visible park areas	High	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
С	5.0	Provide the required number of accessible parking spaces, including signage and striping	Engage contractor to perform repairs	High	1-2 Years	\$2,400
Р	2.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	3.0	areas; Propose appropriate additional	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner

## KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

4.1 ELMA MEADOWS PARK

## **ELMA MEADOWS PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	3.0	Provide signage at "Y" between golf course and picnic grove	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	5.0	Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С	2.0	Prevent further deterioration of the following structures:	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	Х
С	2.1	Shelter #1 - Repair brickwork	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	Long	\$22,000
С	2.2	Shelter #2 - Repair brickwork	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	Long	\$22,000
С	2.3	Shelter #3 - Replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	3.0	Prevent deterioration of comfort station near picnic grove - replace roof	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	4.0	Replace handrails on exterior stairs with compliant railings.	Engage contractor to perform repairs	Medium	3-5 Years	\$6,000
А	2.2	Improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations	Low	Ongoing	In-House
А	4.0	Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House

## **ELMA MEADOWS PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	4.1	Intersection of Jamison Rd. and Girdle Rd.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	4.2	Potentially signage on Route 400 in advance of the Jamison Rd. and Maple Rd. exits	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А	6.0	Consider additional use of the clubhouse facility as a revenue generator, i.e. meetings and special events, etc.	Coordination and planning with parks staff	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	8.0	Aesthetic improvements and repairs are needed at the park maintenance building.	Repair and improve building	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
С	1.0	Establish Enhanced Gateways for the park at intersection of Girdle Rd. and Rice Rd.		Low	6-10 Years	\$17,500
С	6.0	Install multi-purpose trail along Rice Road to extend to Girdle Road/Rice Road intersection, and additional tie- in to Fairway Drive.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
С	7.0	Remove small outdated basketball hoops and asphalt pads, and/or remove hoops and repurpose asphalt pad as hopscotch/shuffle board court, etc.	Engage contractor to perform improvements	Low	6-10 Years	P.O.B.
Р	1.0	Provide traffic calming measures along the entrance road to reduce traffic speed.	Coordinate with Town of Elma	Low	6-10 Years	Partner

## KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## GROVER CLEVELAND GOLF COURSE

## **DESCRIPTION**

Grover Cleveland Park and Golf Course is a 111-acre park fully developed as an 18-hole golf course. Previously a City of Buffalo Park, Grover Cleveland Golf Course was sold to Erie County for one dollar in 1986. Now primarily a golf course with supporting golf-related facilities, Grover Cleveland used to have more recreational services. The current Golf Course was designed to put a premium on accuracy not distance. The course plays over 5600 yards with par being 34-35-69. The Golf Course is relatively flat overall with no dense tree cover. Mature trees border the north and west sides, with only linear groupings of trees within the course area.

Another notable "heritage" aspect of the Grover Cleveland Golf Course is that the site has one of the oldest stone buildings in Erie County on it, the 'Schenck house', possibly dating back as early as the 1810s. This structure is in need of upgrades to preserve its structural and architectural integrity.

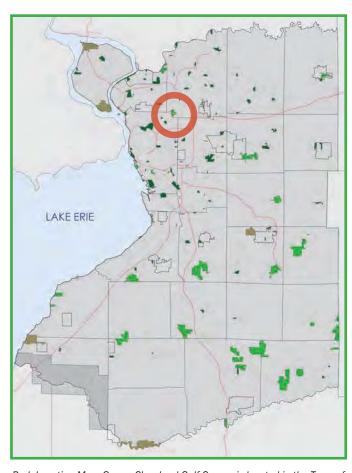
## PARK AND AREA HISTORY

The Grover Cleveland Golf Course has an impressive and storied history within the Western New York region. It is one of the oldest Golf Courses around, and was the original site of the Country Club of Buffalo (between 1900–1926). The original clubhouse was built in 1901, designed by architect George Cary, who also built the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society building. The 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, and polo field were added in 1902. To highlight, the Country Club of Buffalo hosted the 1912 U.S. Open Golf Tournament. The City of Buffalo purchased the club in 1925 for \$800,000.00, and renamed the site to honor the former Mayor of Buffalo, Governor of New York State, and President of the United States of America.

The Country Club of Buffalo eventually moved out to its current site in Williamsville. A portion of the golf course property was sold by the City of Buffalo to the Veterans Hospital in



Grover Cleveland Golf Course Clubhouse



Park Location Map: Grover Cleveland Golf Course is located in the Town of Amherst off of Main Street

## PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Improve drainage; engage a consultant to conduct a drainage study and develop a design to solve drainage issues, therefore improving the playability of the course.
- Restore the Schenck House structure and associated out-buildings. Potential exists for an Erie County heritage-related museum, upgraded golf course-related facility, meeting rooms, etc. Maximize access and visibility to Main Street.
- Plant additional trees and shrubs along Main Street and Bailey Avenue to improve playability of the course.

the 1940s, resulting in the Grover Cleveland course being shortened to its current length of 5600 yards.

Many historical design features are still visible, even though years of neglect and other haphazard changes have erased some of the course's character. Unfortunately, the original Clubhouse building burned to the ground in the 1970s. The County acquired the course in 1983. Although the "shortened" course length has made it hard to compete with newer, longer courses in the area, Grover Cleveland remains a very popular venue in Erie County and one of the best deals in the region. This property was originally a large farm / estate, which was acquired and used by the Country Club of Buffalo after they were forced to move from their Nottingham Terrace (North Buffalo) location to make way for the Pan-American Exposition of 1901.

## LOCAL CONTEXT

The Grover Cleveland course sits very strategically in an urban "first-ring suburb" neighborhood adjacent to the University at Buffalo South Campus. It is located between four major municipalities in the northeast corner of the City of Buffalo, adjacent to the Town of Amherst and close to both the towns of Tonawanda and Cheektowaga. Residential and institutional land uses compose most of the surrounding neighborhood, with commercial strips along Main Street off the northeast corner of the course and along Bailey Avenue off the southeast corner. The main entrance for the course is on Main Street, which forms a portion of the northeast and part of the eastern boundary, with Eggert Road completing the eastern boundary of the



Local context map

course; the southeast end borders a single family residential area while the southwest property line borders the Veteran's Administration Hospital. Lastly, Bailey Avenue and the University at Buffalo South Campus form the entire western boundary line.



View of the golf course



# MASTER PLAN GROVER CLEVELAND GOLF COURSE





## RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

Grover Cleveland Gold Course sits in an urban setting with nearby parks and recreation facilities within the City of Buffalo, Town of Amherst, and Town of Tonawanda. The site has a regulation tennis court and seasonal trails for cross-country running and skiing.

## **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Limited resources, low fee schedules, and intensive course play are taking their toll on the course.
- The County should re-evaluate its greens fees to reflect regional golf course fees, and to put revenue into repairing and enhancing the golf course.
- General course improvements and enhancements are needed to keep the course competitive in the area.
- The course is too exposed to the perimeter roadways
- Constant drainage issues make some holes often unplayable, and is usually one of the last courses to open in the spring.
- Schenck house is in disrepair and isolated.

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

- Various improvements and upgrades to Club House and Halfway House.
- Parking lot and roadway improvements Utility road and access road were repayed and parking lot was striped.

## 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: 1.0-1.2) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new native tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges (Consult County Forester and local experts to determine appropriate species to benefit wildlife).
  - Provide additional tree and shrub plantings along the Main Street and Bailey Avenue course edges to improve safety and playability at this course.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - Apply for funding from NYSDEC and Erie County Soil and Water District for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry



View of the golf course





The Schenck House

- (C: 3.0) Improve drainage; engage a consultant to conduct a drainage study and develop a design to solve drainage issues, therefore improving the playability of the course.
  - Priority: MediumPartner: Consultant
- (C: 2.0) Restore the Schenck House structure and associated out-buildings. Potential exists for an Erie County heritage-related museum, upgraded golf courserelated facility, meeting rooms, etc.
  - Maximize the access and visibility to Main Street, the proximity to the University at Buffalo and the close proximity to some of the region's most prestigious homes as major marketing advantages for future uses at this facility.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Preservation Buffalo Niagara/The University of Buffalo/VBN

- (C: 4.0) Provide interpretive signage and markers to highlight the rich history of the course and past events in non-playable areas.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 5.0) Upgrade course facilities in the future, as funding becomes available. This includes resurfacing the existing parking lot, and upgrading/remodeling clubhouse/proshop etc.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Consultant/Contractor
- Consider the inclusion of the Schenck House and outbuildings on the National Register of Historic Places.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House

- (C: 6.0) Undertake a course master plan; given its unique historical design, it would be in the County's best interest to reinvigorate some of its original design features, and to promote the course as a regional "heritage" attraction.
  - A Golf Course Architect should be hired to assist with this restoration plan.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- (A: 1.3) Provide additional tree plantings between various "tight" fairways and holes to improve safety measures and playability on the course.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- Consider transitioning tennis court into a multi-purpose sports court; offer different interchangeable activities.
   Many schools in the area offer several tennis courts.
  - Consider in the short-term dual striping the court to allow for pickleball for example or other court sports.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Consultant/Contractor
- (C: 1.0) Enhance or upgrade the park sign at the corner of Main St. and Bailey Ave., and provide landscape improvements.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House



Single tennis court off of the main park road



Entry into the Golf Course from Main Street



## **GROVER CLEVELAND GOLF COURSE: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	1.1	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
A	1.2	Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.	Provide additional tree and shrub plantings along the Main Street and Bailey Avenue course edges	Medium	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	1.3	Provide additional tree plantings between various "tight" fairways and holes to improve safety measures and playability on the course.	Apply for tree grants	Medium	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
С	2.0	Prevent further deterioration to the Schenck House structure and associated out-buildings. Potential exists for an Erie County heritage-related museum, upgraded golf course-related facility, meeting rooms, etc.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$50,000

## 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

## **GROVER CLEVELAND GOLF COURSE: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	3.0	Improve drainage; engage a consultant to conduct a drainage study and develop a design to solve drainage issues, therefore improving the playability of the course.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$40,000
С	_	Establish Enhanced Gateways for the park at intersection of Main Street and Bailey Ave., as well as the Main Street entrance.	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,600
С		Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Low	3-5 Years	\$3,500
С	5.0	Upgrade course facilities in the future, as funding becomes available. This includes resurfacing the existing parking lot, and upgrading/remodeling clubhouse/proshop etc.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$45,000
С	6.0	Undertake a course master plan; given its unique historical design, it would be in the County's best interest to reinvigorate some of its original design features, and to promote the course as a regional "heritage" attraction.		Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

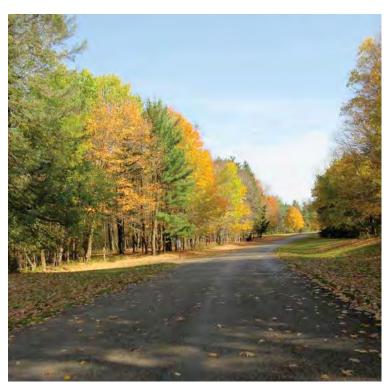
THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## **SPRAGUE BROOK PARK**

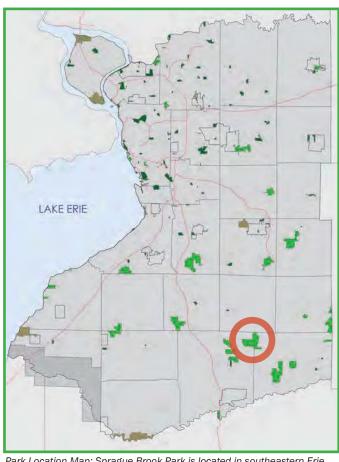
## **DESCRIPTION**

Sprague Brook Park is one of the largest developed County Parks at 967 acres, and is the only facility in the park system offering overnight camping. The park is located in the rural, well-forested Towns of Concord and Sardinia in southeast Erie County, just off Route 240 on Foote Road. Functionally, Sprague Brook Park centers around 130 campsites in three large camping areas. Additional recreational amenities are meant to enhance the camper's use and experience of the park and allow for large group picnics and outings. While some "active" recreation is offered, emphasis is on passive recreation throughout the park's vast open spaces and woodlands. As of late, multi-purpose trails through the direction and construction from the Western New York Mountain Biking Association have become a popular and integral part of the park. Mountain biking, hiking, and cross-country skiing have all become part of the network of available recreational opportunities at Sprague Brook.

Sprague Brook is a park of hidden natural treasures, from flora and fauna to incredible natural scenery along the Brook, in the woodlands, atop the hillsides, etc. One of the most impressive sites is the views to the opposite distant hillside of Kissing Bridge Ski area. The terrain is gently sloping throughout, with some severe topography in the park's northeast section. Three ponds add to the park's beauty and usefulness for park users and wildlife enhancement. Numerous trails traverse the forested areas which have become very popular for mountain bikers. The park is also a popular destination for winter activities, such as sledding and cross-country skiing.



Gorgeous views are aplenty as you make your way through the park



Park Location Map: Sprague Brook Park is located in southeastern Erie County within the Towns of Sardinia and Concord

## PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

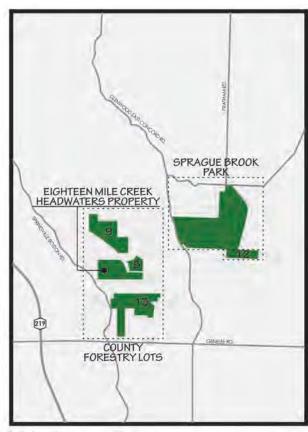
- Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails;
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards;
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.
- Provide large trail map at all trailheads identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, and user difficulties.
- Continue and expand "re-naturalization" initiative in the park to phase out current practices of regularly mowing large expanses of lawn.
  - Provide wildflowers and meadow areas near main entrance to park.

## PARK AND AREA HISTORY

Sprague Brook Park was acquired by Erie County in 1963 by using state and federal aid programs to assume title to more than 2,200 acres of parkland. In 1964, Erie County bought an additional 86 acres of land for expansion in the Town of Sardinia and Concord for \$1,500.00.

## **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Sprague Brook Park is approximately 28 miles southeast of the City of Buffalo, and is located off the main Route 240 traveling south from Orchard Park and West Falls. The Park is on the opposite hill from Kissing Bridge Ski area, one of the region's popular destinations.



Local context map

## **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

Sprague Brook Park is situated in a rural setting with very little demand for recreational facilities. Rather, due to its snowy winters, Sprague Brook serves the south towns as a destination park for winter recreation including sledding, snow shoeing, and cross-country. Given the low population in the immediate vicinity, recreational demand is not as high as many of the county parks in urban areas.



Sprague Brook Casino

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS/ IMPROVEMENTS

The 2012-2017 Capital Improvements within Sprague Brook Park totaled \$420,507. Recent projects included:

- Resurfaced all 4 tennis courts.
- Continued expansion and upkeep of park trails (WNYMBA).
- Aprons paved around Comfort Stations A and B.
- Converted 32 non-electric campsites into electric.
- Replaced roof on Comfort Station A.
- Renovated Comfort Stations A and B including new lighting and doors.
- Installed new fire alarm systems and doors (2018).

## **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Too much of the park's open space is regularly mowed.
   This detracts from the park's overall theme of nature and wildlife.
- The maintenance facilities should be better screened from the public use areas
- Conflicts with ATV riders
- Some outdated play structures still remain throughout park
- Lack of general park signage, some are hidden and difficult to see.
- RV sanitary dump station is located on the right side of the park loop road, and RV and trailer waste ports are located on the left side of the vehicles.
- Comfort stations and shelters need upgrades and repairs.



## MASTER PLAN SPRAGUE BROOK PARK

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (A: 1.0-2.3) Continue and expand "re-naturalization" initiative in the park to phase out current practices of regularly mowing large expanses of lawn. Transition the little-used lawn expanses to natural meadows; some areas mowed down once at the end of each season, and others never mowed
- (A: 9.0) Repair wooden timber edging around tree rings in street medians/Islands. Timbers are missing and should be replaced.
- (C: 4.0) Consider adding additional shelters to the park based on current rentals of picnic shelters if there is demand for it.
- (C: 2.0) Provide interpretive signage throughout the park. Coordinate with historical society to obtain images and other relevant content to produce on sign panels. Develop signage typology to highlight flora, fauna, and wildlife within park trails and other destinations of the park.
- (C: 5.0) Consider expansion of camp sites and facilities, mainly adding more sites to the northernmost campground.
- (A: 4.2) Remove the numerous old metal playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park. These pieces of equipment are outdated, most are unsightly, and many do not meet any current playground safety.
- (7) (P. 3.0) Establish overlook areas in the park to highlight the impressive vistas to the surrounding hillsides, Kissing Bridge Ski Area, etr. Provide benches and seating areas.
- © Expand recreation/passive area around pond near campsites on the north side of the park, potentially with updated playground equipment, additional benches, picnic tables, etc.





## MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- (A: 3.1-3.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
- (A: 4.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park. Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually. Replace swings/playe quipinment as needed due to wear and tear.
- (A: 7.0) Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and potentially expand existing cross-country ski warming hut.
- (A: 8.0) Prevent further deterioration of picnic shelters. Perform necessary repairs and renovation to keep shelters usable and safe.
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
- (A: 5.0) Coordinate with Parks and Highways to provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park. Overall park maps showing drive amenities, camp sites and

shelter locations.

- (C. 1.0) Engage consultant to establish enhanced gateways for the park at the main entrance. Develop sign model and landscape typology for each location.
- Continue progress with expansion, enhancements, and connectivity among park trails. Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
- (A: 4.2) Remove the numerous old meta playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the



## 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

## Structures:

- (A: 7.0) Renovate and potentially expand existing crosscountry ski warming hut.
  - If partnership funding and resources are available, provide new warming hut.

■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House

(A: 8.0) Prevent further deterioration of picnic shelters. Perform necessary repairs and renovation to keep shelters usable and safe.

> ■ Priority: Medium ■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 4.0) Consider adding additional shelters to the park based on current rentals of picnic shelters if there is demand for it. Shelter locations could include:
  - Off main park road near bridge over Sprague Brook. Picnic tables already in this location.
  - Near campsites and pond area

■ Priority: Low ■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 4.0) Design and provide 'Adirondack style Leantos', if usergroups such as an Eagle Scout group or the Adirondack Mountain Club can provide funding and support, and if deemed appropriate in select areas of the park.
  - 'Lean-tos' could be adjacent to camping areas and be rented out for camping purposes.

