



Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail

VOLUME 3

WATERFRONT ACCESS AND TRAILWAYS

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WATERFRONT ACCESS AND TRAILWAYS

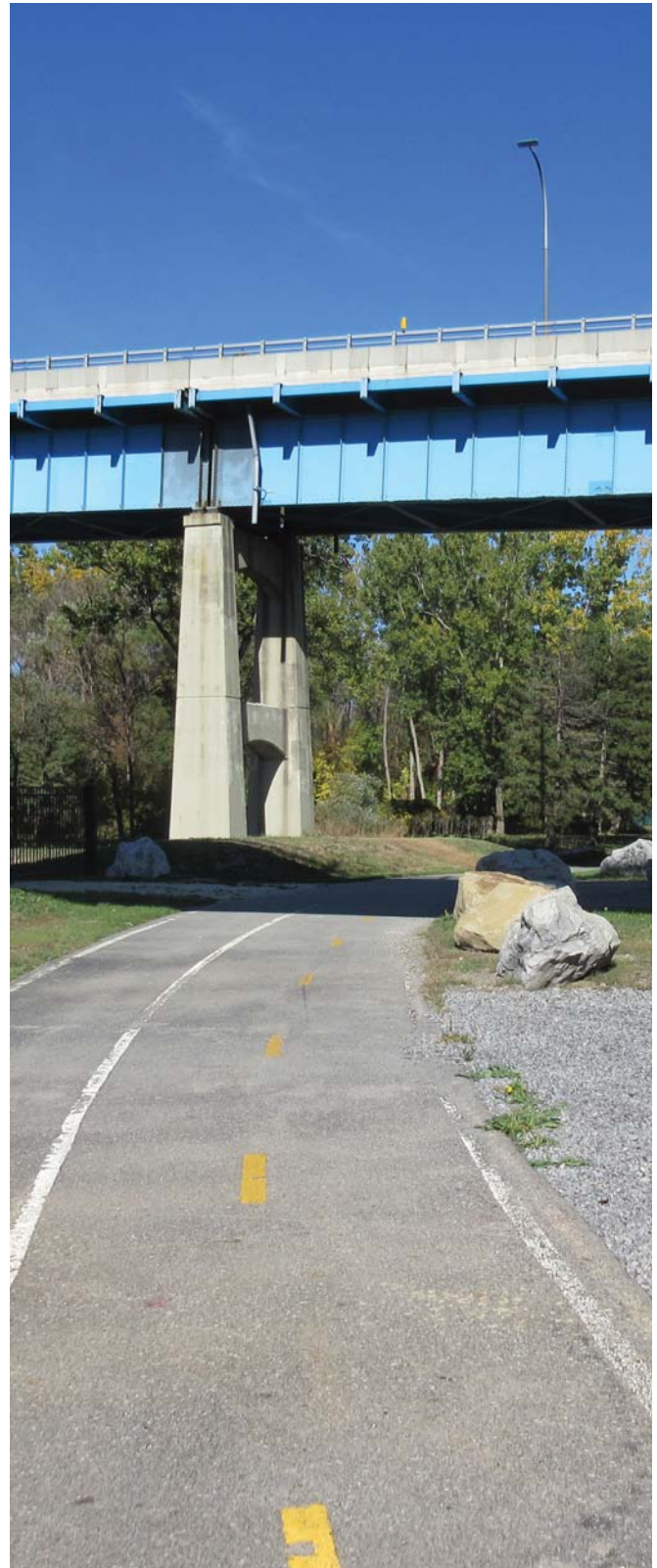
INTRODUCTION

As part of the Master Plan Update for the Erie County Parks System, an emphasis was placed on analysis and strategic recommendations for parks and greenways in the Niagara River corridor. This area contains several County-owned properties, parks, and multi-use paths including the Erie County Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail and Two-Mile Creek Greenway. County-owned parks considered part of the Niagara River Greenway Corridor include Isle View Park and Ellicott Creek Park (These parks were included within the park specific recommendations in volume 2 of the report).

The primary focus of this particular Volume is on the County maintained multi-use paths. These trails, particularly the Erie County Shoreline Trail are key components of the overall waterfront planning initiative for Erie County.