■ Priority: Low ■ Partner: Usergroups



Potential 'Lean-to' design - Image credit: Adirondack Mountain Club



FINAL PLAN

Warming shelter



Park could accommodate additional shelters in the future



Shelter #3



Grouping of picnic tables



## Maintenance:

- (A: 1.0-2.3) Continue and expand "re-naturalization" initiative in the park to phase out current practices of regularly mowing large expanses of lawn. Transition the little-used lawn expanses to natural meadows; some areas mowed down once at the end of each season, and others never mowed again.
  - Establish meadow/wildflower appearance near main entrance off of Foote Road; this area is passive in nature with no active recreation.
  - Establish select zones of 'no-mow' naturalized areas where excess lawn is being mowed. There are large areas of mowed lawn which have no active recreation; these areas, especially those which abut wooded areas can transition into no-mow areas with potential meadows and wildflowers.
  - Restore and connect grassland/meadow habitat in the northwestern area of the park to support valuable host plants and nectar sources for pollinators and declining species of grassland birds. (Restore native plants and remove knapweed and tree rows within grassland)
  - Include signage like "Regeneration Area", or "No-Mow Zone" to engage park users to learn about the landscape management technique. Include potential benefits of the practice being used.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House

- (P: 2.0) Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails;
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards:
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNYMBA/In-House
- (A: 5.0) Provide large trail map at all trailheads identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, and user difficulties.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNYMBA/In-House
- All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user (hikers, mountain bikers)
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: WNYMBA/In-House
- Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)
  - New renovations can present opportunities to address standards in ADA accessibility. These can include for example improved accessibility/ updated surfaces to children play areas, and potential paving of new trails for people with mixed abilities.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House



Scenic overlook within established meadow areas

 (A: 9.0) Repair wooden timber edging around tree rings in street medians/islands. Timbers are missing and should be replaced.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 3.0) Consider either relocating the sanitary dump station to the left side of the loop road, or adding a drive lane on the right side of the dump station.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/In-House

## Signage:

 (A: 5.0) Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park. Overall park maps showing drive amenities, camp sites and shelter locations.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Highway

 (C: 1.0) Establish enhanced gateway for the park at the main entrance.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/In-House

- (C: 2.0) Provide interpretive signage throughout the park. Coordinate with historical society to obtain images and other relevant content to produce on sign panels.
  - Develop signage typology to highlight flora, fauna, and wildlife within park trails and other destinations of the park.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

## Connectivity:

- Continue expansion, enhancements, and connectivity among park trails. Coordinate with WNYMBA.
  - Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife.
  - Design and provide distinct trail markers for better park orientation.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry/WNYMBA



Park signage off of Foote and Glenwood East Concord Road



Scenic Byways signage



Camping sites

## Recreation:

- (A: 4.1) Improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.
  - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
  - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 5.0) Consider expansion of camp sites and facilities, mainly adding more sites to the northernmost campground.
  - County should explore the feasibility of other areas where camping may be appropriate.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

 (A: 4.2) Remove the numerous old non-compliant metal playground structures and equipment that dot the landscape throughout the park. These pieces of equipment are outdated, most are unsightly, and many do not meet any current playground safety requirements.

- Consideration should be given to several "legacy" playground pieces, such as the pumpkin coach.
   This equipment appeared to be in good condition and could be maintained in the park as a feature or considered artwork, without a fall surface which would encourage its use as a play event.

   Refer to Volume One for additional information regarding "legacy" playground pieces.
- Consider earthtone colors for playground equipment in the Heritage park setting rather than bright, primary colors. Potential opportunities exist to reuse this old playground equipment by reaching out to local artists and craftsman. The metal parts could be used as installation pieces located throughout the park. (2003 Master Plan)

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- Promote winter use through expansion of cross-country ski trails, sledding, winter camping, etc.
  - Consider location for potential depressed ice skating area similar to Como Lake Park.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House/WNYMBA



An old non-compliant seesaw in poor shape

 (C: 6.0) Consider dual-striping one or more tennis courts to allow for pickleball or other court sports to expand recreational opportunities.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

 (P: 3.0) Establish overlook areas in the park to highlight the impressive vistas to the surrounding hillsides, Kissing Bridge Ski Area, etc. Provide benches and seating areas.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House/WNYMBA

 Promote the use of Sprague Brook Park for important seasonal events. Consider upgrading existing facilities to accommodate different events. Work with stakeholders and local user groups to analyze the feasibility of hosting events such as festivals, etc.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 7.0) Remove old half-court basketball courts and revert to natural area, if usage is limited. If basketball remains a desired recreational activity, explore the possibility of consolidating courts and engage consultant to create a full size asphalt court.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



Recently resurfaced tennis courts



View down the main park road towards Kissing Bridge



- (C: 8.0) Expand and enhance recreation/passive area around pond near campsites on the north side of the park, with updated playground equipment, additional benches, picnic tables, etc.
  - Remove existing benches which are deteriorating.
  - With resources or grants available consider placing a small facility or pavilion near pond area to be a revenue generator for company retreats, rentals, events, etc. Capitalize on the scenic location with access to the pond and nearby trails.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Local Stakeholder Group/In-House
- Offering concessions at the Casino during the winter.
   (Selling of County made maple syrup) Capitalize on the many winter seasonal events that take place.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Private Businesses/In-House



Small halfcourt basketball court and rusted backboard/rim



View along the pond edge

### **Environment:**

- (A: 3.1-3.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - o Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new native tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges (Consult County Forester and local experts to determine appropriate species to benefit wildlife).
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - 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: 5.0) Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize native pollinator friendly plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
  - The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House



Much of the park is forested, but there are many trees in maintained areas of the park as well.



- (A: 10.0) Enhance and restore natural habitat around ponds.
  - Reduce intensive mowing which occurs right up to the pond edge. Allow for the development of shoreline vegetation.
  - Consider planting native grasses and plants around areas of the perimeter.
  - Seek input from Erie County Soil and Conservation District.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: In-House/ECSWD

- (P: 6.0) Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park.
  - Address and remove threatening invasive species.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD

- (P: 1.0) Improve the health of Sprague Brook. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the creek and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
  - Potential projects could be similar to 'Living Shoreline' project at Ellicott Creek Park.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: ECSWD/NYSDEC/Waterkeeper/

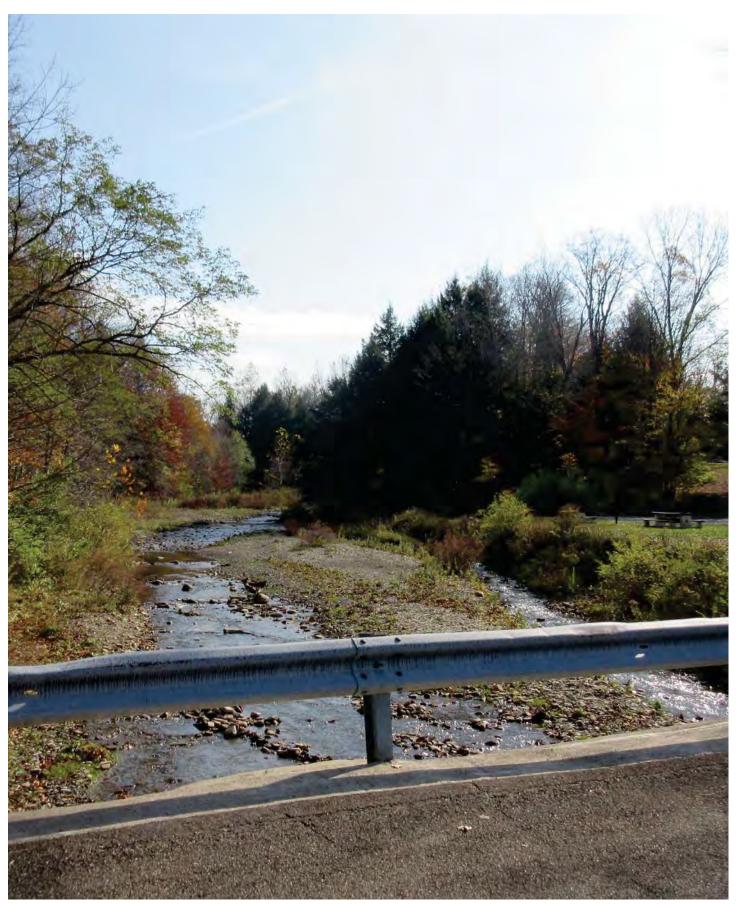
In-House



Pond near camp sites



Sprague Brook



View of Sprague Brook from the main park road overpass



### SPRAGUE BROOK PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0		Establish "Natural Regeneration Areas" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А		Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Establish "Low Mow Zones" identified on the Master Plan	High	1-2 Years	In-House
А		provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the "Low Mow Zones" to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House
A	3.1			High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	4.1	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	10.0	Enhance and restore natural habitat around ponds. Reduce intensive mowing which occurs right up to the pond edge. Allow for the development of shoreline vegetation. Consider planting native grasses and plants around areas of the perimeter.	Coordinate with mowing crews on proper management and care.	High	Ongoing	In-House

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

### **SPRAGUE BROOK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	2.0	Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails; Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards; Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.	Coordinate with WNYMBA	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
Р	5.0	Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas; Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;	Designate potential native pollinator plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	6.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	3.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
А	5.0	Overall park maps showing drives,	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the directional sign panels, trail maps and trail markers.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	6.0	Ensure that shelters, comfort stations and buildings are identifiable	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	7.0	Renovate and potentially expand existing cross-country ski warming hut.	Parks crew task	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	8.0	Prevent further deterioration of picnic shelters. Perform necessary repairs and renovation to keep shelters usable and safe.	Parks crew task	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.

### SPRAGUE BROOK PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	9.0	Repair wooden timber edging around tree rings in street medians/ islands. Timbers are missing and should be replaced.	Parks crew task	Medium	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
А	2.2	Establish "Low Mow Zones" to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Begin an educational program, through the use of the County's website, to the general public which provides information regarding the "Low Mow Zone" program	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
А	4.2	Improve playground safety	Remove playground equipment that is not compliant with current regulations, with the exception of "legacy" pieces of equipment	Low	Ongoing	In-House
С	1.0	Establish Enhanced Gateways for the park at the main entrance	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	2.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content. Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$10,500
С	3.0	Improve the sanitary dump station, currently on the wrong side of waste ports on most trailers and RV's	Engage a consultant to develop plans, and a contractor to construct improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$60,000
С	4.0	Consider adding additional shelters to the park based on current rentals of picnic shelters if there is demand for it.	Off main park road near bridge	Low	6-10 Years	\$200,000

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	5.0		Engage consultant to strategize potential areas	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
С	6.0		Engage contractor to perform improvements	Low	3-5 Years	\$3,000
С	7.0	Remove old half-court basketball courts and revert to natural area, if usage is limited.	Parks crew task	Low	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
С	8.0	Expand and enhance recreation/ passive area around pond near campsites on the north side of the park, with updated playground equipment, additional benches, picnic tables, etc.	Partner with usergroups/In-House	Low	3-5 Years	\$15,000
Р	1.0	Sprague Brook through stream bank stabilization, erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration and	_ :	Low	Ongoing	Partner
Р	3.0	Establish overlook areas in the park to highlight the impressive vistas to the surrounding hillsides, Kissing Bridge Ski Area, etc. Provide benches and seating areas.	Coordinate with WNYMBA	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
Р	4.0	Design and provide 'Adirondack style Lean-tos', if usergroups such as an Eagle Scout group or the Adirondack Mountain Club can provide funding and support, and if deemed appropriate in select areas of the park.	Work with potential partner	Low	3-5 Years	Partner

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



# 5.0 CONSERVATION PARKS

- **5.1 Boston Forest Park**
- 5.2 Eighteen Mile Creek Park
- **5.3 Franklin Gulf Park**
- **5.4 Hunters Creek Park**
- 5.5 Scoby Dam Park

5.6 Buffalo River Natural Habitat Parks (Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park, Red Jacket Riverfront Park, Seneca Bluffs Park, Times Beach Nature Preserve)

5.7 Lakeview Pocket Preserve

**5.8 Eighteen Mile Creek Headwaters Property** 

# **BOSTON FOREST PARK**

### **DESCRIPTION**

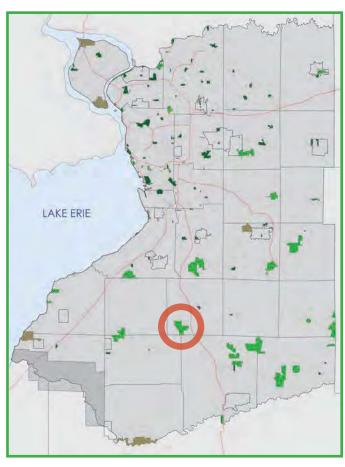
Boston Forest is a 710 acre County Park property in southern Erie County. Technically, almost 480 acres is undeveloped parkland and the remaining 230 acres is Forestry Division lands. The eastern half of the park is relatively flat, while the remainder has sloping terrain. Three major swales cut through the property from east to west. Most of the property is a combination of woodlands and naturalizing meadows with small tree growth. A number of multi-purpose trails traverse the property.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Boston Forest is located in the southwest section of the Town of Boston and approximately 18 miles from Downtown Buffalo. Roads that bound the park include Feddick Road on the east and south, Rice Road to the north, and Zimmerman Road to the east. The Rice Road interchange from Route 219 Expressway is located one-half mile to the east. The area around the property is a rural community of forests, farms and occasional residences. The most unique and significant adjacent land use is the Hunting and Conservation Club located on Zimmerman Road immediately south and east of the parkland.



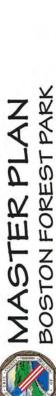
Local context map

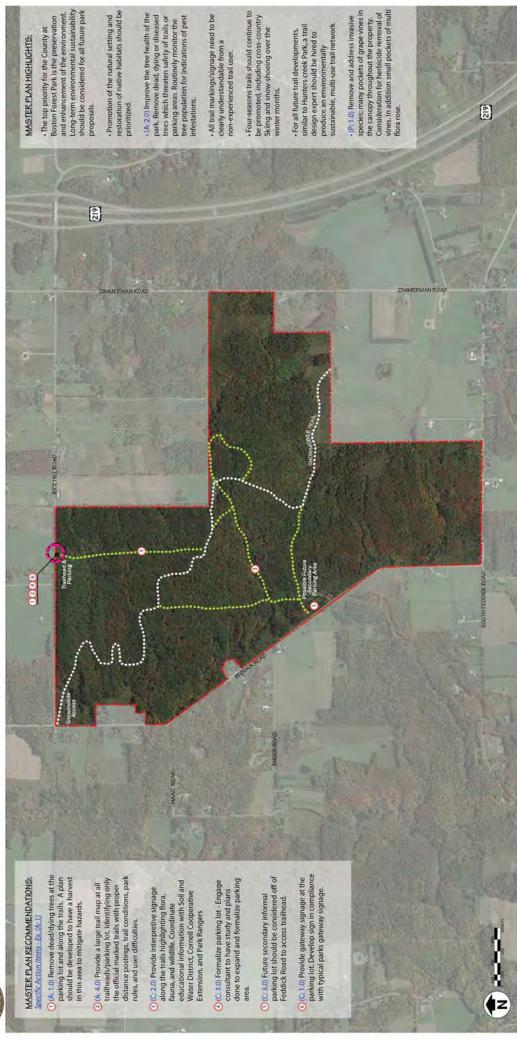


Park Location Map: Boston Forest Park is located in the Town of Boston

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Provide a large trail map at all trailheads/parking lot.
- Assess and address parking lot trees; Based on visual inspection the trees are showing signs of infestation.
  - Remove dead/dying trees at the parking lot and along the trails.
  - A plan should be developed to have a harvest in this area to mitigate hazards.
- Formalize parking lot, and well as consider future secondary informal parking lot off of Feddick Road to access trailhead.









Park signage off of Rice Hill Road



Parking area at Boston Forest Park off of Rice Hill Road

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- No boundary lines or corners were observed during the inspection
- Lack of park and trail signage
- No formal trail maps

### 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
- The top priority for the County at Boston Forest Park is the preservation and enhancement of the environment.
   Long-term environmental sustainability should be considered for all future park proposals.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/In-House
- Promotion of the natural setting and restoration of native habitats should be prioritized.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/WNY Prism
- (A: 1.0) Assess and address parking lot trees; parking area on north end has several large ash trees around its perimeter and along the trail. Due to the inspection during dormancy it is difficult to determine their canopy. Based on visual inspection the trees are showing signs of infestation.
  - Remove dead/dying trees at the parking lot and along the trails.
  - A plan should be developed to have a harvest in this area to mitigate hazards.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- (C: 3.0) Formalize parking lot.
  - Coordinate with Town and DPW/Parks
  - Future secondary informal parking lot should be considered off of Feddick Road to access trailhead.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: DPW

- (A: 2.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees which threaten safety of trails or parking areas.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

 Improve trail safety wherever public use is promoted (In addition to proper signage of potential hazards and user difficulties) This may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House



Trail

- (A: 4.0) Provide a large trail map at all trailheads/ parking lot, identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, park rules, and user difficulties.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife. Coordinate educational information with Soil and Water District, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Park Rangers.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Cornell Cooperative/ECSWD/In-House/Forestry

 All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

 Four-seasons trails should continue to be promoted, including cross-country Skiing and snow-shoeing over the winter months. (Note that seasonal trail closures, or temporary closures due to wetness or erosion, will be adhered to for environmental sustainability.)

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

 For all future trail developments, similar to Hunters Creek Park, a trail design expert should be hired to produce an environmentally sustainable, multi-use trail network.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: WNYMBA/Forestry

 (C: 1.0) Provide gateway signage and landscape treatment at the parking lot. Develop sign in compliance with typical parks gateway signage.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

(C: 2.0) Provide interpretive signage in the park.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 (P: 1.0) Remove and address invasive species; many pockets of grape vines in the canopy throughout the property. Consideration for herbicide removal of vines. In addition small pockets of multi flora rose.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: WNY Prism

### **BOSTON FOREST PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	present near the parking lot and	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
С	2.0	Formalize parking lot. Consider future secondary informal parking lot off of Feddick Road to access trailhead.	Engage consultant to design plans	High	3-5 Years	DPW
А		Provide welcome sign and rules for the park	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels, trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С		Establish gateway signage for the park	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С		Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

### 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 THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK PARK**

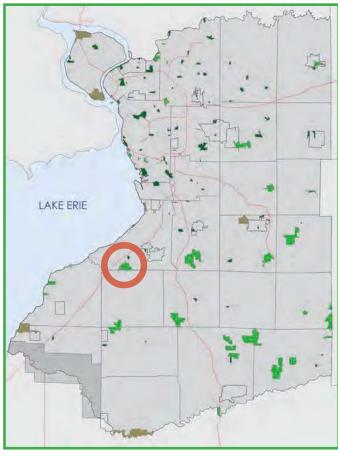
### **DESCRIPTION**

Eighteen Mile Creek Park is defined by the two branches of Eighteen Mile Creek; the North Branch and South Branch. This 466-acre park is presently undeveloped. Access is extremely difficult to the Creek and parking is currently very limited, however, this portion of the Creek is a hot-spot for fishing. While the park's landscape character is dramatically marked by a 60'-deep gorge cut by Eighteen Mile Creek, most of the Park's land above the gorge and between the two branches of the creek is very flat. Park and area history is generally tree covered, with former farm fields reverting back to woodlands. Previous concepts for this park proposed a conservation-oriented park with nature study and passive recreation, and an alternative proposed developing the land into a golf course. Current plans call for maintaining the passive, natural setting of the entire park area.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Located on the southern edge of the Town of Hamburg, Eighteen Mile Creek Park lies approximately 15 miles south of Downtown Buffalo. The Park is located between the fork of the North Branch and South Branch of the Creek. It is situated roughly 3.5 miles from Lake Erie and 3 miles from the Village of Hamburg to the northeast. The center of the park is accessible only via South Creek Road, a narrow, two-lane town road. The area around the property is largely rural, with a few newer residences and housing developments nearby. The south fork of the Creek borders on the Town of Eden.



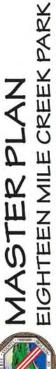


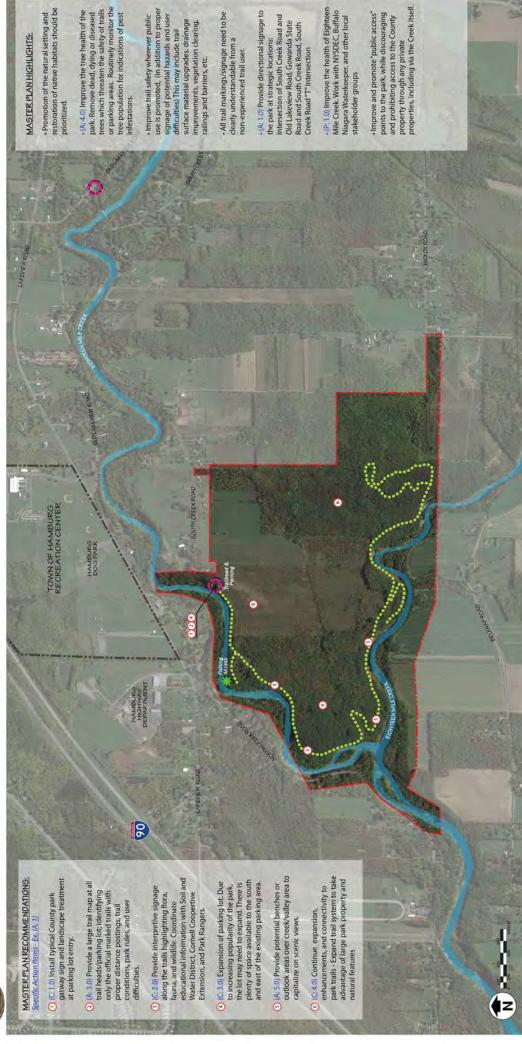
Park Location Map: Eighteen Mile Creek Park is located in the Town of Hamburg off of South Creek Road

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Install typical County park gateway sign and landscape treatment at parking lot entry. Provide new welcome sign and large trails map.
- Improve trail safety; this may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.
- Address and remove emerging invasive species like Japanese Knotweed along the Creek and Common Buckthorn.

# ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE







FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

### **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

Outdoor activities include hiking, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- This magnificent Creek setting has difficult access.
- Limited parking.
- Difficult to find, very little signage apart from the immediate parking area.
- Complaints have been raised by certain neighboring residents: some people are accessing the park area through private properties.
- Welcome sign has been vandalized by graffiti.
- Old stone chimney was found, in disrepair, off of a trail in the woods.
- Park map sign has been vandalized with graffiti.
- Trail signage is limited.
- Invasive species



Graffiti on park kiosk



Eighteen Mile Creek

### 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: 4.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse 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: In-House/Forestry



Parking area



Park trail

 Improve and promote "public access" points to the park, while discouraging and prohibiting access to the County property through any private properties, including via the Creek itself.

Priority: HighPartner: In-House

 Promotion of the natural setting and restoration of native habitats should be prioritized.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: NYSDEC/WNY Prism

 (P: 2.0) Address and remove emerging invasive species like Japanese Knotweed along the Creek and Common Buckthorn.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNY Prism

- (P: 5.0) Manage and address large grassland areas for grassland birds and pollinator friendly plants.
  - Consult and coordinate with experts in the field from State and Federal natural resource agencies, academic institutions, and private conservation organizations.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: Natural resource agencies and experts

 Improve trail safety wherever public use is promoted, (In addition to proper signage of potential hazards and user difficulties) This may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

 All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

 (C: 1.0) Install typical County park gateway sign and landscape treatment at parking lot entry.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House

 (A: 3.0) Provide a large trail map at all trail heads/ parking lot; identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, park rules, and user difficulties.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

- (A: 1.0) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:
  - Intersection of South Creek Road and Old Lakeview Road
  - Gowanda State Road and South Creek Road
  - South Creek Road "T" Intersection

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House



Fishing at Eighteen Mile Creek





Trail down to the Creek

- (P: 1.0) Improve the health of Eighteen Mile Creek. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the waterways and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: ECSWD/NYSDEC/Buffalo Niagara Waterkeepe
- (C: 4.0) Continue expansion, enhancements, and connectivity of park trails.
  - Expand trail system to take advantage of large park property and natural features
  - Provide kiosks with trail maps and rules at select trailhead locations.
  - Provide distinct trail markers to guide trail users.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife. Coordinate educational information with Soil and Water District, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Park Rangers.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (P: 4.0) Improve and enhance fishing access.
  - Provide clear trails and access points, along with possible fishing platforms or stone areas.
  - Fish species include steelhead and smallmouth bass.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/NYSDEC
- (C: 3.0) Expansion of parking lot. Due to increasing popularity of the park, the lot may need to expand. There is plenty of space available to the south and east of the existing parking area.
  - Priority: Low■ Partner: DPW
- (A: 5.0) Provide benches or overlook areas over the creek/valley area to capitalize on scenic views across the ravines.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Local stakeholder groups
- (C: 2.0) Provide interpretive signage highlighting some
  of the significance of the park space and its natural and
  physical assets.
  - Coordinate with Hamburg Historical Society with information pertaining to the history of the park site;
  - Acquire information regarding the history of the old stone chimney and other lesser known facts about the park.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Hamburg Historical Society/In-House
- (P: 3.0) Potential mountain biking/shared trail systems could be established with proper studies, usergroup funding/support, and if deemed appropriate (does not conflict with other park uses).
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Usergroups/WNYMBA
- Provide possible small picnic shelter or two adjacent to the creek.
  - This could provide anglers and park patrons areas to eat and seek shelter from inclement weather.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Usergroups/In-House

### **EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	4.0		Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
Р	2.0		Partner with usergroups such as WNY Prism	High	1-2 Years	In-House WNY Prism
А		for the park	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House, Highway
А	3.0	and directional signage within the park, including large park trails	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels, trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С	4.0	Continue expansion, enhancements, and connectivity of park trails. Expand trail system to take advantage of large park property and natural features	Engage consultant to design new trails	Medium	6-10 Years	P.O.B
Р		Mile Creek	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

### **EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	4.0	access. Provide clear trails	Work with potential usergroups like the NYSDEC and other potential partners with interest	Medium	3-5 Years	Partner
А	l	F	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	5.0		Establish a few of these areas in several areas of the main trail	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
С	l		Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	l	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С	3.0		Engage a contractor to construct a larger parking lot	Low	6-10 Years	\$30,000
Р	3.0		Work with usergroups to implement possible expanded trails	Low	3-5 Years	Partner

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

5.3 FRANKLIN GULF PARK FINAL PLAN

# FRANKLIN GULF PARK

### **DESCRIPTION**

Franklin Gulf Park is a 631 acre undeveloped park in the Towns of Eden and North Collins. It is primarily a wooded area that has impressive topography and scenic natural features, such as creeks, ravines, waterfalls and ledge outcroppings. The topography is dominated by the "gulf", a steep gorge which is practically inaccessible. The park landscape lends itself best to passive uses such as hiking and nature enhancement uses.

Franklin Gulf Park is the winner of Buffalo Spree Magazine's The Best of WNY 2015: Most Beautiful Under-The-Radar Park award.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

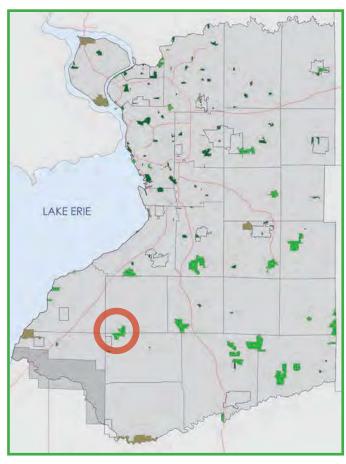
This irregularly-shaped park is generally bound by Sandrock Road to the north, Rogers Road to the east and School Street to the South. Surrounding land uses are largely agricultural, with a scattering of residences throughout. The Village of North Collins is only a short distance to the southwest of the property. An active railroad line crosses the gulf slightly beyond the western edge of the park.

### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

Outdoor activities include hiking, wildlife viewing, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing (ungroomed trails). A maintained snowmobile trail is located on the western portion of the park.



Local context map

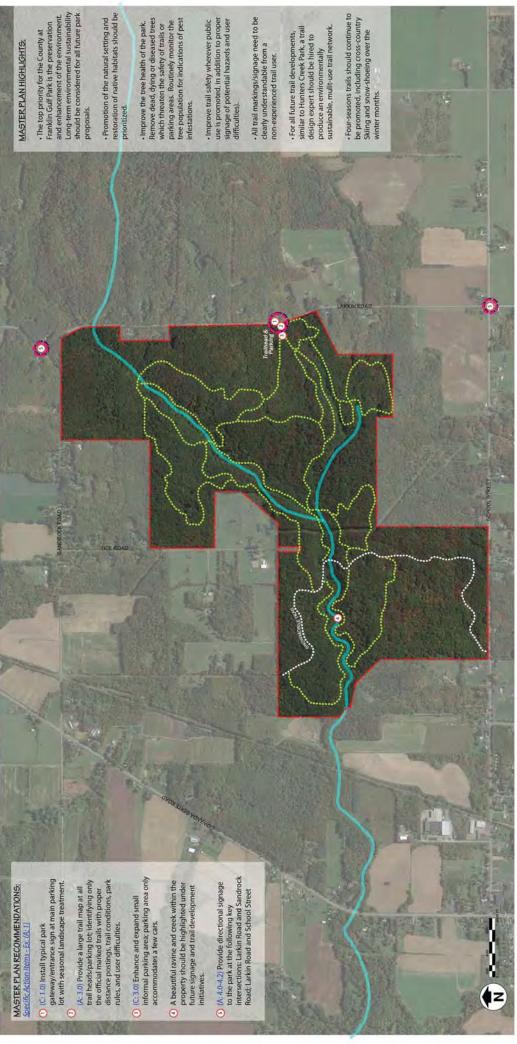


Park Location Map: Franklin Gulf Park is located in the Towns of Eden and Collins.

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails;
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards;
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.
- Enhance and expand small informal parking area; parking area only accommodates a few cars.
- Implement an invasive species management plan. Address and remove emerging invasive species.







FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2



View down the creek

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Does not have typical park gateway signage at park entrance
- Lack of park and trail signage
- No formal trail maps
- Small parking lot cannot accommodate sufficient cars

### 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
- The top priority for the County at Franklin Gulf Park is the preservation and enhancement of the environment.
   Long-term environmental sustainability should be considered for all future park proposals.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/In-House
- Promotion of the natural setting and restoration of native habitats should be prioritized.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/WNY Prism
- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees which threaten the safety of trails or parking areas.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry

- (C: 1.0) Install typical park gateway/entrance sign at main parking lot with seasonal landscape treatment.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 3.0) Enhance and expand small informal parking area; parking area only accommodates a few cars.
  - Provide secondary lot to accommodate 20 cars; Potential location off of School Street at snowmobile trailhead.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Parking area

5.3 FRANKLIN GULF PARK FINAL PLAN

- Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails;
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards;
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House

- (P: 1.0) Implement an invasive species management plan.
  - Address and remove emerging invasive species.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNY Prism

- (A: 3.0) Provide a large trail map at all trail heads/ parking lot; identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, park rules, and user difficulties.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife. Coordinate educational information with Soil and Water District, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Park Rangers.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Cornell Cooperative/ECSWD/In-House/Forestry

- Improve trail safety wherever public use is promoted, in addition to proper signage of potential hazards and user difficulties).
  - This may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.

Priority: MediumPartner: In-House

 All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

 (A: 4.0-4.2) Provide directional signage to the park at the following key intersections:

Larkin Road and Sandrock Road

Larkin Road and School Street

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 Highlight beautiful ravine and creek within the property with future signage and trail development initiatives.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

(C: 2.0) Provide interpretive signage in the park.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 For all future trail developments, similar to Hunters Creek Park, a trail design expert should be hired to produce an environmentally sustainable, multi-use trail network.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: WNYMBA/Forestry

 Four-seasons trails should continue to be promoted, including cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing over the winter months. (Note that seasonal trail closures, or temporary closures due to wetness or erosion, will be adhered to for environmental sustainability.)

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House





V2-280

FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

### FRANKLIN GULF PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	l	Increase tree health and tree canopy 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
A	2.0	Provide welcome sign and rules for the park	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
С	ı	Enhance and expand small informal parking area	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	3-5 Years	In-House
Р	1.0	Implement an invasive species management plan	Potential partnership with WNYPRISM to develop volunteer opportunities	High	Ongoing	In-House
А	3.0		Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels, trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	ı	Provide directional signage <u>to</u> the park at the following key locations:	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	Х
А	4.1	Larkin Road and Sandrock Road	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А	4.2	Larkin Road and School Street	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
С	ı	l	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
С	I	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

5.4 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

# HUNTERS CREEK PARK (SGT. MARK RADEMACHER PARK)

### **DESCRIPTION**

Officially named Sgt. Mark Rademacher Park, this park is more commonly referred to as Hunters Creek Park. This is a 756-acre park within the Town of Wales. This property has seen much activity over the past few years in the way of nature trail use by hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians and cross-country skiers. In particular, Hunters Creek has become extremely popular for mountain biking, which is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. The sloping terrain and Creek gorge help to define the park's character, as well as a primarily forested interior.

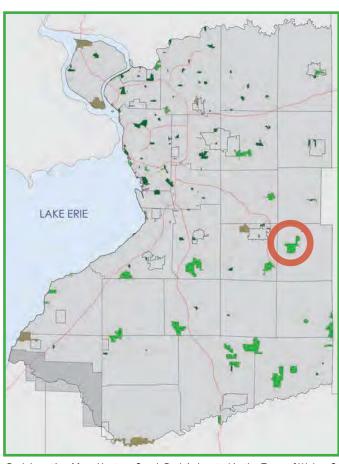
The main park area is roughly square, with a "panhandle" extending to the northeast. The Creek divides the park into an east half and west half (accounting for roughly two-thirds of the area). After flowing off park property, the Creek reenters the park at the northeast corner, roughly paralleling the narrow north property line. The Park currently has dirt "service" roads and an extensive trail network throughout the park. Two parking areas exist: one off of Hunters Creek Road and another near the intersection of Centerline and Vermont Hill Road.

Hunters Creek Park has adopted and implemented many of the recommendations proposed in the 2003 plan, however some still need to be improved and expanded further. Thanks to many contributions from user groups, the park now features over 20 miles in multi-purpose trails. These trails include the "Orange Blazes" trail (The Conservation Trail); which is part of the greater "Finger Lakes Trail" which extends all over New York State spanning over 1,000 miles of hiking. The trails are for all non-motorized users, and feature hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and snow-shoeing.

### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

The history of the area we now refer to as Hunters Creek Park began tens of thousands of years ago with the formation of the area topography and dramatic creek gorge. Hunters Creek bisects this undeveloped park and cuts an impressive gorge through a portion of it. Following the area's settlement, this property consisted of farm land and woods. Foundations of old homesteads and barns can still be seen. In the park's interior, a large log cabin was constructed by Sanford Hubbard for the Kellog family as a hunting lodge. Only the fieldstone chimney and foundation remain.

In the 1950s parallel underground gas transmission lines were constructed through the area in an east-west direction and a major transmission station was constructed on Rieter Road. In the early 1970s, several parcels totaling approximately 760 acres were purchased by Erie County using Federal and State funds for a future park. Around that same time, a number of roads and trails were constructed by county-sponsored groups and the Boy

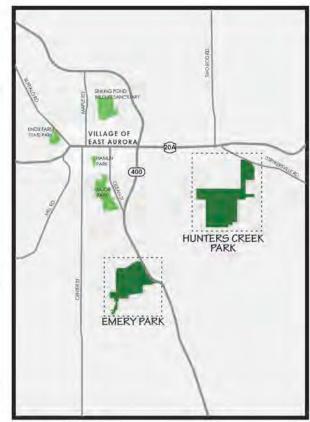


Park Location Map: Hunters Creek Park is located in the Town of Wales, 2 miles from Emery Park

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails:
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards;
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.
- The top priority for the County at Hunters Creek Park is the preservation and enhancement of the environment. Long-term environmental sustainability should be considered for all future use proposals.
- Provide a large trail map at all trailheads, identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, and user difficulties should be provided.

5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN



Local context map

Scouts planted thousands of evergreen trees. In recent years some of these roads and trails have eroded and deteriorated, while other trails have been further developed and improved.

In 1983, the Erie County Legislature voted unanimously to approve a resolution to rename Hunters Creek Park to "Sgt. Mark A. Rademacher Memorial Park." Mark Rademacher, a 20 year old Town of Wales resident, was one of the few US Army Rangers killed in the Grenada Invasion in November, 1983. Reflection of the new park name is not found within the park, i.e. no signs were erected or no other verification can be found, but there are other memorial remembrances within the Town of Wales. Today, other than a trail that bears the Rademacher name, most still refer to the park as "Hunters Creek Park."

With the growth of mountain biking as a recreational activity, the use of the park has dramatically increased as it has been termed "ideal" for single track riding. It has become a regional draw for trail activities including mountain biking, hiking, and wildlife observation.

Currently this property receives limited county maintenance. Volunteers and local organizations have maintained the park on a regular basis by removing trash, maintaining the trails, improving trails, designing trails, etc. These groups include the Western New York Mountain Biking Association, Friends of Hunters Creek, Foothills Trail Club, and the Western Chapter of the NYS Horse Council.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

Within the Town of Wales in eastern Erie County. The site is approximately 20 miles to the south and east of downtown Buffalo, and is about 3 miles southeast of the Village of East Aurora. Also, the park is only 2 miles north of Emery Park, another major County facility. Access to the park is from either Hunters Creek Road on the east or on Centerline Road near Vermont Hill Road to the south. The area surrounding the park is largely rural in nature with active farms and large open tracts of undeveloped land. Residential properties are scattered along both Centerline and Hunters Creek Roads.

### **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

Few other parks equal the use and beauty of Hunters Creek Park. Other area park facilities that complement the passive recreational uses at Hunters Creek are Kenneglenn Scenic Nature Preserve which lies adjacent to the park, Emery Park in Aurora and the Knox Farm State Park in East Aurora. Town parks and schools in Wales and Aurora/East Aurora offer active recreational opportunities.

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

The rapid increase in popularity and use at Hunters Creek Park has also come with numerous issues and concerns. Some of these include, but are not limited to:

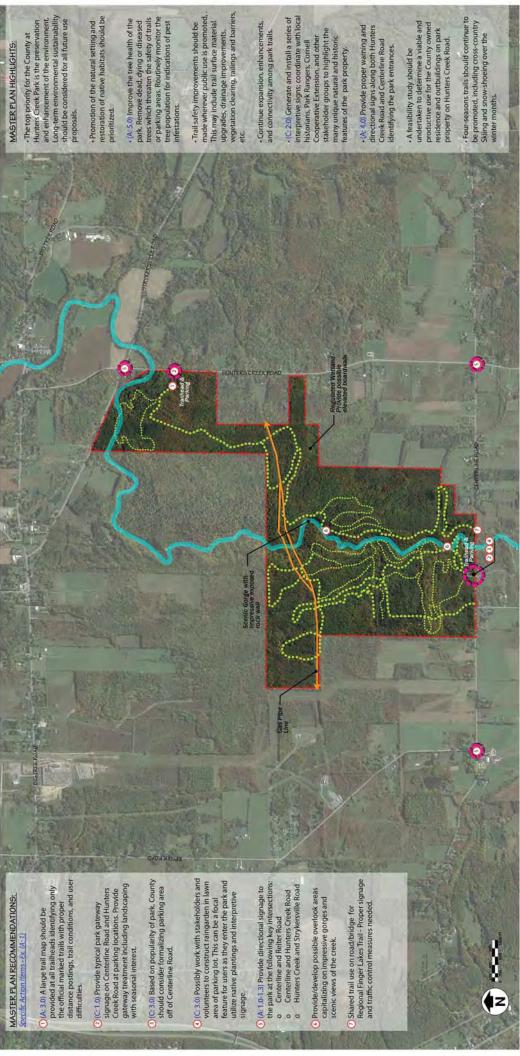
- A concern for perimeter properties / trespassing
- A lack of respect for boundary private properties by certain park users.
- A concern for emergency services access
- A concern over trail use and long-term maintenance
- Improvements needed with signage and clear trail markers
- A concern for safety and liability.
- Emerging invasive species



Small creek









5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

### 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

### Trails:

- · Routinely inspect and provide upkeep of all trails;
  - Remove dangerous tree limbs and other potential hazards:
  - Improve drainage and divert water away from trails where necessary.