This Volume includes the following sections:

- **Typical Conditions**
- **Trailways and Connectivity**
- **Waterfront Strategy**
- **Waterfront Trail System**
- **Inventory and Recommendations**
- **Schematic Plans:**
 - Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail Strategic Plan
 - United Refinery/Isle View Extension Plan
 - Two-Mile Creek Greenway Trail Extension



Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail in the Town of Tonawanda (Erie County)

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TYPICAL TRAILWAY CONDITIONS

The range of design treatments available for a recreational trail system includes off-road multi-use pathways and on-road bicycle lanes, wide curb lanes, paved shoulders, or shared lanes. Also included among these treatments is bicycle route signage designed to alert motorists of increased bicycling activity and to designate specific bicycle routes.

2.1 MULTI-USE PATH

Multi-use paths are special use facilities which provide physical separation from motorized traffic. In general, these paths are intended to supplement the roadway network and provide access to otherwise inaccessible areas. However, they are also often utilized within the public right-of-way parallel to roadways. Typically, multi-use paths are about 12' wide paved surfaces to allow two-way cycle traffic and a pedestrian lane.

2.2 BICYCLE LANE

Bicycle lanes are generally one-way facilities in the direction of traffic flow that use a portion of a roadway shared with motor vehicles. They are designated by signing, striping and pavement markings to indicate their exclusive use by bicyclists.

2.3 WIDE CURB LANE

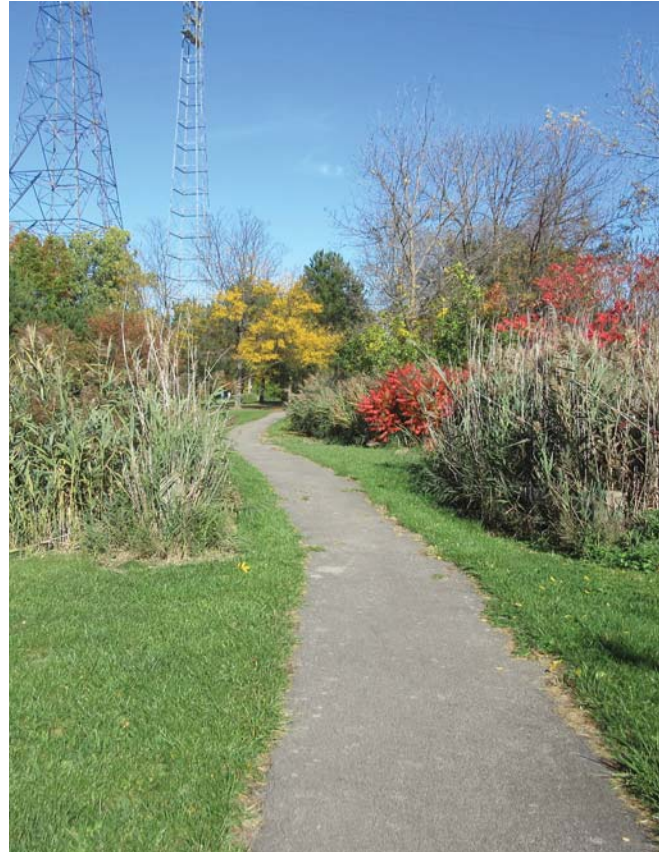
Wide curb or outside lanes are on-street facilities in which bicyclists and motor vehicles share the same travel lane. Where prescribed, these outside lanes should be a minimum of 14' wide. These facilities are useful where bicycle lanes are warranted but are prevented due to physical constraints.