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House

- (A: 3.0) A large trail map should be provided at all trailheads identifying only the official marked trails with proper distance postings, trail conditions, and user difficulties.
  - Trail map should also explain the meaning of the orange blazes "conservation trail".

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House

 All trail markings/signage need to be clearly understandable from a non-experienced trail user (hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders)

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House

Trail safety improvements should be made wherever public use is promoted, . (In addition to proper signage of potential hazards and user difficulties) This may include trail surface material upgrades, drainage improvements, vegetation clearing, railings and barriers, etc.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House

 Provide/develop overlook areas capitalizing on impressive gorges and scenic views of the creek.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House/WNYMBA

 Proper warning signage and/or physical barriers should be placed at specific points where the trail travels through difficult or steep terrain.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: WNYMBA/In-House



One of the many park trails



FINAL PLAN VOLUME 2

 Four-seasons trails should continue to be promoted, including cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing over the winter months. (Seasonal trail closures, or temporary closures due to wetness or erosion, should be adhered to for environmental sustainability.)

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

### Structures:

- (C: 5.0) In the short-term, County should provide portajohns at each parking area, until a more permanent comfort station can be built.
  - Usergroups should provide additional restroom accommodations for any events that may take place at the park.
    - Priority: HighPartner: In-House
- Determine a viable and productive use for the County owned residence and outbuildings on park property on Hunters Creek Road (2003 Master Plan). Consideration should be given to turning this building into a parksrelated facility, including the potential for revenue generation. Potential future uses could include:
  - Possible seasonal residence for a park ranger to monitor the park and oversee public use of the park.
  - Meeting rooms for parks and environmental groups, local organizations and educational programs, etc.
  - Park Comfort Station / restroom facility; could include interpretive information, park related maps, etc., and could be a stop along the Finger Lakes Trail.
  - Warming Hut for winter activities and crosscountry skiing
  - If remodeled, one of the outbuildings could be utilized for the storage of emergency equipment and trail maintenance tools, etc.

■ Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House



One of the many park trails



Picnic table near Hunter's Creek

5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN



Trail symbols

- (C: 4.0) Accommodate a modest comfort facility (restrooms) at one or both of the parking lots/trail head locations.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House

### Maintenance/Safety:

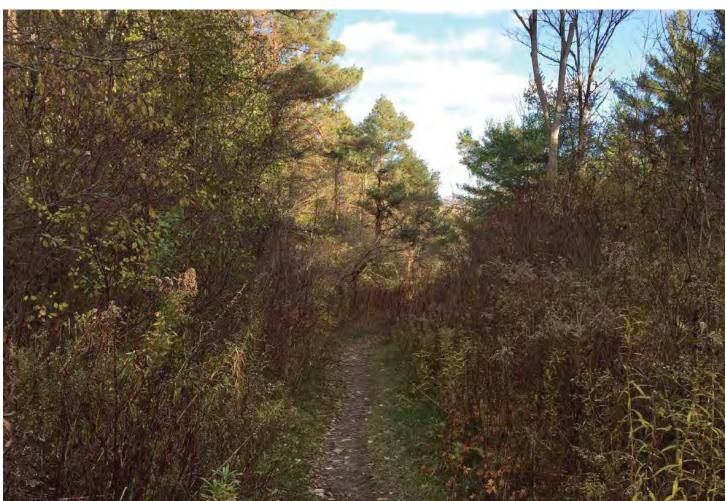
- Improvements should be made within the park to assure adequate emergency vehicle access, consult with local fire department and sheriff to determine what types of equipment they would need to get through.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- entire park property, with the special exceptions of park entrances, trail heads, "public" trail linkages to adjacent properties and emergency access points along both Centerline Road and Hunters Creek Road. Buffers should also be established around state or federal regulated wetlands.
  - The provisions for setbacks are designed to be flexible due to the varied conditions along the perimeter of this and other county owned properties. There will be specific cases where natural barriers, vegetative screens or fences may be the best solution.
  - Exceptions to the recommended perimeter buffer may be made where the park property abuts or adjoins other publicly held lands where public access and linkages would likely be promoted, such as from the adjacent Kenneglen Scenic and Nature Preserve Property.
  - Consideration will be given to establishing an even wider buffer around sensitive environments such as official wetlands or areas with unique vegetation, etc.
    - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House
- (C: 3.0) Based on popularity of park, County should consider formalizing parking area and entrance drive off of Centerline Road.
  - Possibly expand lot to accommodate a growing number of park users.
  - Possibly work with stakeholders and volunteers to construct rain garden in lawn area of parking lot. This can be a focal feature for users as they enter the park and utilize native plantings and interpretive signage.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/WNYMBA/Volunteers

#### Signage:

- (C: 1.0) Provide typical park gateway signage on Centerline Road and Hunters Creek Road at parking locations. Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest. Develop sign in compliance with typical park gateway signage.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (A: 4.0) Provide proper warning and directional signs along both Hunters Creek Road and Centerline Road identifying the park entrances. Recommendations should be made to the County's DPW to study the traffic along Centerline to decide whether further safety enhancements/traffic calming provisions are warranted. (i.e., is a flashing yellow light warranted?). It is recommended that reduced speed limit signs be placed at the park entrances.
  - Shared trail use on road/bridge for Regional Finger Lakes Trail - Proper signage and traffic control measures needed.

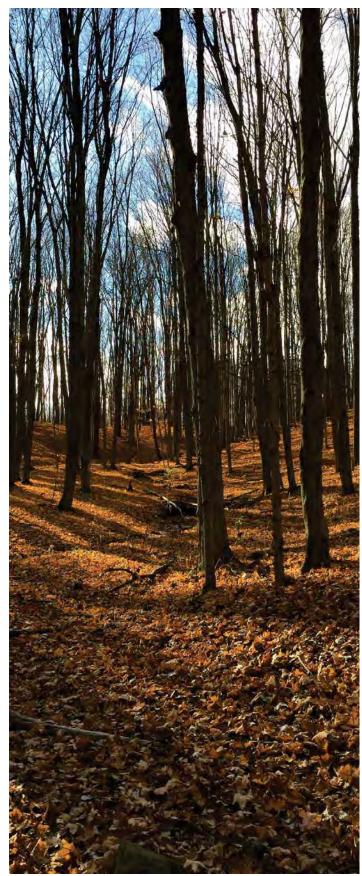
■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

- (A: 1.0-1.3) Provide directional signage to the park at the following key intersections:
  - Centerline and Reiter Road
  - Centerline and Hunters Creek Road
  - Hunters Creek and Strykersville Road
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- Undertake a formal perimeter/boundary survey, with permanent boundary markers set at regular intervals and at critical points around the entire park property.
  - Partner with an area college to utilize students to assist with these survey efforts as part of their field education.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: University At Buffalo/Consultant



Narrow park trail

5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN



View into the woods

- (C: 2.0) Generate and install a series of interpretive signs; coordinate with local historians, Park Rangers, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and other stakeholder groups to highlight the many unique natural and historic features of the park property, such as:
  - History and geology of the Creek/gorge
  - Local history of the area (early settlers, early trails and routes, Holmes farm and other area homesteads, cemeteries, etc.),
  - Kellogg Cabin site (log cabin built in 1940 by Sanford Hubbard - son of Roycroft's Elbert Hubbard)
  - Potential map showing earlier farm properties on the current park land
  - Story behind the gas pipeline, which originates in Texas.
  - Unique park flora and fauna 0
  - Potential ancient forest groves on park property
  - Story of natural succession, i.e. second growth forests, open meadows, etc.
  - Unique amphibious habitats 0
  - Potential Native American Site (Indian Ridge Trail?)
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Local Historian/Cornell Cooperative/In-House

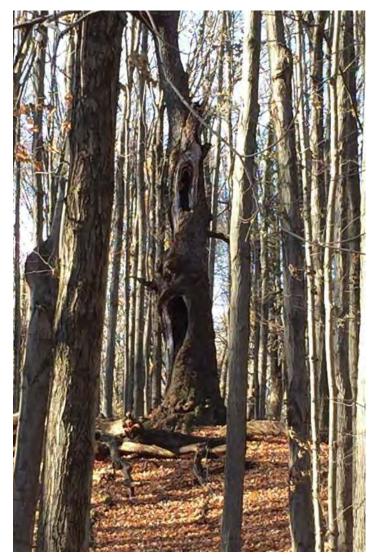
#### Connectivity:

- Continue expansion, enhancements, connectivity among park trails, and regional trails such as the Finger Lakes Conservation Trail.
  - Provide interpretive signage along the trails highlighting flora, fauna, and wildlife.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry

#### **Environment:**

- The top priority for the County at Hunters Creek Park is the preservation and enhancement of the environment. Long-term environmental sustainability should be considered for all future use proposals.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/WNYMBA/In-House
- (P: 1.0) Address and remove invasive species such as Japanese Siltgrass.
  - Develop invasive species management plan for the park
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY Prism
- Promotion of the natural setting and restoration of native habitats should be prioritized.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: NYSDEC/WNY Prism

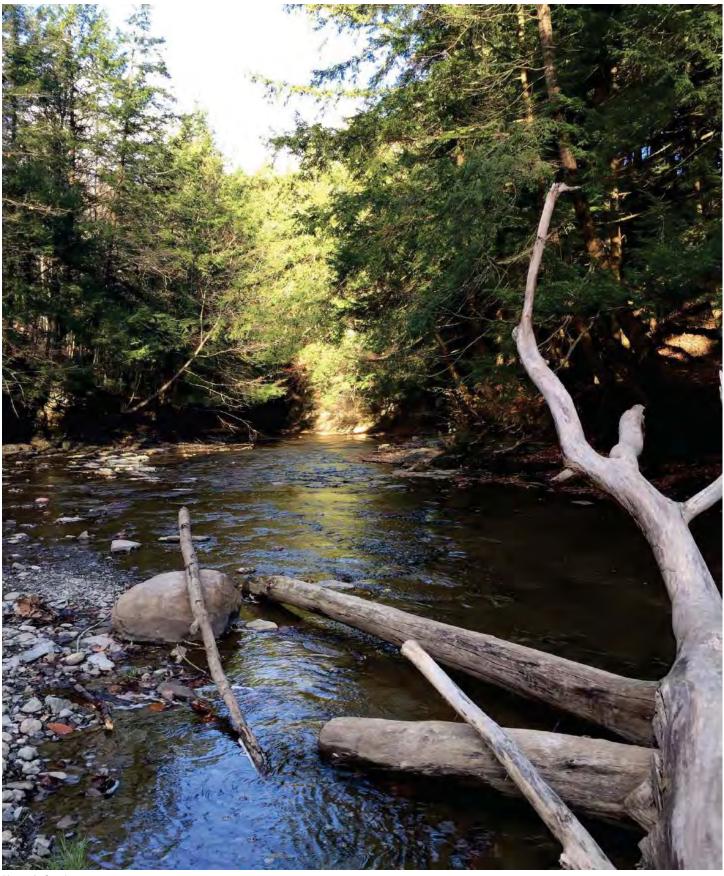
- (A: 5.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry
- "Active" recreation (athletic fields and courts) should not be promoted within the park.
  - Only "passive" recreational elements and activities should be promoted for Hunters
     Creek Park. Primary emphasis will be placed on improving environmentally sustainable nature trails.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Unique tree in the woods showing signs of poor health

- Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize plantings for bird and butterfly habitats;
  - Designate potential native plant gardens to promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats;
  - The County should encourage the development of outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools. Outdoor classrooms can be living laboratories for local children to immerse themselves in nature and our local ecosystem.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Improve the health of Hunter's Creek. Work with NYSDEC, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, and other local stakeholder groups.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the creek and naturalization of the surrounding wooded areas can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: ECSWD/NYSDEC/Waterkeeper

5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN



Hunter's Creek

#### **HUNTERS CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	5.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park.	Remove dead, dying or diseased trees which threaten the safety of trails or parking areas.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
Р	1.0	Address and remove invasive species and emerging infestations to prevent spread to other areas.	Work with potential parters such as WNY Prism to develop invasive species management plan for the park.	High	Ongoing	X
С		In the short-term, County should provide porta-johns at each parking area, until a more permanent comfort station can be built.	Usergroups should provide additional restroom accommodations for any events that may take place at the park.	High	1-2 Years	Х
А		Provide welcome sign and rules for the park	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Provide consistent wayfinding and directional signage within the park, including large park trails map at main trailhead	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels, trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	4.0	Provide proper warning and directional signs along both Hunters Creek Road and Centerline Road identifying the park entrances.	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	1.0	Provide directional signage to the park at the following key intersections:	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	Х
А	1.1	Centerline and Reiter Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

5.0 HUNTERS CREEK PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **HUNTERS CREEK PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А		Centerline and Hunters Creek Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
А		Hunters Creek and Strykersville Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House, Highway
С	1.0	Provide typical park gateway signage on Centerline Road and Hunters Creek Road at parking locations. Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest. Develop sign in compliance with typical park gateway signage.	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,600
С		Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500
С		Expand and formalize parking lot off of Centerline Road	Engage a contractor to construct a larger parking lot, and local stakeholder groups to define planting areas and rain gardens	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,500
С	4.0	Accommodate a modest comfort facility (restrooms) at one or both of the parking lots/trail head locations.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$75,000

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

5.5 SCOBY DAM PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **SCOBY DAM PARK**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

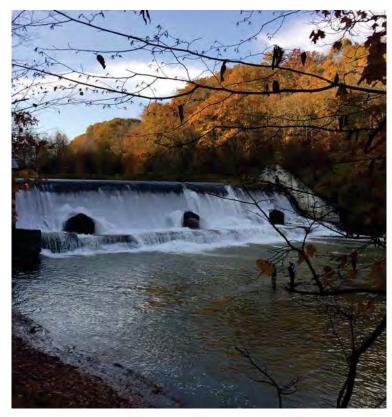
Scoby Dam Park is a linear strip of land along Cattaraugus Creek and is a mecca for fishing. The passive park takes advantage of its superb siting on the Creek, including fishing, informal kayak access, hiking and the beautiful scenery at the southern end of Erie County.

Scoby Hill Dam is the site of a small turn-of-the-century hydroelectric generating facility on Cattaraugus Creek, and at one time generated a small percentage of the Village of Springville's electricity. The dam was constructed in 1924 and is 30-feet high. The existing building is in very good condition, it and the Dam are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The site affords scenic views of the creek and dam.

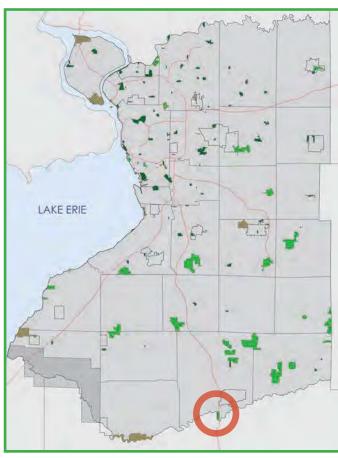
Currently, Scoby Hill Road ends at Cattaraugus Creek near the dam. The bridge, which formerly carried Scoby Hill Road across Cattaraugus Creek, was removed after the 1998 summer flooding and there are no plans to rebuild it. The creek bank suffered a great deal of erosion in the June 1998 storm.

The Army Corps of Engineers is currently developing a plan to open the access upstream to various fish populations that will make this area a primary fishing destination in Erie County.

A rest stop along Cascade Road is maintained by the County. It contains a small picnic shelter and a large area of maintained turf.



Scoby Dam



Park Location Map: Scoby Dam Park is the southern most park in the County System, located in the Town of Concord on the border of Cattaraugus County

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Manage and monitor invasive species within the park.
- Preserve the beautiful stand of large trees along the bank of the Creek; infill with new tree plantings to assure a long-term sustainability and beauty.
- Promote this County park as a prime fishing site along the scenic Cattaraugus Creek.
- Provide improved access to the edge of the creek, as well as possible accessible fishing platforms.

5.5 SCOBY DAM PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

This site is at the far southern end of Erie County along the border with Cattaraugus County. Access to this relatively remote site is from Scoby Hill Road just downhill from Route 219 before crossing the Cattaraugus Creek Bridge heading south. Only a few residences are nearby along Scoby Hill Road in this mostly rural location.

#### **RECREATIONAL CONTEXT**

The primary recreational use for the park is for fishing, picnicking, and kayaks. Casual walk and hiking along the trail is also a popular activity at the park.

#### **RECENT PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

Approval of restoration project of dam between U.S Army Corps of Engineers, DEC, and Erie County. Dam would be lowered by 25 feet, with installation of a fish ladder and series of pools to allow fish to bypass the dam.



Access to the Creek



Access road parallels the park

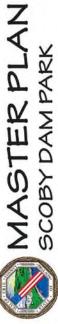


Local context map



Large stand of Hemlock Trees









5.5 SCOBY DAM PARK FINAL PLAN



A view down Cattaraugus Creek towards the dam

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Directional and interpretive signage is lacking for this County facility
- No formalized fishing areas are currently available.
- Erosion has done much damage to the Creek bank.
- Safety barriers or landscape buffers are lacking to the more dangerous spots along the creek.
- Only 2 picnic tables at the park.
- Park boundaries are unclear
- Minimal parking available

#### **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: 1.1-1.2) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
  - Apply for funding from NYSDEC and Erie County Soil and Water District for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- (P: 13.0) Manage and monitor invasive species within the park.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism/ECSWD



 Preserve the beautiful stand of large trees along the bank of the Creek; infill with new tree plantings to assure a long-term sustainability and beauty.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: In-House/Forestry

- (P: 1.0) Improve the health of Cattaraugus Creek.
  - Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the river/creek can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper,

NYSDEC, ECSWD

 (A: 2.0) Provide improved access to the edge of the creek, as well as possible accessible fishing platforms.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: NYSDEC/In-House

 Promote this County park as a prime fishing site along the scenic Cattaraugus Creek.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House/VBN

- Promote the "heritage" aspects of the site, including the historic dam site, former bridge crossing, geological history, etc.
  - The hydroelectric generating building could be rehabilitated as an interpretive center, and could include restrooms in the future, as funding becomes available.

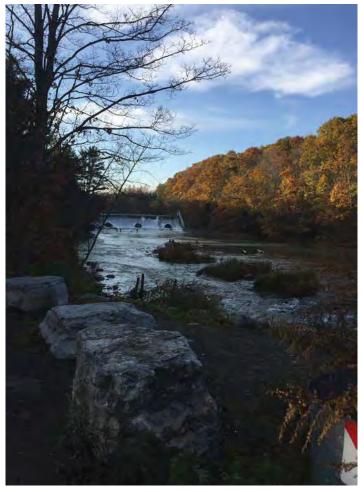
■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 1.0) Provide new interpretive signage and informational kiosks that tie the park better "into the mix" with other local cultural and historical attractions.
  - Provide an interpretive "story-line" for the Park's geological and local history, i.e. How and when the gorge was formed?; When was the area first settled?; What's the history behind the Scoby Dam? What were some significant historic happenings in the area, or in the park?; What fish species are found in Cattaraugus Creek?; etc.
  - Provide interpretive signs or markers at key historic and natural sites, such as at the Dam, old generating building, former bridge site, etc.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House



View of the dam from the parking area



Cattaraugus Creek

5.5 SCOBY DAM PARK FINAL PLAN

 (C: 2.0) The remaining bridge abutment at the foot of Scoby Hill Road could be utilized to develop a viewing platform overlooking the creek, also serving as an ADA accessible fishing platform.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/Contractor

 (C: 3.0) Provide a expanded parking layout at the foot of Scoby Hill Road, to maximize the numbers of cars that can enjoy the Creek and park.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 Upgrade existing trail access from the foot of Scoby Hill Road to the area above the existing dam; provide signage and trail markers.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House

 (C: 4.0) If funding and partnerships are available, design formalized trail (asphalt) south of the Dam along Cattaraugus Creek. Include additional access points to the creek for fishing and to capitalize on views of the scenic area.