2.4 PAVED SHOULDER

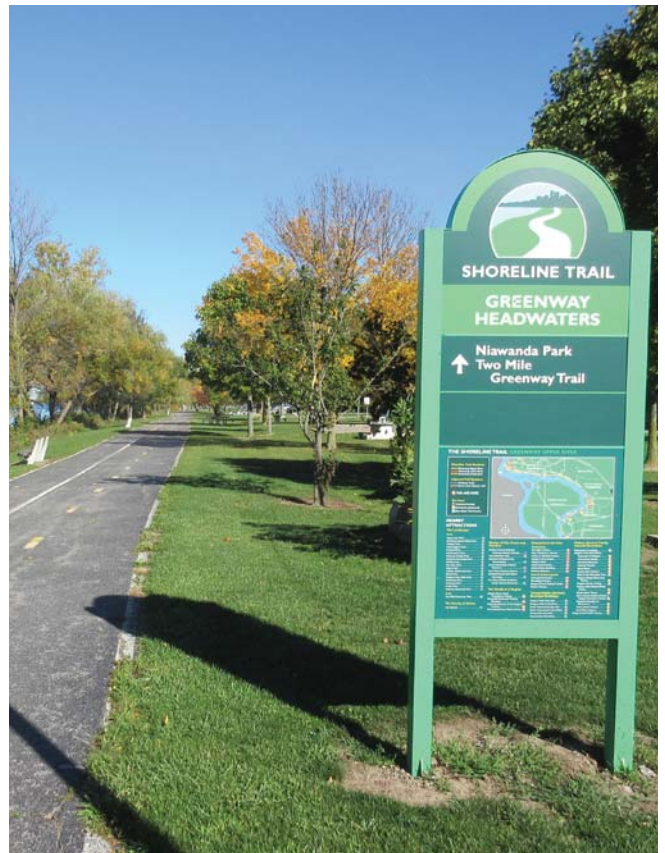
Paved shoulders are not part of the motor vehicle travel lane. As such, they are separated from the outermost travel lane by an edge stripe. When these facilities are part of a designated bike route system, parking should be prohibited on such shoulders except in the event of an emergency. Paved shoulders as bicycle facilities have the widest application in rural areas.

2.5 SHARED LANE

Shared lane facilities exist when bicyclists and motor vehicles share the same travel lane on a roadway. Shared lanes typically are 12' wide or less. These facilities are most common on neighborhood streets and rural roads and are preferably reinforced by signage which increases driver awareness of bicycles.



Paved trail spur at Isle View Park



Shoreline Trail signage

2.6 BICYCLE ROUTE

As mentioned previously, bicycle routes are identified only by signage which directs bicyclists along preferred routes to specific destinations. Bike route signage can be established on both multi-use paths and along bike lanes, paved shoulders, wide curb lanes or shared travel lanes. Therefore it is recommended that bike route signage be utilized as part of the comprehensive recreational trail network. It has been found that the range of abilities for bicyclists can be condensed into three groups. These are:

- Group A - advanced or experienced cyclists
- Group B - basic or casual adult cyclists
- Group C - child bike riders

2.7 NON-COUNTY PARTNERSHIPS

The public sentiment regarding family-oriented recreational trails is to explore as many off-road linkages as possible. To accomplish this, the County will have to form partnerships with some non-county entities. A summary of the anticipated process to initiate these partnerships follow:

2.7.1 UTILITY CORRIDORS

The various snowmobile clubs active in Erie County commonly utilize these corridors as part of their network of trails. Sharing paved, multi-use pathways with snowmobiles is not considered to be wise from either a maintenance or safety perspective. However, it could be possible in some areas to expand the use agreement for the utility corridor and develop multi-use paths adjacent to the snowmobile trails. The snowmobile trails can also be shared by equestrian groups.



Riverwalk signage

GAS LINE

- National Fuel

The majority of the utility corridors used by National Fuel are under private ownership and used by National Fuel through easements. To use any privately owned land, permission must be granted by the landowner. National Fuel does, however, own a portion of corridors in Erie County, mostly in the Lancaster and Clarence areas. A review of County Tax Records will reveal if a proposed corridor is owned by National Fuel or is under private ownership. If it is determined that the proposed land is owned by National Fuel, a written request must be submitted to National Fuel's Land Department. The request would state the intended use and location. Once this information is submitted to the Land Department, an internal proposal is compiled and a decision would be made formally accepting or denying the request.