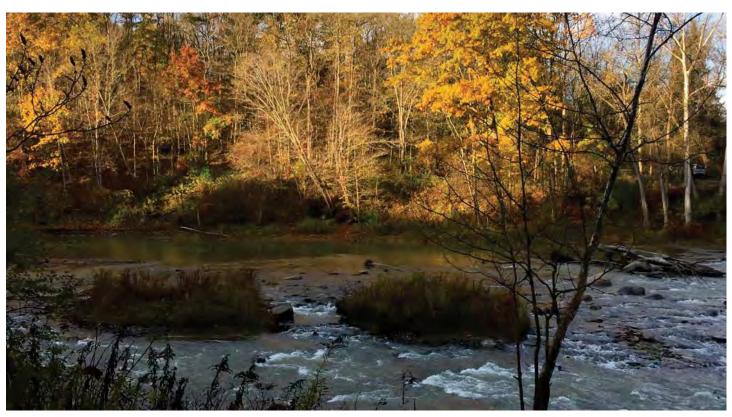
■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Consultant/Contractor

- (C: 5.0) A "seasonal" kayak launch could possibly be developed from the Creek bank, which is steep in this area but has the potential for a small ramp, which would need to switch back, to launch kayaks. Given the shallow depth of water over much of the year in the Creek, it is likely that spring high-water season is the likely use period for this park feature.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: NYSDEC/In-House/Stakeholder group
- Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
  - Prioritize plantings for bird and butterfly habitats
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Maintain rest area off of Cascade Road; if site is a heavy burden on park maintenance crews, seek new partner/ agency to take care of site.
  - Revert most of site to low-mow to reduce the amount of maintenance at rest stop.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: In-House



Water flowing down Cattaraugus Creek



#### **SCOBY DAM PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.1	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
Р	2.0	-	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	1.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. The overall age of the tree population at the Park is considered to be mature, with limited young trees to renew the resource over time. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings	program.	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
Р	1.0	Improve the health of Cattaraugus Creek	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
А	2.0	I	Parks staff and partership support, such as the NYSDEC	Medium	1-2 Years	\$15,000
С	1.0	park	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content. Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels, installation In-House	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,000

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

5.5 SCOBY DAM PARK FINAL PLAN

#### **SCOBY DAM PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
С	2.0	the foot of Scoby Hill Road could	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
С	3.0	at the foot of Scoby Hill Road, to	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$25,500 - DPW
С	4.0	available, design formalized trail	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$100,000
С	_	possibly be developed from the	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$18,000



Entrance sign



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## BUFFALO RIVER NATURAL HABITAT PARKS

(Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park [Now known as - Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park], Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park, Times Beach Nature Preserve)

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Erie County has continued to take a leadership role in the preservation and enhancement of the environment along the Buffalo River. This former industrialized corridor has seen much improvement with regard to water quality and habitat restoration. The County has worked closely with the City of Buffalo, New York State, and various Federal agencies to remediate, restore, and revitalize three small, but notable, park sites along the Buffalo River, including Thomas F. Higgins Bridge and Riverfront Park (Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park), Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park and Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park.

Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park (Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park) site lies at the confluence of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek. Both Red Jacket and Bailey Peninsula park sites have become favorite fishing locations.

Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, lies at the foot of Smith Street along the Buffalo River, with excellent southerly views of the River and historic grain elevators. It also has a naturalized wetland / pond area which is reminiscent of an earlier time in history, before industries took over the landscape.

Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park lies just east of Bailey Avenue at Seneca Street and Avon Place. The County has recently obtained additional land to expand the habitat park.

Times Beach Nature Preserve runs along Fuhrmann Boulevard on the Outer Harbor and is owned by the City of Buffalo. Erie County manages maintenance and operations of the park. Over the last five years, extensive invasive species removal, control and native plant



View towards the Lighthouse and Times Beach



All four natural habitat parks are located in the City of Buffalo

#### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders to maintain, restore, and enhance parks.
  - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat parks.
  - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
- Install security camera system at parks tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
- Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the parks. Educate park users about local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.

restorations were funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and will be turned back over to the County in 2018 for full responsibility of the habitat maintenance and operations.

#### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

All four properties have a history along and near the Buffalo River. There was a point in Buffalo's history when the city was one of the largest and most powerful industrial centers in the country, and the Buffalo River was at the epicenter of this industrial might. Ships once traveled up and down the river, servicing the numerous grain elevators, steel mills and other factories. It's hard to believe that heavy Industry once dominated this urban river-scape. Although some industry still exists and some ships do pass through, it is a fraction of its former use, and now fish, wildlife and vegetation have come back to reclaim their historical homes.

#### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

During the completion of the original Erie County Parks Master Plan, South Buffalo and the Outer Harbor were in need of revitalization efforts. Over the last several years South Buffalo and specifically areas near the Buffalo River are witnessing a renaissance. From Buffalo Riverworks to the Ohio Street Complete Streets Project, this area has seen tremendous improvements. New apartments/lofts, restaurants, and parks have made South Buffalo and up-and-coming vibrant destination. Likewise, the Outer Harbor is now a haven for bikers, joggers, park-goers, and nature enthusiasts, as new parks like Wilkeson Pointe and Outer Harbor State Park have sparked regional interest in the area as a recreational asset. The Habitat Parks contribute to this rebirth providing natural sanctuaries, wildlife habitats, and scenic views of the Buffalo River.

Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park formerly known as Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park, lies in a small triangular piece of land between the Buffalo River, Cazenovia Creek and Bailey Avenue. It is just south of the major intersection of Elk Street, Seneca Street and the I-190, and just north of the major city intersections of McKinley Parkway and South Park Avenue. Southside Elementary School lies across Bailey Avenue further to the east, adjacent to the restored natural site.

Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park is located at the foot of Smith Street, off of South Park Avenue. Many industrial uses and single family homes to the north surround the park site which fronts the Buffalo River. Active railroads are also present to the east and west of the site.

Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park is located just a short kayak trip up river from Baily Peninsula Habitat Park. Located off of Seneca Street and just a couple blocks from Bailey Avenue, this park has approximately over 3,000 feet of shoreline frontage on the Buffalo River. Several industrial sites front Seneca Bluffs on the opposite side of the river with businesses and single family homes residing south and east of the park site.

Times Beach is located on the Outer Harbor, accessible off of Fuhrmann Boulevard via the Buffalo Skyway. Wilkeson Pointe Park lies directly south of the park site while the Buffalo Lighthouse is directly to the north. In close proximity to Times Beach is access to the Queen City Bike Ferry, which provides waterborne transportation back and forth to Canalside. The Outer Harbor in recent years has become a beacon for people in the City to escape urban life to bike, walk, kayak, and enjoy breath-taking views of Lake Erie.



Buffalo River



#### RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

All of the habitat park sites are passive, nature-based sites. However, many other area parks offer both formal recreational and nature-based opportunities including:

- Tifft Nature Preserve (passive/habitat preserve)
- Wilkeson Pointe
- Outer Harbor State Park
- Mutual Riverfront Park
- Conway Park
- Houghton Park
- Riverfest Park

#### **CURRENT MAINTENANCE OF THE HABITAT PARKS**

With funded construction, restoration and invasive species control efforts ending in 2018, maintenance responsibility, funding, and dedicated staffers will be a concern for all habitat parks moving forward. Invasive species is a major issue within these parks, as well as several other County Parks. Long-term management of these parks needs to be addressed in order to monitor and preserve habitats, plant life, and the Buffalo River. Typically Parks crew members maintaining natural habitat parks have not always had the necessary training to preserve and maintain natural parks. Long-term/trained dedicated staffers as well as local partners/community groups need to work together as caretakers and stewardship advocates for these important urban natural habitats.

- Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park Area across Cazenovia Creek being restored to parkland, and will be turned over to the County in 2018 for ongoing maintenance and invasive species control.
- Red Jacket Currently in a post-constructions warranty
  period with LDC Construction. Park will receive additional
  invasive species control spraying in the spring. Park
  will be turned over to the County in 2018 for ongoing
  maintenance and invasive species control.
- Seneca Bluffs Army Corps of Engineers has Federal funding for maintenance and invasive species control of the 50' riparian shoreline buffer. The County is responsible for the rest of the land. County will be responsible for the entire park as of 2020.
- Times Beach Full maintenance and operations will be transferred back to the County in 2018 with the end of the US Army Corps 5-year invasive species management and native planting investment. This park needs a grant or increased parks operations budget to maintain this nature preserve.
- An extensive invasive species management plan and policy is needed to:
  - mitigate the impacts of invasive species,
  - reduce the rate of invasive species introduction (prevention),
  - o eradicate new invader populations, and
  - reduce damages by slowing the spread of

invasions across the landscape or adapting to an invader's presence through control or altered management practices.

In addition, monitoring is key to most invasion mitigation strategies—for knowing what and where to control and for evaluating the effectiveness of management actions. Native plants communities are indispensable to ecosystem health, resiliency, and productivity. Recognizing the need to maintain native plant communities, the County should create and implement a Policy for promoting the use of native plants in revegetation projects within the Parks System, as well for other projects on County-managed lands.



Times Beach

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## THOMAS F. HIGGINS RIVERFRONT BRIDGE & PARK

(Formerly known as Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park)

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems. These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as (On-going construction and restoration to continue):
  - Invasive Species
  - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
  - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- At least half of the trees that were planted recently have been destroyed by beavers.
- Site continues to suffer from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats and wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- Encroachment of businesses, industrial practices, unlawful dumpings, poor care of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/ trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse.
- Due to lack of staff and the small acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic.
- Additional signage is needed off of Bailey Avenue
- Fast traffic and difficult sight lines on Bailey Avenue make pedestrian access difficult.
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



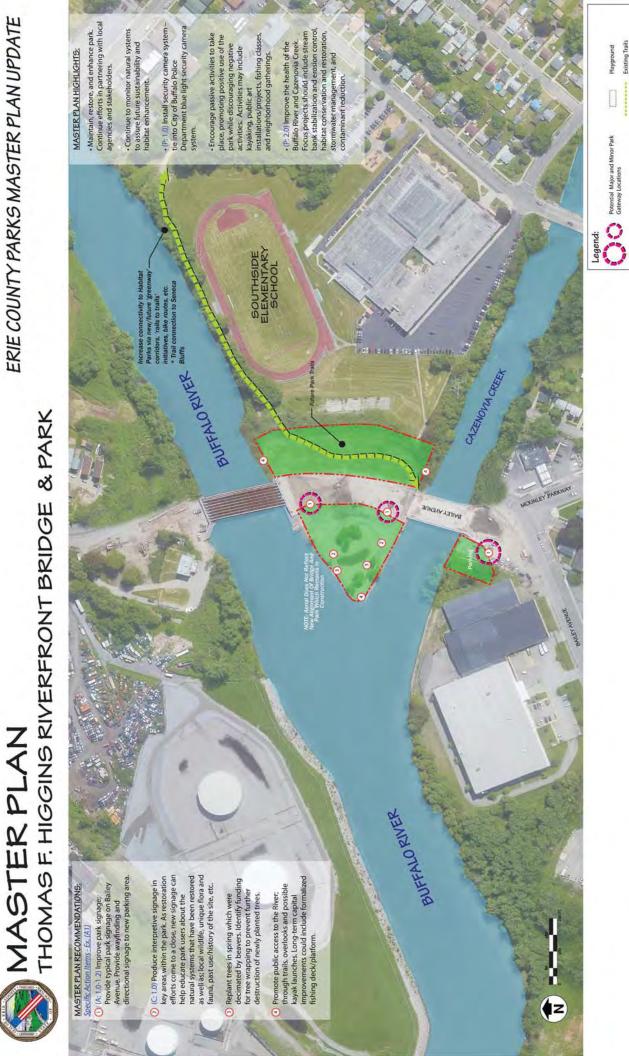
Park Location Map: Bailey Peninsula is located off of Bailey Ave.



View of Buffalo River from Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge & Park



## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



**Existing Trails** 

#### 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
- Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders.
  - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
  - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups
- (A: 1.0-1.2) Improve park signage;
  - Provide typical park signage on Bailey Avenue.
  - Provide wayfinding and directional signage to new parking area.
    - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- Continue to monitor natural systems to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

- (C: 1.0) Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the park. As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House
- Increase connectivity to Habitat Parks
  - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups
  - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway
- (P: 1.0) Install security camera system tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs



View of natural habitat park

- (P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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
- (P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/ early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.
  - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders
- (P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River
- Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.
  - Increase awareness of park by providing guided nature walks with Erie County Park Rangers.
     Tours could include other habitat parks.
    - Priority: MediumPartner: In-House

- Prioritize protection and enhancement of areas deemed appropriate for additional native plantings. Native plant gardens will promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: NYSDEC/Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/In-House
- · Promote public access to the River;
  - through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches
  - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Restored native plants and trees



New sign and landscaping

#### THOMAS F. HIGGINS RIVERFRONT BRIDGE & PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	1.0	Install security camera system  – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
Р	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear- winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
А	1.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A		Provide typical park signage on Bailey Avenue.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
Р	1	Improve the health of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek.	Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
А		Provide wayfinding and directional signage to new parking area and park.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
С	ı	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### RED JACKET RIVERFRONT NATURAL HABITAT PARK

#### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems. These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as;
  - Invasive Species
  - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
  - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- Site suffers from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats/wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- · Mistreatment of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/ trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse (graffiti on boulders and railings)
- Railings at overlook are deteriorating, contains missing rails, and is covered in graffiti.
- Due to lack of staff and the small acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic.
- Signage at Smith Street and South Park Avenue does not conform with typical County park signage.
- Sidewalk along Smith Street terminates at St. Stephens Place. Local users have to walk on the street south of St Stephens Place to access park.
- Lack of interpretive signage
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



Park Location Map: Red Jacket Riverfront Park is located off of Smith Street.



Overlook area



# ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



**Existing Trails** Park Boundary

Natural Feature

#### 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

- (P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders
  - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
  - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
  - Coordinate with local user-groups like Valley Community Association, neighborhood block clubs, and local schools to provide programs and stewardship opportunities at park.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups



New native tree plantings along path

- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree and native planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural character of the park.
  - 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
- Continue to monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
  - Priority: HighPartner: In-House

- Maintain park as 'natural habitat park'
  - Apply no (or limited) mowing and limited weed whacking policy. Reducing lawn maintenance will increase natural habitats and would help divert park crew members to work on additional tasks.
    - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY PRISM
- (P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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



Pathway between Buffalo River and small pond area





Railings in poor shape at the overlook area

- (P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- (C: 1.0) Produce and install interpretive signage in key areas within the park. As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House



Great panoramic views

- Increase connectivity to habitat parks;
  - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
  - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups, specifically with the proposed DL&W Greenway trail.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway
- Install security camera system tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
- (A: 3.0) Repair and improve rails at overlook;
  - Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Shoreline conditions



Park signage off of Smith Street

- Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.
  - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders
- (P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the river/creek can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River

- (A: 4.0) Promote public access to the River;
  - through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.
  - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 7.0) Replace or provide space for murals and public art on concrete walls on either side of Smith Street.
  - Collaborate with local artists and interested neighborhood residents.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Local artists/Community groups/ Schools
- (A: 2.0) Replace existing gateway signage to be in conformance with the branding of the Parks System.
  - In the event the sign requires repairs or needs to be reconstructed it should conform to the signage used on the other parks.
    - Priority: Low■ Partner: In-House

Artwork off of Smith Street

#### **RED JACKET RIVERFRONT PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	3.0	Repair and improve rails at overlook;	Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.	High	1-2 Years	P.O.B
Р	1.0	Install security camera system  – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
Р	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear- winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	5.0	Maintain, restore, and enhance park.	Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	6.0	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	2.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House

#### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р		River	Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
А			Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
А		access to the River;	through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches. Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.	Low	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С		park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,000
Р	7.0		Collaborate with local artists and interested neighborhood residents.	Low	3-5 Years	Partner

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### SENECA BLUFFS NATURAL HABITAT PARK

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems (more improvements on-going). These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as;
  - Invasive Species
  - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
  - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- Site suffers from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats and wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- Encroachment of businesses, industrial practices, unlawful dumpings, poor care of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/ trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse.
- Due to lack of staff and the large acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic.
- Does not have typical park signage visible off of Seneca Street.
- Lack of interpretive signage
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



Park Location Map: Seneca Bluffs is located off of Seneca Street in South Buffalo.



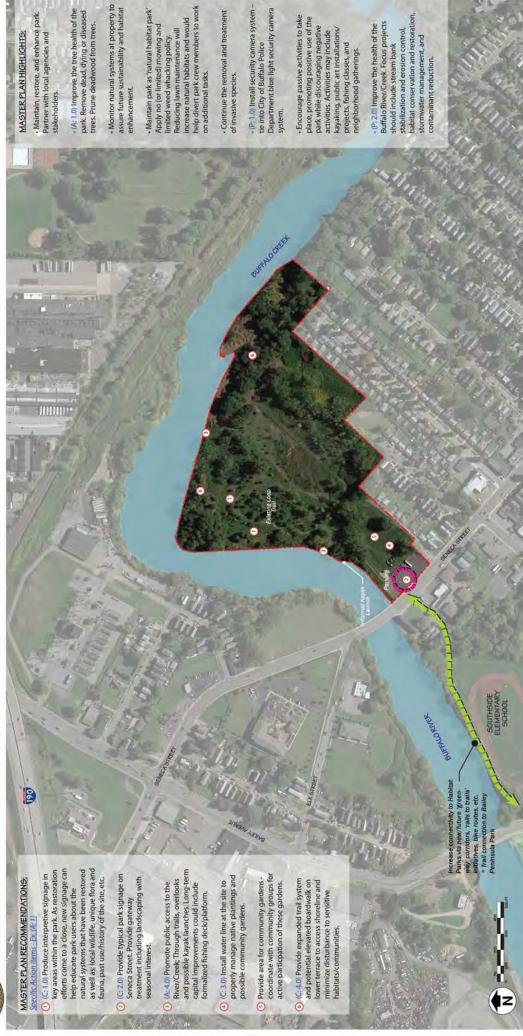
Trail and signage from parking area



ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



## MASTER PLAN SENECA BLUFFS PARK







View of the Buffalo 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
- (P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Partner with local agencies and stakeholders.
  - Pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
  - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups
- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, inhouse staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Develop annual tree and native planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural character of the park.

- 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
- Monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 3.0) Install water line at the site to properly manage native plantings and possible community gardens.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House
- Maintain park as 'natural habitat park'
  - Limit mowing and weed whacking. Reducing lawn maintenance will increase natural habitats and would help divert park crew members to work on additional tasks.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House
- (C: 1.0) Produce and install interpretive signage in key areas within the park. As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House

- Increase connectivity to habitat parks;
  - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
  - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway
- (P: 1.0) Install security camera system tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs

- (P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY PRISM
- (C: 2.0) Provide typical park signage on Seneca Street.
  - Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House



Buffalo River

- (P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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
- (P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Provide area for community gardens coordinate with community groups for active participation of these gardens.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Community members/groups
- (C: 4.0) Provide expanded trail system and potential elevated boardwalk on lower terrace to access shoreline and minimize disturbance to sensitive habitats/ communities.
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: In-House, NYSDEC
- Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.
  - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, community gardens and neighborhood gatherings.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders
- (P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River/Creek.
  - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements to the ecological status

of the river/creek can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.