Shoreline Trail



POWER LINES

- National Grid (formerly known as Niagara Mohawk)

Due to security and liability concerns, it is National Grid's policy not to invite any third parties to use their land. However, permission may still be granted in certain instances. Before an application would be accepted, the County would first have to acquire all the necessary insurance, proof of consent from all neighboring landowners, and pay all fees associated with the application. Once all three prerequisites are met, the application would then be submitted to the Real Estate Office where an official decision would be made.

2.7.2 RAILROAD CORRIDORS

The use of railroad corridors as recreational trails may only become a possibility after numerous studies, planning, and community public meetings take place to properly explore if a trail is feasible and appropriate. There are two scenarios in which railroad corridors can be utilized for recreational trails.

Abandonment (Rails-To-Trails)

- The first step to building a Rail-to-Trail multi-use path is to determine ownership and if the corridor is abandoned. A request for Abandonment must be submitted and

accepted by the Surface Transportation Board in order for a railroad corridor to be considered abandoned. The status of abandonment can be determined by contacting the railroad company or through the rail office in the State Department of Transportation. After abandonment the railroad company usually removes the tracks and ties for salvage. Municipalities have the first opportunity to purchase these abandoned corridors from the railroad which can then be surfaced with asphalt, crushed stone or another material appropriate for the intended trail use. Occasionally the railroad companies leave the bridges and tunnels intact. Therefore the new owner would only have to add wood decking and other appropriate features.

Easement (Rails-With-Trails)

- Many communities have started to team up with railroad companies to construct a trail that runs alongside active tracks. In most cases, a full easement is granted for the use of the land.

Similar to an easement is 'railbanking'. When a railroad announces its intention to abandon a corridor, interested groups or agencies can apply to the Surface Transportation Board to have the corridor railbanked and used in the interim as a trail.



Shoreline Trail (City of Buffalo)

2.7.3 LOCAL AND STATE ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAYS

The philosophy is to develop County road linkages as extensions of the park system. In some areas, utilizing either local or state road right-of-ways as linkages makes the most sense. Generally, successful partnerships for bicycle facilities within these areas will be determined by the ability of the jurisdictions involved to resolve maintenance and liability issues.

2.8 MAINTENANCE

The jurisdiction(s) responsible for the maintenance of planned bicycle facilities should be established prior to construction. In addition, the annual costs of maintaining these facilities has to be budgeted for. Neglecting routine maintenance will eventually create bicycle facilities that are undesirable and unsafe. Deteriorating facilities

will eventually become a liability for the jurisdiction. Broken glass, sand, litter and fallen leaves often accumulate on multi-use pathways, bike lanes and paved shoulders. Therefore, as a minimum, regular maintenance should be provided to sweep the debris from bicycle facilities. If multi-use pathways are to be cleared of snow, then this should be done by plowing. De-icing agents and abrasives can damage bicycles and create potentially unsafe conditions. Yearly inspections of all bicycle facilities should also be conducted. These inspections should focus on the following items:

- Surface repairs - small bumps, cracks or potholes
- Pavement edges - should be uniform and not have abrupt drop-offs
- Vegetation - remove overgrown plant material that is encroaching onto bikeways and inhibiting both maneuverability and sight lines



Shoreline Trail - LaSalle Park





Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail - Isle View Park

Maintenance requirements can be reduced through proper planning. Good edge treatments and adequate base materials will increase the longevity of paved surfaces. Placing plant materials a sufficient distance from bikeways will minimize encroachment problems. Additionally, some communities have initiated “adopt-a-trail” programs where civic groups or other organizations take responsibility for some routine maintenance. As in all agreements, the responsibilities of any organization interested in this program should be clearly spelled out.

The Bicycle Federation of America report titled *Liability Aspects of Bikeway Designation* presents a compelling argument for reducing the potential of increased public liability as it relates to bikeways. Several points are presented:

- Bicyclists have a right to use the road and the local highway agency has a responsibility to make it as safe for bicyclists as it does for motorists. Because the presence of bicyclists can be predicted, extra need for safety may be plainly apparent at some locations and thus require greater care and attention than would be the case if bicyclists were prohibited.
- The duty to provide a reasonable safe highway for public use remains with the designated government agency. That agency has a responsibility to maintain the highway, inspect it for defects and hazards and to remove any such hazards or provide some warning of the defect to highway users.
- Most importantly, the designation of bikeways will not affect the government highway agency potential liability because the liability already exists for providing a safe environment for bicyclists, so long as they are not expressly forbidden from using the road. It is in the best interest of the highway agency to comply with applicable laws, guidelines, and recommended procedures relating to the design, construction, operation and maintenance of bikeways as a means of reducing the risk of liability for bicyclists.