- Priority: Medium
- Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River
- (A: 4.0) Promote public access to the River/Creek;
  - Through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.
  - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



Informal parking area



Existing trail

### **SENECA BLUFFS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	multi-pronged tree planting strategy	if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	3.0	Repair and improve rails at overlook;	Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.	High	1-2 Years	In-House
С	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	High	6-10 Years	\$10,500
С	2.0	park; Provide typical County Park sign	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	High	1-2 Years	\$17,800
С	1 2 0	properly manage native plantings	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	1-2 Years	\$5,000
Р	1 4 0	into City of Buffalo Police Department	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
Р	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р			Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	5.0		Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

### **SENECA BLUFFS: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
Р	I	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
А	2.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
А	ı	signage to the park.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
С	4.0	potential elevated boardwalk on	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$220,000
Р	I		Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
А	I	Promote and provide public access to the River;	Through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.	Low	3-5 Years	\$75,000

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### SCHEMATIC PLAN SENECA BLUFFS



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### **TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE**

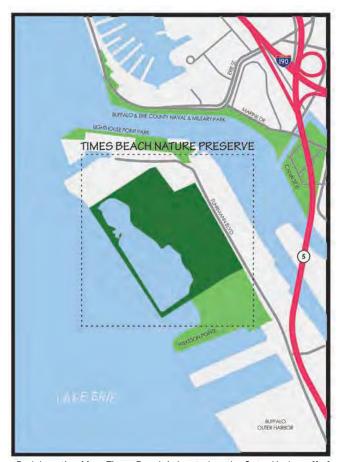
### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse
- Some graffiti found on boardwalk and signs
- Due to lack of staff and the large acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security/patrol becomes an issue at times.
- Does not have typical park signage visible off of Fuhrmann Blvd.
- Aggressive invasive species control needed

### 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
- (P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Partner with local agencies and stakeholders
  - Continue to seek grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
  - Partner and collaborate with Friends of Times Beach group.
  - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups



Park Location Map: Times Beach is located on the Outer Harbor off of Fuhrmann Blvd.



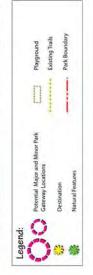
View of the marsh at Times Beach



## MASTER PLAN

## TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE





- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.
  - o Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry
- (P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - 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

- (P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House
- Monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House



Boardwalk and bird viewing area

- (P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY PRISM
- (A: 2.0) Provide typical park signage off of Fuhrmann Blvd.
  - Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest to entrance sign.
    - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House
- (P: 1.0) Install security camera system tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: City of Buffalo/Erie County Sheriffs
- (A: 3.0) Improve and maintain park trails and boardwalks.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House/Stakeholder and Volunteer Groups
- (P: 2.0) Improve the health of Lake Erie.
  - Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
  - Continued improvements can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/

NYSDEC/ECSWD



Boardwalk



Trail adjacent to Fuhrmann Blvd.



### TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
А	2.0	Improve park signage; Provide typical park signage off of Fuhrmann Blvd.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	High	3-5 Years	In-House
А	3.0	Improve and maintain park trails and boardwalks.	Parks staff and partners	High	Ongoing	In-House
Р	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
Р	5.0	Maintain, restore, and enhance park.	Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	6.0	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	1.0	Install security camera system  – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	Low	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
Р	2.0	Improve the health of Lake Erie	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Low	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### LAKEVIEW POCKET PRESERVE

### **DESCRIPTION**

Lakeview Pocket Preserve is an approximately 9 acre wooded parcel off of Lakeshore Road on the shoreline of Lake Erie. The undeveloped parcel sits upon a bluff with a beautiful view overlooking the lake. There are a variety of trees on-site dating to more than 100 years of age, and a series of wetlands which provide habitat for a variety of species according to the Western New York Land Conservancy. Private residences reside on either side of the parcel. Notably, on the eastern side of the property is a new wedding/retreat venue called Suncliff on the Lake.

The Pocket Preserve in the near future will have a direct connection to the Shoreline Trail on Lakeshore Road. The Shoreline Trail will connect users with Wendt Beach to the south and Graycliff Estate to the north.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

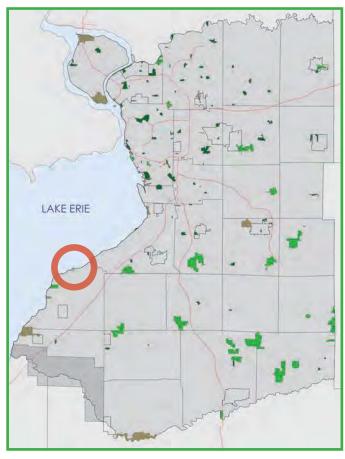
Nearby County Parks include Bennett Beach and Wendt Beach.

### **CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

- Property is underdeveloped and currently does not have access or any formal trails
- Much of the site is overrun with invasive species
- Safety along the bluff would be an issue in terms of allowing the public in this area
- Abandoned building foundation located near Lakeshore Road



Aerial view of the north side of the property which features a large bluff overlooking the Lake (Photo credit: Bing Maps)



Park Location Map: Lakeview Pocket Preserve is located in the Town of Evans off of Lakeshore Road

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Monitor and remove invasive species from site to prevent spreading of unwanted plants, and to preserve the unique native species found on-site.
- Prioritize the preservation of the natural habitat; especially rare tree/plant species, wetland areas, and habitats of wildlife.
- Create a 'natural habitat park' for passive recreational purposes. Design a trail through the property to take advantage of the unique natural features and the bluff over Lake Erie. Tie new trail into Shoreline Trail System.

### 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 pocket preserve.
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- (C: 1.0-1.4) To take advantage of the property's distinct natural setting and location on Lake Erie, it would be advantageous to create a 'natural habitat park' for passive recreational purposes.
  - Design and construct a single trail from Lakeshore Road, with minimal to no damage to existing trees/habitats, to the bluff overlook on the shoreline. Tie potential trail into Shoreline Trail along Lakeshore Road.
  - A portion of the trail may have to be an elevated boardwalk to prevent damage to any wetland areas.
  - Design and construct small pull-off area for parking with minimal disturbance to the sensitive environment.
  - Design and construct small overlook at end of trail near shoreline to capitalize on fantastic panoramic views out over Lake Erie. Railings along the bluff would be critical to make this happen because of the danger of a potential

Aerial of the Lakeview Pocket Preserve property - outlined in red (Photo credit: Google Maps)

- steep fall from the bluff.
- Partner with stakeholders to create interpretive signage areas along trail, educating users about the history of the site, unique tree/plant species, wetland characteristics, etc.
- Typical park signage should be installed on Lakeshore Road.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Consultant/Grants/In-House
- (P: 2.0) Prioritize the preservation of the natural habitat; especially rare tree/plant species, wetland areas, and habitats of wildlife.
  - Preserve the native plants on-site to ensure the ability to collect seeds and possibly re-use on the property.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: In-House/WNY Prism/NYSDEC
- (P: 3.0) Monitor and remove invasive species from site to prevent spreading of unwanted plants, and to preserve the unique native species found on-site.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism
- (P: 1.0) Possibly partner/coordinate with Suncliff on the Lake group as a possible funding source. As an adjacent property, a possible boardwalk through the woods and other scenic features could be an additional asset and tool for the venue to promote wedding photos and other amenities.
  - Groundskeepers for the venue could also be a possible resource to provide maintenance assistance.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: Suncliff on the Lake



### LAKEVIEW POCKET PRESERVE: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	1.0	l .	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, P.O.B., Forestry
С	1.0	passive recreational purposes;	Design and construct a single trail from Lakeshore Road, with minimal to no damage to existing trees/habitats, to the bluff overlook on the shoreline.	High	3-5 Years	\$100,000
С	1.1	passive recreational purposes;	Design and construct small pull- off area for parking with minimal disturbance to the wooded property.	High	3-5 Years	\$15,000
Р	2.0		Coordinate and partner with NYSDEC, WNY Prism, etc.	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	3.0	Monitor and remove invasive species from site to prevent spreading of unwanted plants, and to preserve the unique native species found on-site.	Coordinate and partner with NYSDEC, WNY Prism, etc.	High	Ongoing	Partner
С	1.2	passive recreational purposes;	Design and construct small overlook at end of trail near shoreline to capitalize on fantastic panoramic views out over Lake Erie.	Low	3-5 Years	\$12,500
С	1.3	passive recreational purposes;	Partner with stakeholders to create interpretive signage areas along trail, educating users about the history of the site, unique tree/plant species, wetland characteristics, etc.	Low	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	1.4		Typical park signage should be installed on Lakeshore Road. Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels	Low	3-5 Years	In-House
Р		the Lake group as a possible funding	Work with Suncliff on the Lake group for partnership opportunities and maintenance assistance	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House

### KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK HEADWATERS PROPERTY

### **DESCRIPTION**

Eighteen Mile Creek Headwaters Property is approximately a 223-acre community forest located in the Town of Concord off of Sharp Street. The 18 Mile Creek forest consists of a mature mixed hardwood forest overlying a glacial moraine aquifer that feeds a trout stream. Because of this location, the forest filters fresh water, creating a healthy and supportive living environment for local trout populations and other wildlife. Protecting this forest secures a key connection to over 1,000 acres of headwater forest, creating connected landscapes of open space to benefit the public. The property provides habitat for more than 150 species of birds, 30 species of trees and 14 types of shrubs.

### **LOCAL CONTEXT**

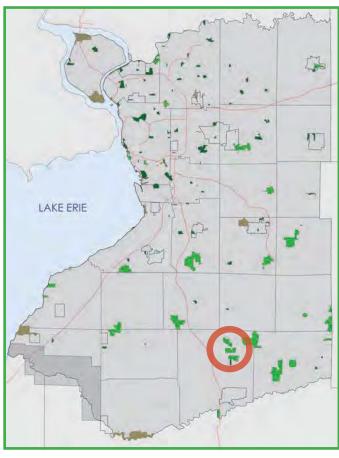
Nearby Forestry Lots include Forestry Lots #8, #9, and #13.

### **CONSERVATION VALUES**

- Preservation of this property is very important due to forests and wetlands on the property which provide critical habitat for land and waterbirds that use the Niagara River watershed, a region designated as a nationally important area for birds.
- Preserving this public land and forest ensures the ability to better enhance and protect the region's plentiful drinking water.



Headwaters of Eighteen Mile Creek (Image Credit: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper)

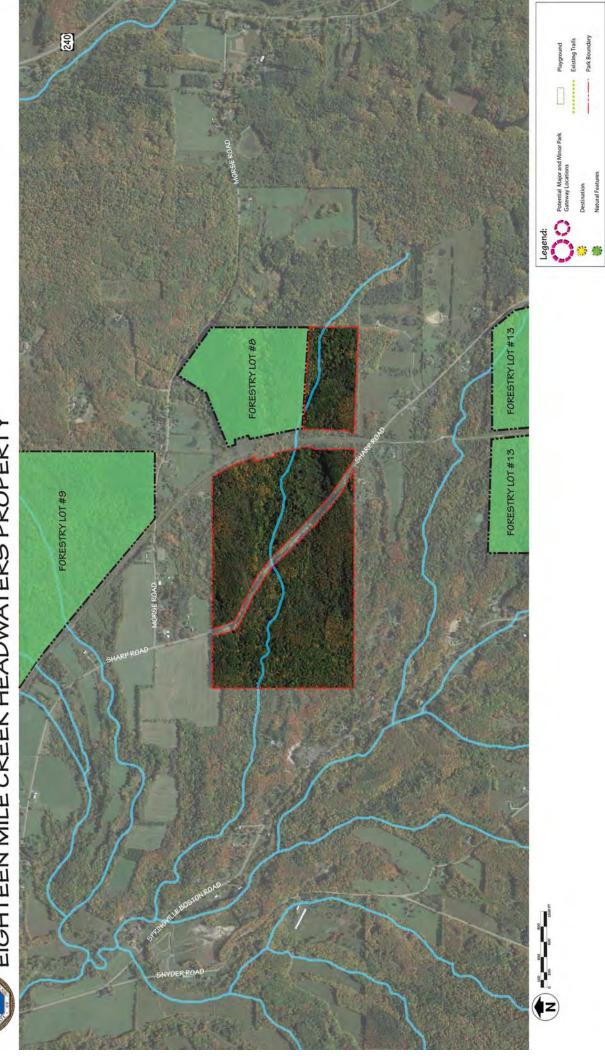


Park Location Map: Eighteen Mile Creek Headwaters Property is located in the Town of Concord.

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Monitor and remove invasive species from site to prevent spreading of unwanted plants, and to preserve the unique native species found on-site.
- Prioritize the preservation of the natural habitat; especially rare tree/plant species, wetland areas, and habitats of wildlife.

# MASTER PLAN EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK HEADWATERS PROPERTY



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



6.0 FORESTRY LOTS (Forestry Lots 1-13)

6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN

### **FORESTRY LOTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

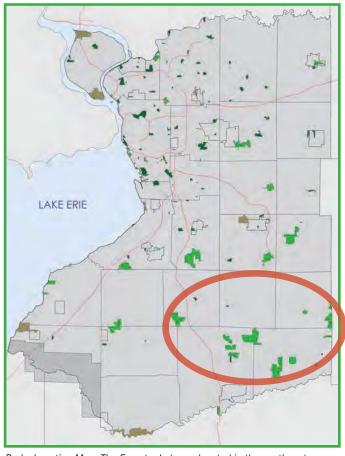
This section of the report provides general observations of the Forest Lots and recommendations regarding stewardship, educational and recreational opportunities. This section does not replace the Erie County Forest Management Plan developed November 2003, but does provide updates to some the recommendations made in that document as the timber stands have evolved over the past 15 years. The observations were made by a Forest Technician.

### **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Perform a comprehensive update to the 2003 Forest Management Plan.
  - Conduct an extensive forest inventory of Forest Lots so these habitats can be better understood and better managed for wildlife in the future.
- Encourage biodiversity of trees, shrubs, and ground cover in all lots.
  - Provide a variety of species; Create and find select openings to plant trees/shrubs to increase diversity and eventual seed sources for perpetuating plant diversity.
- A recommendation from the 2003 Forest Management Plan was to survey and mark property lines for each lot. It is understood that posting the property has traditionally taken place each fall. During the winter 2016 site observations several of the lots did not have the boundaries marked. It is recommended to annually check and post the property boundaries.



Visitors Center - Restrooms (Forestry Lot #1)



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.

### FORESTRY LOTS SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- Perform a comprehensive update to the 2003
   Forest Management Plan.
- Repair and make improvements to all Forestry Lot structures as many are deteriorating and in rough shape.
- Promote and provide walking, horseback riding, hiking and cross country trails where appropriate.
   Coordinate with usergroups whenever possible to expand and enhance recreational and educational opportunities.

6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN

### **Invasive Species:**

Site visits were conducted during November - December 2016. The following invasive species were identified. This may not be a comprehensive list as the observations were during the dormant season.

- Multiflora Rose: Multiflora Rose (Rosa polyantha)
   is native to eastern China, Japan and Korea and is
   classified as either a noxious weed, prohibited invasive
   species or banned altogether. It is extremely prolific and
   can form dense thickets, excluding native plant species.
   This non-native invasive rose invades open woodlands,
   forest edges, early succession pastures and fields.
   Consideration should be given to managing this invasive
   species either by mechanical, chemical or biological
   means.
- Tatarian Honeysuckle: Honeysuckle (Lonicera tatarica)
  can out compete and suppress the growth of native plant
  species. Because these plants spread rapidly via birds
  eating seed, control should be started in late summer
  or early fall before seeds are ready to be dispersed.
  Consideration should be given to managing this invasive
  species by mechanical means. For invasive honeysuckles
  growing in open habitats prescribed burning may be an
  effective control alternative.
- Garlic Mustard (reported by staff): Garlic mustard
   (Alliaria petiolata) is an invasive herb that has spread
   throughout much of the United States over the past 150
   years, becoming one of the worst invaders of forests
   in the American Northeast. It is usually found in the
   undergrowth of disturbed woodlots and forest edges.
   Its spread has allowed it to become the dominant plant
   in the undergrowth of some forests, greatly reducing
   the diversity of all species. Garlic mustard is one of very

- few non-native plants to be able to successfully invade forest understories. It has the potential to form dense stands that choke out native plants in the understory by controlling light, water, and nutrient resources. The best method for controlling garlic mustard is to prevent its establishment. Disturbances in the forest understory that would allow for rapid invasion should be minimized. This would include limiting foot traffic, grazing, and erosion-causing activities. Monitoring the forest understory and removing any garlic mustard plants as soon as they are introduced will help to prevent the establishment and spread of this invader. Chemical applications can also be effective for controlling garlic mustard, particularly in areas too large for removal by hand.
- Japanese Knotweed: Japanese knotweed (Polygonum cuspidatum) was introduced into the U.S. from Eastern Asia (Japan, China, Korea) as an ornamental on estates in the late-1800s. It has also been used as an erosion control plant. By the mid-1890s, it was reported near Philadelphia, PA, Schenectady, NY, and in New Jersey. Although once sold through seed and plant catalogs, by the late-1930s knotweed was already being viewed as a problematic pest. The plant, which can grow from 3 to 15 feet tall, has bamboo-like stems and is sometimes called Japanese bamboo. Japanese knotweed spreads rapidly, forming dense thickets that crowd and shade out native vegetation. This reduces species diversity, alters natural ecosystems, and negatively impacts wildlife habitat. The ground under knotweed thickets tends to have very little other growth. This bare soil is very susceptible to erosion, posing a particular threat to riparian areas. Consideration should be given to managing this invasive species by either mechanical or chemical means.



Existing conditions - Forestry Lot #4



### Other invasive species of note:

- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA, Adelges tsugae) is an aphid-like, invasive insect that poses a serious threat to forest and ornamental hemlock trees (Tsuga spp.) in eastern North America. HWA is native to Japan and possibly China where it is considered a common inhabitant of both forest and ornamental hemlock and spruce trees. HWA was first detected in New York State in the early 1980s (Souto et al. 1995). Outbreaks have expanded from initial infestations on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley to the Rochester area, the Catskill Mountains, Finger Lakes and recently into the Western New York region. Currently, the two approaches for managing HWA infestations are chemical insecticides and the use of natural enemy predator species as biological control. Infested hemlock trees can be protected individually with chemical, systemic insecticides. However, the costs associated with application, environmental safety concerns about applying insecticides near water resources, and the tremendous reproductive potential of HWA makes this approach less feasible on a broad scale in natural areas. Researchers have been investigating the use of biological control agents. Over the last 10 years, scientists have evaluated the effectiveness of several HWA predators from Japan and the Pacific Northwest including the beetles, Sasajiscymnus tsugae, Scymnus spp., and Laricobius nigrinus as well as fungal pathogens. Some promising evidence has emerged, but further study is needed to test the effectiveness of biological control at larger geographical scales and over the long-term (Cheah et al. 2004).
- The Emerald Ash Borer, Agrilus planipennis Fairmaire, commonly referred to as "EAB", is an invasive woodboring beetle native to Asia. Emerald Ash Borers feed on and eventually kill all native ash trees (Fraxinus spp.). Management options include Timber, Firewood and leaving to rot. If marketable Ash trees are present it is recommended to harvest this timber. Ash trees can be harvested for firewood as long as State regulations are adhered to. Ash trees may also be cut and left on the ground. Dried out trees are no longer suitable for egg laying and larval development which helps to slow the spread. This also will open up a stand and allow other more desirable species to establish and grow.