The development of bikeways thus has the potential for reducing liability because properly developed bike routes should have the net effect of reducing accidents involving bicyclists. Reducing the number of accidents reduces liability. “Properly developed” is a key issue for Erie County. As long as the rationale is justified on how or why a specific improvement was designed then there is limited liability for design to the County. Any new facilities will be designed to industry standards and guidelines to the fullest extent possible. However, it should be noted, in many cases involving development of trail facilities into existing site conditions (as opposed to new build), it is not always feasible to follow design guidelines exactly and compromises sometimes have to be made.

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TRAILWAYS AND CONNECTIVITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

With a total of 39 parks and trailways properties, Erie County provides a variety of services and amenities throughout the County. It is advantageous for the County to work with local governments and multi-modal transportation groups to establish community-based trail linkages. These opportunities would provide access to the parks, as well as increasing connections to Town and Village business centers. Many of the County Parks are only a few miles from each other and serve the communities as great places to enjoy bike rides, strolling walks, and hiking opportunities. For people who enjoy an active lifestyle, new community trail linkages can provide alternative ways to access the parks.

3.2 COMMUNITY-BASED LINKAGES

3.3.1 CITY OF BUFFALO

Provide safe access to and from the Buffalo River Habitat Parks by working with the City of Buffalo, GObike Buffalo, and the GBNRTC. Red Jacket Riverfront Park is less than a 2 mile bike ride from Seneca Bluffs and Bailey Peninsula Park. Times Beach Nature Preserve is connected to nearby parks via the Outer Harbor Trail. Providing connectivity among these parks, would provide more people with the opportunities to enjoy these natural areas within the urban community. These parks have received various restoration efforts and volunteer cleanups to provide a beautiful natural setting on the Buffalo River.

It is recommended that for all future road construction and improvements that the County work closely with various municipalities and agencies to achieve elements of successful Complete Streets design.

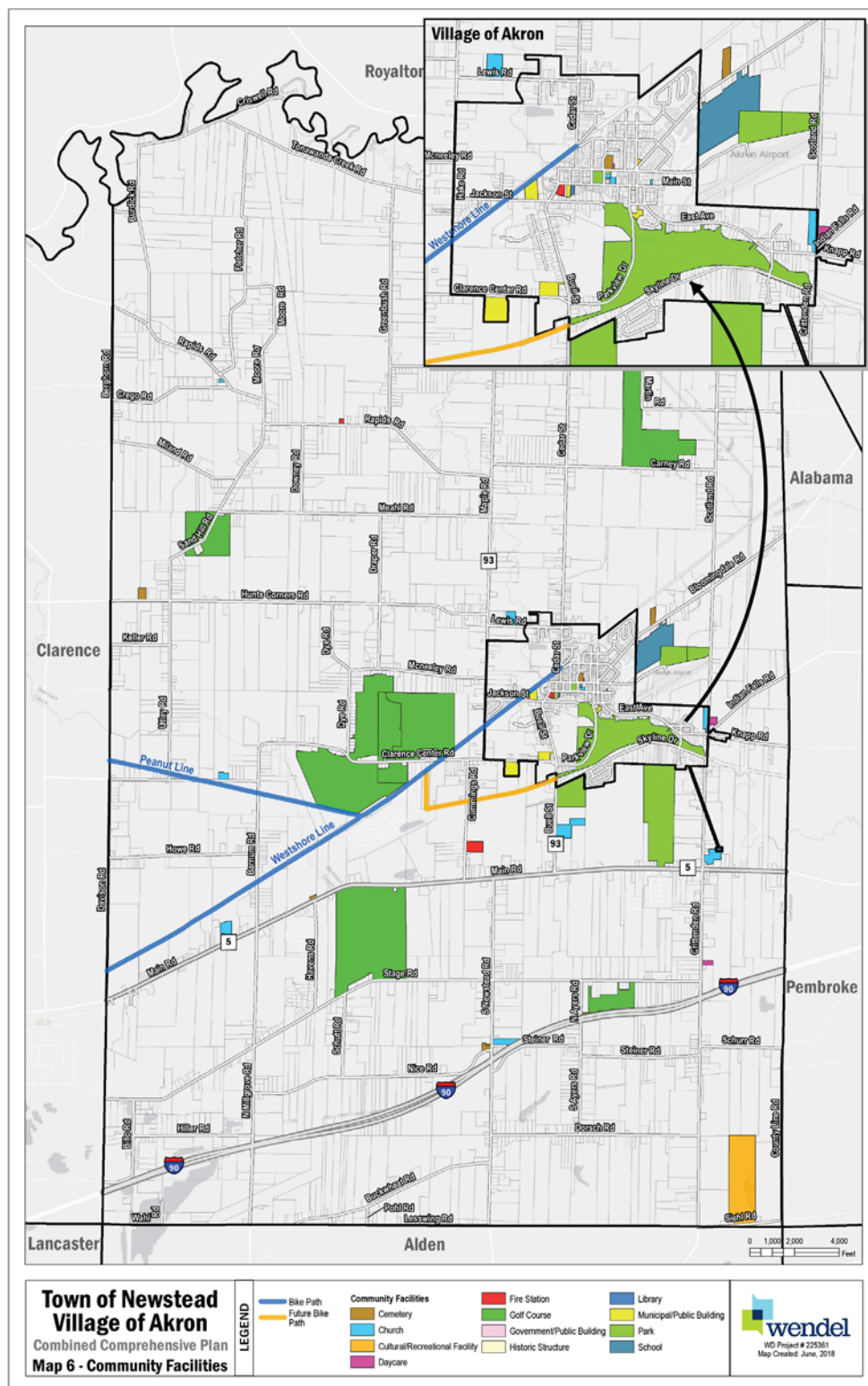
Existing and potential trail connections