### Recreation:

The following recreational activities are presently, or potentially could, be provided in additional Forest Lots depending on the physical characteristics of the lot:

- Hiking
- Orienteering
- Cross Country Skiing
- Snowmobiling
- Horseback Riding
- Picnicking
- Bird Watching

### **Prohibited activities:**

- Hunting and trapping of any kind
- Fishing
- Motorized vehicles
- Alcoholic beverages

6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN

### FORESTRY LOT #1

### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Sardinia, 200-acres of managed hardwood forest, conifer plantations, shrublands and mowed fields.

### RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

The County has been utilizing the resources of Lot #1 to conduct seasonal Maple Sugaring programs for local schools and the general public. Sawmill demonstrations are also provided. Walking, hiking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, equestrian and snowmobile trails exist through the lot along with several Warm Up Shelters.

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS/ISSUES**

- A detailed architectural assessment of the buildings at the site was not included in the field analysis. The roofs on the Sugar Shanty and Warm Up Shelter have reached their useful life and should be replaced. There may be structural issues with a portion of the roof at the Warm Up Shelter over the outdoor seating area. The concrete pavement adjacent the Warming Hut has also reached its useful life. The roofs on the sawmill structures appear to be in good condition.
- The driveways and parking areas are compacted stone, in serviceable condition and appropriate for the location and level of service.
- The roof on the Dresser Creek Bridge has reached its useful life. Additionally there is a step on each end of the bridge which limits access across the structure.



Parks Location Map: Forestry Lot #1 is located in the town of Sardinia



Warming Shelter



### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Uneven aged stand comprised mainly of Sugar Maple and is used as a sugar bush. An understory of American Beech as well as Multiflora Rose are present within the stand.

Stand B: Uneven aged stand comprised of Scotch Pine and small sawtimber sized hardwoods, Red Maple, White Ash, and Black Cherry. The northern portion of Stand B contains a stronger presence of Black Cherry.

Stand C: Comprised of Black Cherry, Norway Spruce and Scotch Pine intermixed together.

### 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

### Maintenance / Safety:

- (C: 1.0) Replace the roof on the Warm Up Shelter and the concrete pavement in the seating area. Engage a consultant to review the structural condition on a portion of the roof at the Warm Up Shelter to determine a course of action.
  - Priority: High
- (C: 2.0) Replace the roof on the Sugar Shanty.
  - Priority: High
- (A: 5.0) Provide an accessible approach to the Dresser Creek Bridge. This may be accomplished with a wood ramp (which may require railings) or compacted asphalt millings or similar durable surface material.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Parks/Highways



The Sugar Shanty remains a popular destination during the Spring to see the production of maple syrup

6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN

### Recreation / Education:

- Continue and promote the walking, hiking and cross country trails.
- Continue and promote the educational opportunities that exist through demonstrations and educational classes and/or workshops revolving around the forest products industry.

### Signage:

- Use signage that conforms to the Park System.
- (A: 1.0) Provide advanced directional signs to the entrances.

■ Priority: Medium

■ Partner: Parks/Highways

 (A: 2.0) Provide additional wayfinding signage at intersections directing patrons to the site. Consider adding signage on Route 219 identifying the route to the site.

■ Priority: Low

■ Partner: Parks/Highways



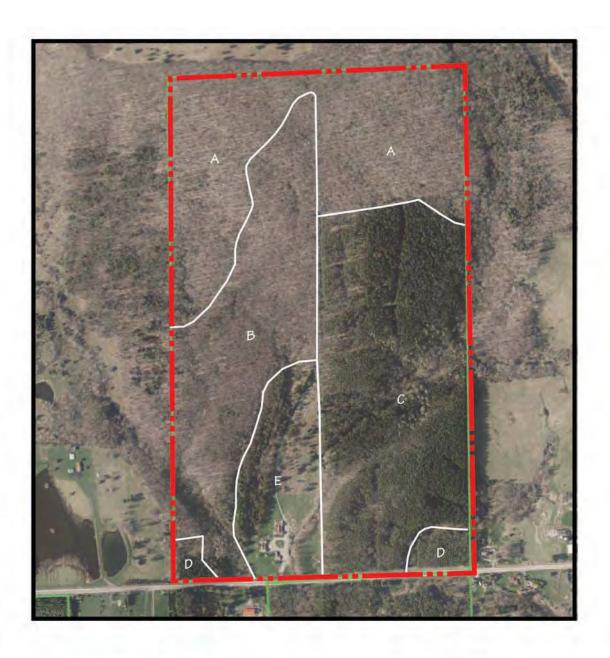
Bridge over the creek



 Property rules posted at access points, provide consistency with language and sign format.

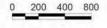
### **Environment:**

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Multiflora Rose is present at the lot.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Erie County Forestry Lot #1





6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN

### **FORESTRY LOT #2**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Sardinia, 852 acres of hardwood forests, conifer plantations, Dresser and Hyler Creeks, a two acre pond, beaver meadows, marshlands and old fields.

The north-west portion of the property was the former home of the Woodlands Environmental Education Center established in the spring of 2001. The structures have since been demolished.

### RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Walking, hiking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, equestrian and snowmobile trails exist through the lot along with several Warm Up Shelters. Numerous bridges for foot traffic and snowmobiles cross the streams.

Signs are posted on various trees along the trails indicating the species of tree, promoting species identification for patrons.

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS/ISSUES**

- The trails are well marked and maintained.
- Two structures exist along Dresser Creek, a drying rack and vacant saw mill. The saw mill structure is currently being used for drying lumber. The roofs on these structures have reached their useful life and there may be structural issues with both.
- The Warm Up shelters are in serviceable condition.



Parks Location Map: Forestry Lot #2 is located in the Town of Sardinia just on the other side of the road from Lot #1







Underutilized shelter in poor shape



Finger Lakes Trail marker



Drainage outflow

Along the drive off of Genesee Rd, north of the drying racks, a twin culvert exists. The culvert pipe are deteriorated and water is eroding the concrete / wood abutments.

### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### Maintenance / Safety:

- (C: 4.0) Repair the drying rack and former saw mill structures. Though their current uses have limited occupancy, both structures are open and accessible by the public. A structural review is needed to determine a course of action. At a minimum the roofs on the structures should be replaced to continue using the facilities as drying racks.
  - Priority: Medium
- (A: 3.0) The culverts should be reviewed by DPW to determine their present condition and provide a course of action.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: DPW
- (A: 6.0) Warm Up shelters need minor repairs and painting.
  - Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

### Recreation / Education:

- Continue to maintain and promote the numerous trails within the property.
- Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

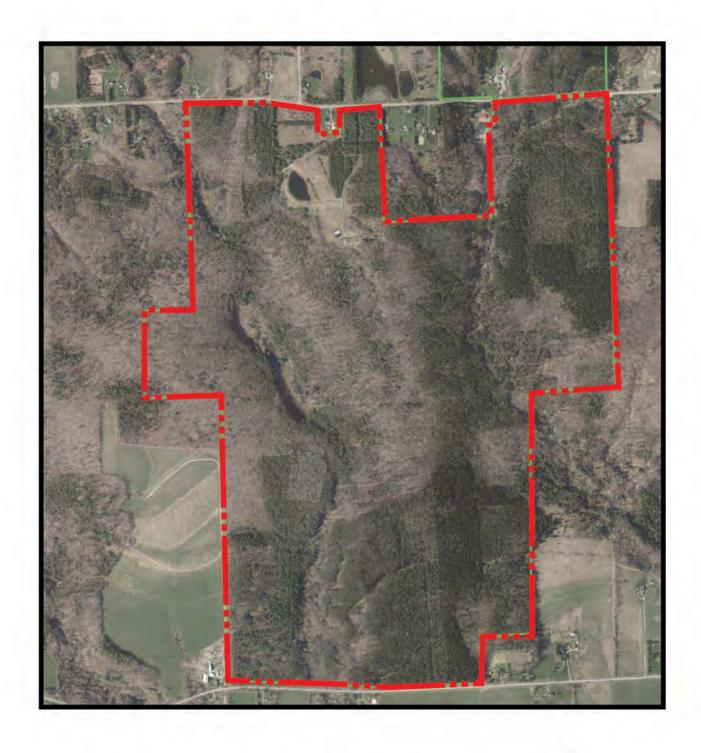
### Signage:

 Property rules posted at access points, provide consistency with language and sign format.

### **Environment:**

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Multiflora Rose and Tartarian Honeysuckle are present on the property.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism

6.0 FORESTRY LOTS FINAL PLAN



Erie County Forestry Lot #2



0 300 600 1200

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **FORESTRY LOT #3**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Sardinia, 329 acres of hardwood forest, conifer plantations and wetlands.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing and snowmobiling trails exist throughout the lot. A Warm Up Shelter is located off of Genesee Road, and includes a trails map. The mapped trails are not well marked or maintained and difficult to follow in some areas.

# **CURRENT CONDITIONS/ISSUES**

- The property has several buildings at the southwest corner including one residential home. The structures were in fair condition and could use some updating/ repair including roof replacement.
- A Warm Up shelter and outhouse, along with a parking area off of Genesee Road on the south-east portion of the lot are in good condition.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods comprised of Sugar Maple, Beech, Hemlock, White Ash and Black Cherry.

Stand B: Plantation of White Spruce

Stand C: Uneven aged stand of pole sized hardwoods comprised of Maple, White Ash and Black Cherry.

Stand D: Plantation of White Pine with hardwood understory. The White Pine is poor quality.



Parks Location Map: Forestry Lot #3 is located in the Town of Sardinia



Existing Forestry Building



Stand E: Plantation of mature Red Pine, White Pine, Scotch Pine and Larch with hardwood understory.

#### **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

# Maintenance / Safety:

- (C: 5.0) Replace the roofs on the buildings.
  - Priority: High
- (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.
  - Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

# **Recreation / Education:**

 (P: 5.0) Clear the trails and provide more permanent trail markers. The hiking trails are overgrown and lacking markers.

Priority: MediumPartner: Usergroups

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

#### Signage:

• (A: 7.0) Use signage that conforms to the Park System at the Warm Up Shelter.

■ Priority: Medium■ Partner: In-House

#### **Environment:**

 (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species - Honeysuckle is present on the lot.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: WNY Prism



Mowed area



Erie County Forestry Lot #3



0 300 600 900

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# FORESTRY LOT #4

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Holland, 264-acres of conifer plantations.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

None presently.

#### **Timber Stands:**

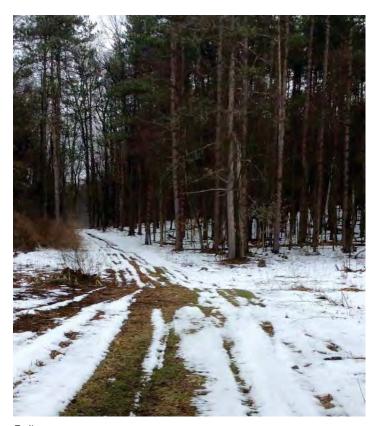
Stand A: Mature conifer plantation of Red Pine and scattering of Black Cherry and Aspen.

Stand B: Contains predominantly Sugar Maple, Hemlock, Beech, Red Maple, White Ash, and lower quantities of Black Cherry, Yellow Birch, Bitternut Hickory, and Basswood (mixed with some Red Pines).

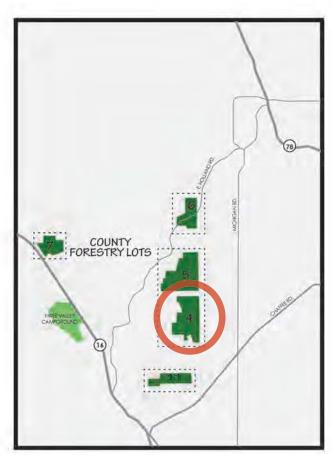
Stand C: Red Pine and Black Cherry

Stand D: Contains Class 1 protected NYS freshwater wetland. Contains scattered large shrubs and herbaceous plants.

Stand E: Contains mature plantations of Red Pine, and scattered Black Cherry and Sugar Maple.



Trail



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.

Stand F: Most of the area is shrubs. Stand is identified as Class 1, protected NYS freshwater wetland.

Stand G: Mature plantations of Red Pine and Norway Spruce. Stream runs through area, and contains abundance of wildlife.

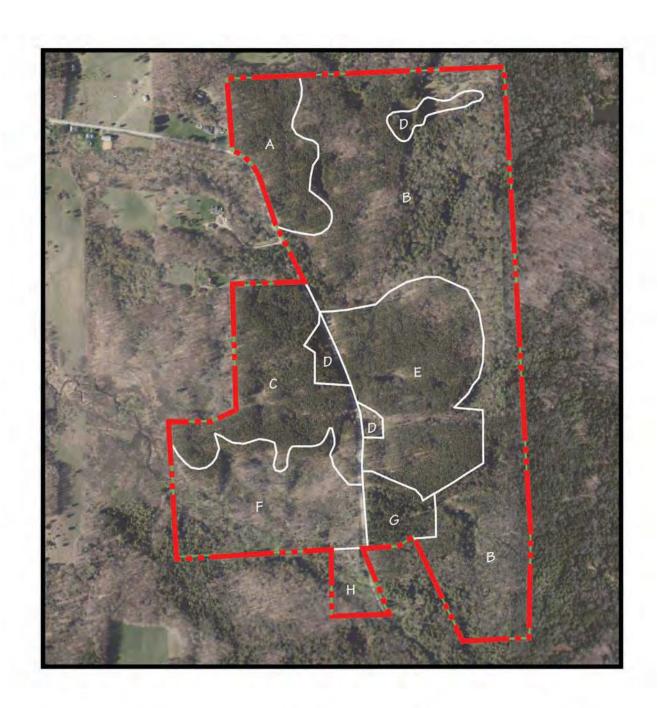
Stand H: Small area of hardwoods, mostly Hemlock-Sugar Maple, and Yellow Birch/Black Cherry. Stream runs across field to the west and is considered Class A.

## **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

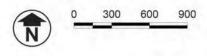
## Recreation/Education:

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Erie County Forestry Lot #4



# **FORESTRY LOT #5**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Holland, 264 acres of hardwood forest, conifer plantations and wetlands.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

None presently.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Plantation of Red Pine with northern hardwood, including mature Black Cherry, interspersed throughout.

Stand B: Uneven aged hardwood stand comprised of Sugar Maple, Beech and a small White Ash component. Stand does contain sawlog sized timber.

Stand C: Plantation of Larch with little understory.

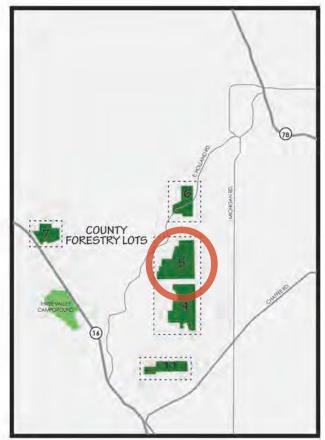
Stand D: Plantation of White Pine, poor stand quality with blowdown.

Stand E: Plantation of White Pine with mixed hardwood understory. Hardwood regeneration is developed.

Stand F: Stand of Red Pine at top of ridge. Little understory present. Not a market value stand.

Stand G: Old field with shrub growth, assumed to be wetlands.

Stand H: Stand is a sphagnum bog and protected wetland.



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.



Hunting stand



# **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Maintenance / Safety:

• (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

#### Recreation / Education:

 Lot #5 provide excellent opportunities for environmental education focused on Wetland Ecology and Forest Management Practices. Several old logging roads and fire breaks may be utilized for hiking or snowshoeing.

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

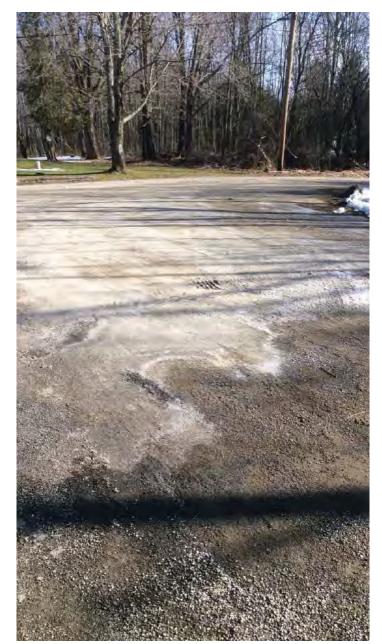
# Signage:

Use signage that conforms to the Park System

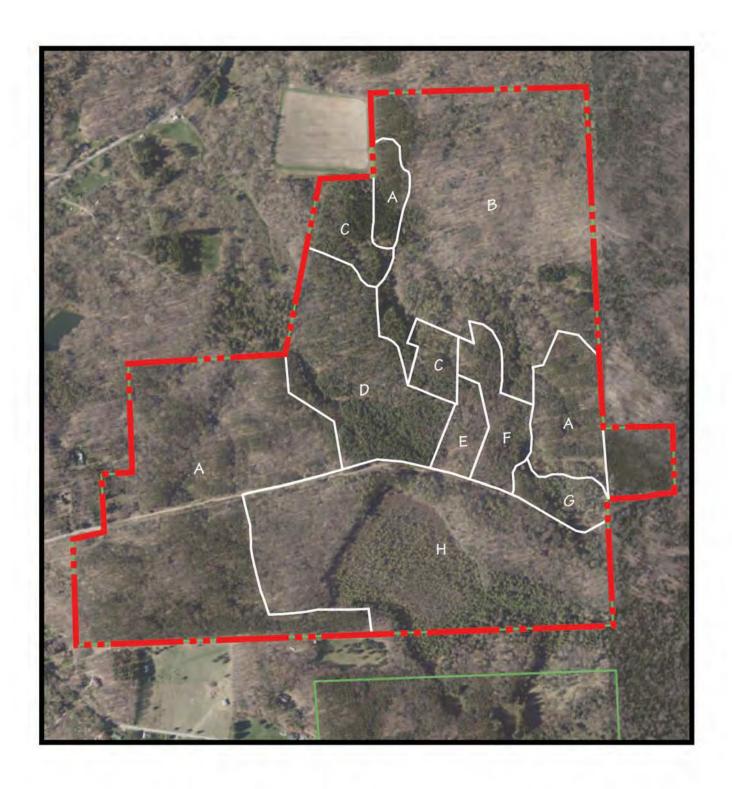
#### **Environment:**

 (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species - Garlic mustard reported by staff present on the property.

Priority: HighPartner: WNY Prism



Parking surface



Erie County Forestry Lot #5



0 200 400 800 1000

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **FORESTRY LOT #6**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Holland, 100 acres

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

None presently.

# **CURRENT CONDITIONS/ISSUES**

 There was evidence of illegal/unauthorized hunting as several deer hunting stands were observed on the lot. No evidence of property boundary posted signs observed.

#### **Timber Stands:**

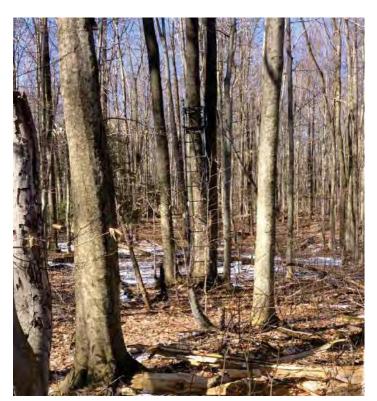
Stand A: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods including Sugar Maple, Beech and White Ash.