3.3.2 CLARENCE / AKRON AREA

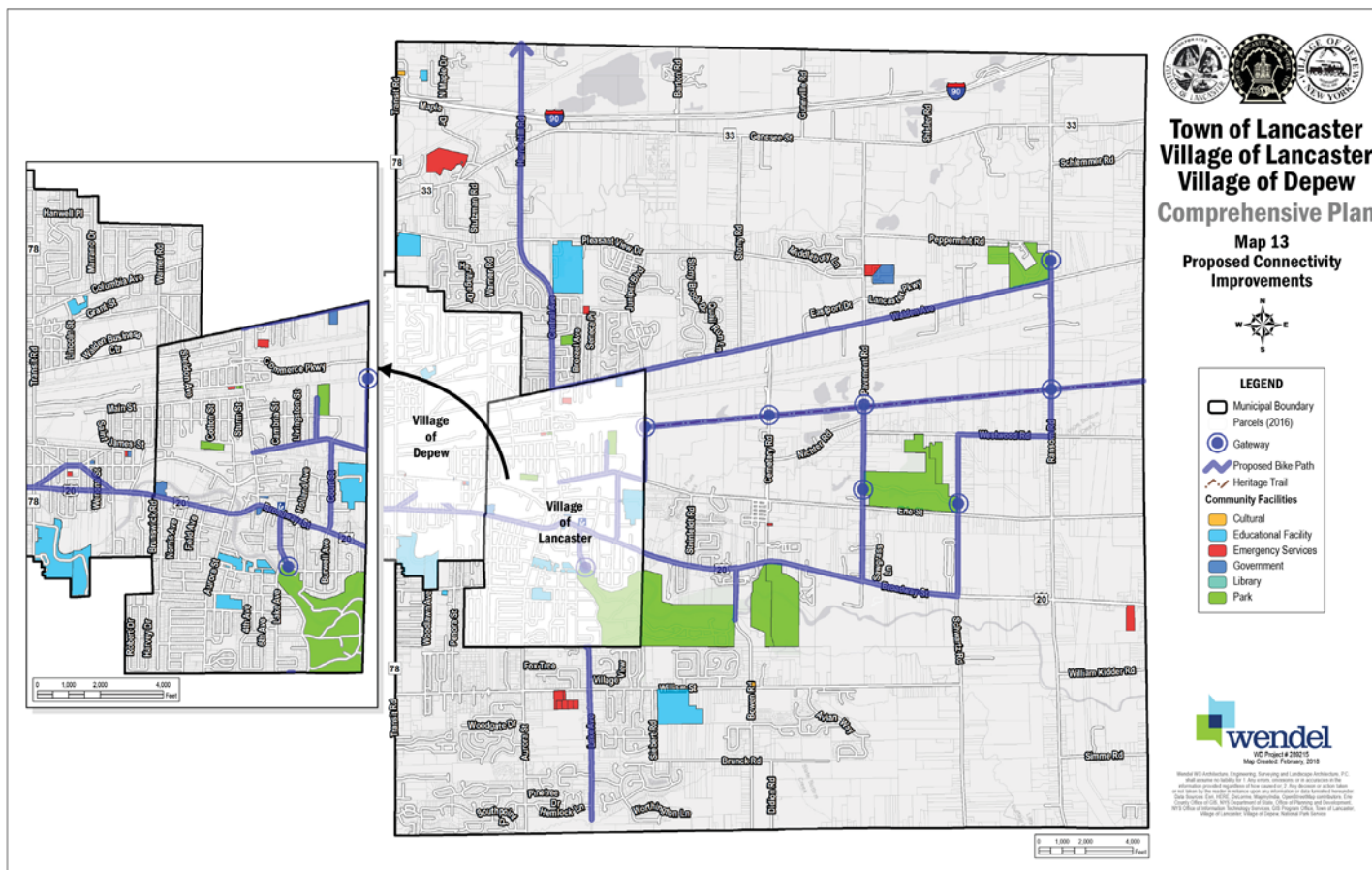
The Town of Newstead and Village of Akron currently have an extensive off-road multi-purpose trail network via the Peanut Line and Westshore Line. The path begins at the Village of Akron at the intersection of Cedar Street (Rt. 93) and travels southwest along the old Westshore railroad line till it hits a junction where the Westshore Line

continues southwest and the Peanut Line travels northwest. In the Town of Newstead/Village of Akron Joint Comprehensive Plan, the plan proposes a future bike path connection from the Westshore Line to Akron Falls Park. The plan also recognizes the importance of establishing stronger connections with the Village Center from Akron Falls Park. The County should coordinate with the Town and Village to create these connections.



Linkages map and
community facilities
- Town of Newstead/
Village of Akron
Comprehensive Plan





3.3.3 DEPEW / LANCASTER AREA

The Lancaster/Depew Comprehensive Plan identifies proposed bike paths extending from the Heritage Trail to form a loop trail with Como Lake Park. One connection would extend south along Walter Winter Drive, then west on Erie Street, south on Court Street to Broadway, west on Broadway to Lake Avenue, and then south on Lake Avenue to Old Lake Avenue, which takes you into Como Lake Park. The plan identifies a potential gateway at Como Lake Park and Old Lake Avenue. Another proposed trail spur extends south along Cemetery Road to Broadway, west on Broadway to Bowen Road, and south on Bowen Road to enter Como Lake Park.

*Proposed connectivity improvements
- Town of Lancaster, Village of
Lancaster, Village of Depew
Comprehensive Plan*

3.3.4 EAST AURORA / WALES AREA

Most potential trails in this area would tend to be on-road shared lanes or widened shoulders due to the rural character of the area. The less traveled roads by the two County Parks, Emery Park and Hunter's Creek Park, lend themselves to this type of trail. Route 16, on the other hand, is a high speed, high volume roadway. Therefore, an off-road trail on the Route 16 right-of-way could be proposed along from Lapham Road south to Warner Hill Road. Additional on-road trail proposals could create a loop trail connecting Emery and Hunters Creek Park with the Village of East Aurora and other local destinations.



Potential connections and trail loop from Emery Park to Hunters Creek Park