Stand B: Plantation of mature Red Pine and Norway Spruce.

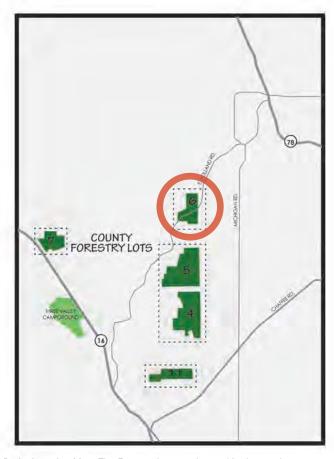
#### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Maintenance / Safety:

- (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House



Existing conditions



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County

#### Recreation / Education:

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

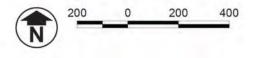
#### Signage:

- Use signage that conforms to the Park System
- Provide boundary signs No hunting, etc.

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Multiflora rose is prevalent throughout the lot.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Erie County Forestry Lot #6



# **FORESTRY LOT #7**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Holland, 76 acres of northern hardwood forest and conifer plantations.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

None presently.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods comprised mainly of Sugar Maple. Understory of Beech present.

Stand B: Plantations of Larch, White Pine, Norway Spruce and Scotch Pine with hardwood understory. Wild grape noted throughout the stand.

Stand C: Plantations of Red Pine and Norway Spruce with hardwood understory.

Stand D: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods comprised mainly of Beech.

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

# Maintenance / Safety:

(A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

#### **Recreation / Education:**

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

#### Signage:

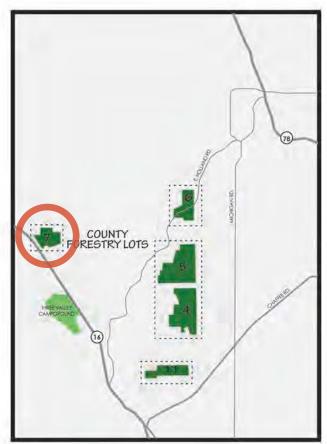
Use signage that conforms to the Park System.

#### **Environment:**

(P: 4.0) Remove invasive species

■ Priority: High

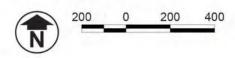
■ Partner: WNY Prism



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County



Erie County Forestry
Lot #7



# **FORESTRY LOT #8**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Concord, 71-acres of conifer plantations.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

None.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Plantation of mature Norway Spruce with hardwood understory towards the south-west portion of the stand.

Stand B: Uneven aged hardwood stand, mainly Sugar Maple with Hemlock interspersed.

#### **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Maintenance / Safety:

(A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.

Priority: HighPartner: In-House

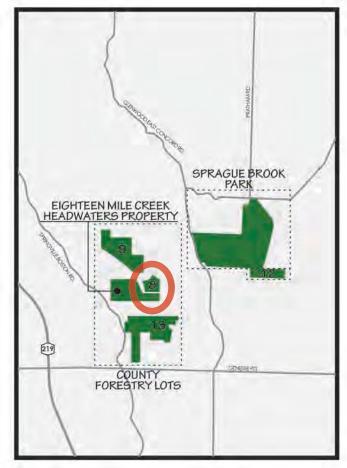
#### Recreation / Education:

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

# Signage:

Use signage that conforms to the Park System

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County

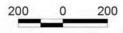


Trail



Erie County Forestry Lot #8





# **FORESTRY LOT #9**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Concord, 278 acres of mixed northern hardwoods and conifer plantations.

#### RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

A snowmobile trail is located along the southern property boundary.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Dense plantation of Scotch Pine along with White Pine and northern hardwoods on the west side of the property including Sugar Maple, Black Cherry and Birch.

Stand B: Plantations of mature Norway Spruce with Hemlock along the ravines. Black Cherry is sparsely populated.

Stand C: Uneven aged northern hardwoods predominantly Sugar Maple, Black Cherry, Beech and Hemlock.

#### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Maintenance / Safety:

- (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House

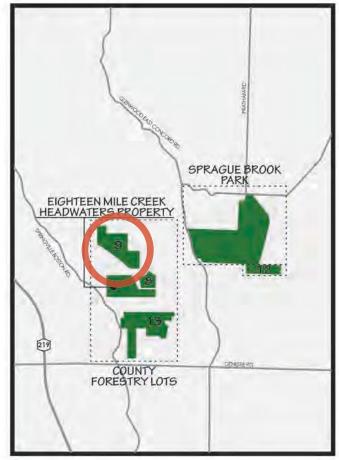
## Recreation / Education:

- (P: 1.0) Partner with usergroups to maintain and enhance snowmobile trail.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: Usergroups
- Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

#### Signage:

Use signage that conforms to the Park System.

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Wild grape is prevalent throughout the property. Tartarian Honeysuckle is also present on the property.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism

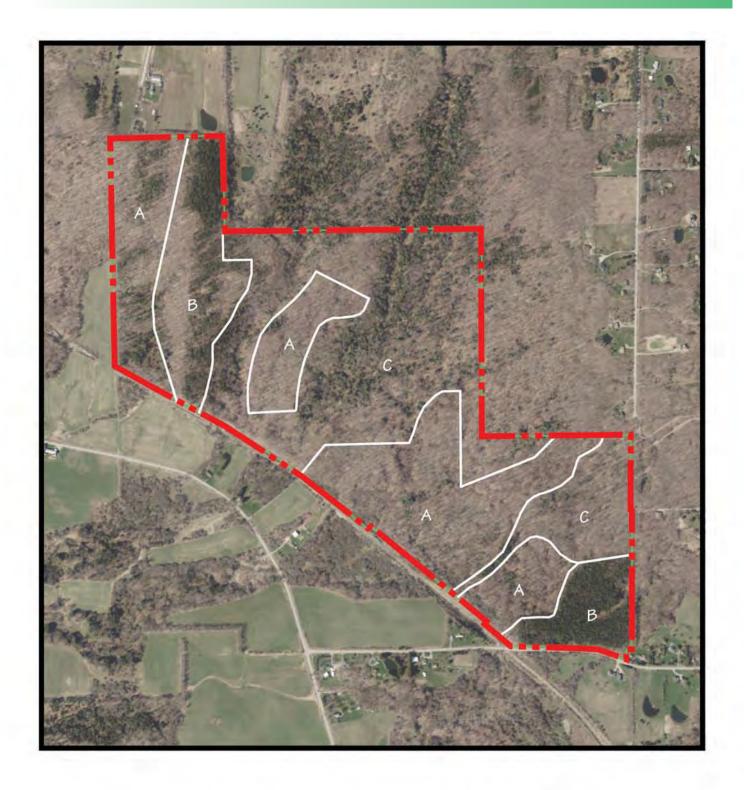


Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.

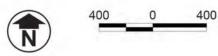


View of the woods





Erie County Forestry Lot #9



# FORESTRY LOT #10 (BOSTON FOREST PARK)

# (SEE VOLUME 2 FOR OVERALL PARK RECOMMENDATION SECTION)

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Boston, 230 acres of mixed hardwoods and conifer plantations.

# **RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT**

Trails for equestrians, hiking, snowshoeing and snowmobiling are provided.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand 1: Northern hardwood stand with large White Ash exhibiting symptoms of EAB infestation.

Stand 2: Plantations of Pine and Spruce intermixed with northern hardwoods including Oak, Beech and Maple.

Stand 3: Uneven aged northern hardwood stand, predominantly Black Cherry and Hemlock.

Stand 4: Patches of mature Hemlocks and Black Cherry with some remnant plantations of Spruce.

Stand 5: Uneven aged mixed northern hardwood stand with significant Beech understory.

Stand 6: Old fields transitioning to northern hardwood forest. Comprised of Red Maple and White Ash.

# **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

# Maintenance / Safety:

- (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House

# Recreation / Education:

 Maintain and enhance trails, provide proper safety improvements

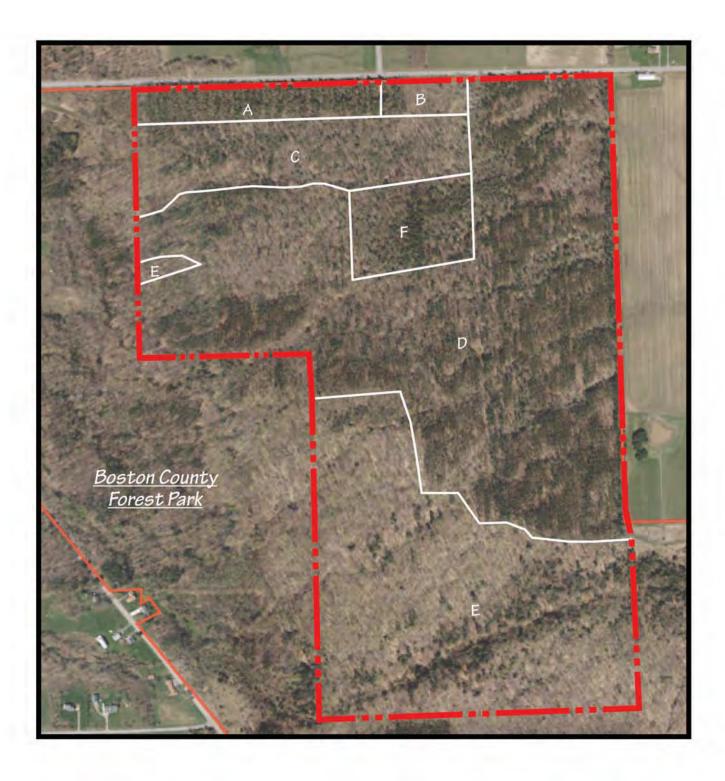
# Signage:

 Consider using signage that conforms to the Park System.



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.

- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Wild grapevines and multiflora rose are present in several of the stands.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Erie County Forestry Lot #10



200 0 200 400

# **FORESTRY LOT #11**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Sardinia, 94 acres of mixed hardwood forest comprised of Sugar Maple, Beech, Black Cherry and Hemlock.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

A snowmobile trail is located along the eastern property border.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods including Sugar Maple, Beech and mature Black Cherry.

Stand B: Plantation of Red Pine and Scotch Pine with Black Cherry understory.

Stand C: Wetland with large shrubs, seedlings and open water.

#### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## Maintenance / Safety:

(A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.

■ Priority: High■ Partner: In-House

## Recreation / Education:

 (P: 2.0) Maintain and enhance snowmobile trail, partner with usergroups.

Priority: HighPartner: Usergroups

 Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers opportunities for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

#### Signage:

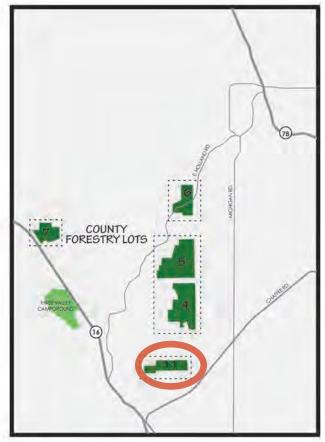
Use signage that conforms to the Park System.

#### **Environment:**

(P: 4.0) Remove invasive species

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNY Prism



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.

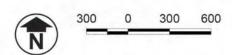


Pond





Erie County Forestry Lot #11



# **FORESTRY LOT #12**

# **DESCRIPTION**

Located in Sardinia, 100 acres of mature conifer plantations.

#### RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

The lot is located south of Foote Road, across the street from Sprague Brook Park. Several mountain bike trails occupy the forest lot: the "out & back", "inner loop," and "outer loop".

These mountain bike trails are noted on the WNYMBA maps as "single track" trails.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: Conifer plantation of White Pine, dense in some areas especially along the road.

Stand B: .Conifer plantations of Scotch Pine and Norway Spruce with interspaced hardwoods in the understory.

Stand C: Conifer plantation of Red Pine, Scotch Pine, and Larch with hardwood understory.

Stand D: Uneven aged stand of Black Cherry, and Hemlock. Understory comprised of Sugar Maple, Ash, and Beech.

Stand E: Old plantation of Scotch Pine dominated by Black Cherry and Red Maple. Scotch Pine are in decline.

#### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

# Maintenance / Safety:

(A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.

■ Priority: High ■ Partner: In-House

#### Recreation / Education:

(P: 3.0) Continue partnership with WNYMBA to provide and maintain the mountain bike trails. The trails appear to be well maintained and the users are respecting the property.

> ■ Priority: High ■ Partner: WNYMBA

#### Signage:

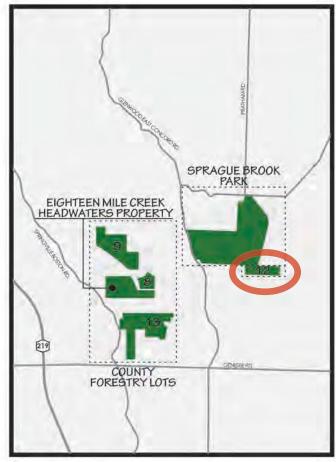
Use signage that conforms to the Park System.

## **Environment:**

(P: 4.0) Remove invasive species

■ Priority: High

■ Partner: WNY Prism



Parks Location Map: The Forestry Lots are located in the southeastern portion of the County.



Erie County Forestry Lot #12



200 0 200 400

# **FORESTRY LOT #13**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Located in East Concord, 295 acres of mature conifer plantations.

# RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

A snowmobile trail traverses the lot along the electrical transmission easement.

#### **Timber Stands:**

Stand A: .Plantations mainly comprised of Larch with an understory of northern hardwoods including Black Cherry, Sugar Maple and White Ash.

Stand B: Plantations mainly comprised of Red Pine, White Pine, Scotch Pine, Austrian Pine, and limited Norway Spruce. The understory contains Black Cherry and White Ash.

Stand C: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods including Black Cherry, Sugar Maple, Hemlock, Red Maple and White Ash. Stand density is moderately low.

Stand D: Uneven aged stand of northern hardwoods and conifers.

# MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## Maintenance / Safety:

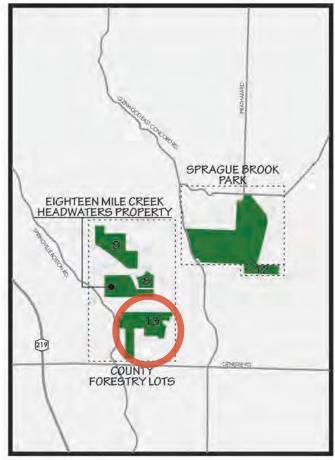
- (A: 4.0) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: In-House
- (C: 6.0) Repair roof and preserve wood chip storage shed to prevent safety issues.
  - Priority: Medium

# Recreation / Education:

Recreational opportunities may include hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and wildlife viewing. The property offers an excellent opportunity for educational programs focused on topics in the areas of field ecology, environmental analysis and conservation biology.

## Signage:

- Ensure that the boundary of the lot is posted adequately and that at access points along the snowmobile trail the rules of the forestry lot are clearly identified.
- Use signage that conforms to the Park System.

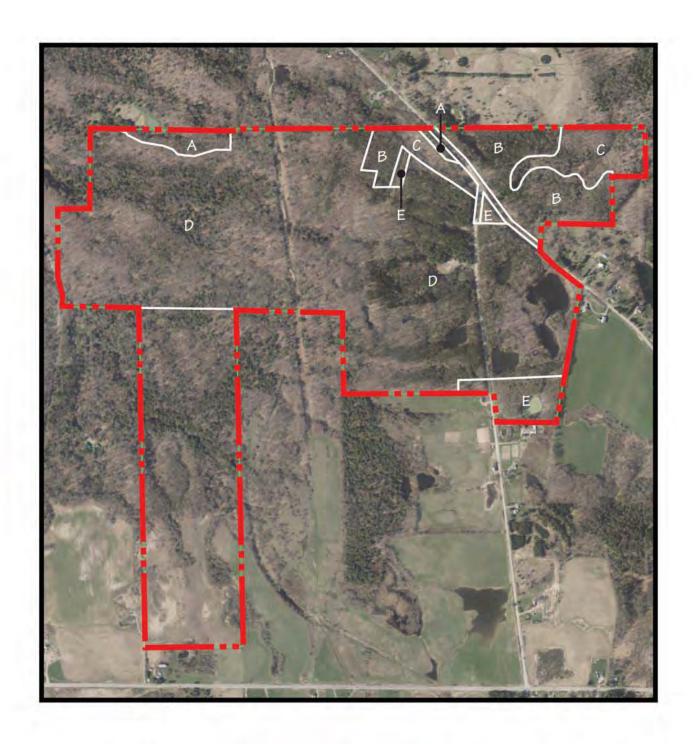


Parks Location Map: Forestry Lot #13 is located in East Concord south of Forestry Lot #8.

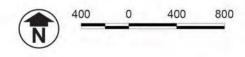
- (P: 4.0) Remove invasive species Multiflora Rose and Tatarian Honeysuckle are present on the lot.
  - Priority: High
  - Partner: WNY Prism



Wood chip storage shed



Erie County Forestry Lot #13



# **FORESTRY LOTS: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A		Perform a comprehensive update to the 2003 Forest Management Plan		High	3-5 Years	Varies dependent on scope of work
А	4.0	(All Lots) Fire Breaks in need of general clearing.		High	Ongoing	In-House
С	1 1 0	on the Warm Up Shelter and the	Engage a consultant to review the structural condition on a portion of the roof at the Warm Up Shelter to determine a course of action.	High	3-5 Years	\$10,000
С	2.0	(Forestry Lot #1) Replace the roof on the Sugar Shanty.	Engage consultant to determine course of action and repairs needed	High	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С	5.0	(Forestry Lot #3) Replace the roofs on the 3 buildings.	Engage consultant to determine course of action and repairs needed	High	3-5 Years	\$25,000
Р	1.0	(Forestry Lot #9) Partner with usergroups to maintain and enhance snowmobile trail.		High	Ongoing	Partner
Р		(Forestry Lot #11) Maintain and enhance snowmobile trail, partner with usergroups.		High	Ongoing	Partner
Р		(Forestry Lot #12) Continue partnership with WNYMBA to provide and maintain the mountain bike trails. The trails appear to be well maintained and the users are respecting the property.	Coordinate with WNYMBA	High	Ongoing	Partner
Р	4.0	(All Lots) Identify and remove invasive species	Work with WNY Prism	High	Ongoing	Partner/ In- House
А	ı	(Forestry Lot #1) Provide advanced directional signs to the entrances.	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	1-2 Years	In-House

# KEY:

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



# **FORESTRY LOTS: ACTION ITEMS**

Туре	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
А	3.0	(Forestry Lot #2) The culverts should be reviewed by DPW to determine their present condition and provide a course of action.	Coordinate with DPW	Medium	1-2 Years	In-House
А	5.0	l'	Highways could provide millings, Parks crew could grade approach	Medium	3-5 Years	P.O.B.
А	0.0	(Forestry Lot #3) Warm Up shelters need minor repairs and painting.		Medium	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
А	1 /()	that conforms to the Park System	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
С	4.0	I' ' '	Engage consultant to determine course of action and repairs needed	Medium	3-5 Years	\$15,000
С	1 00	Γ	Engage consultant to determine course of action and repairs needed	Medium	3-5 Years	\$1,800
Р	5.0	the trails and provide more	Could be partner opportunity with Orienteering groups, scouts, etc Parks and Highways produce markers	Medium	Ongoing	In-House
А	2.0	(Forestry Lot #1) Provide additional wayfinding signage at intersections directing patrons to the site. Consider adding signage on Route 219 identifying the route to the site.	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce the sign panels.	Low	3-5 Years	In-House

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK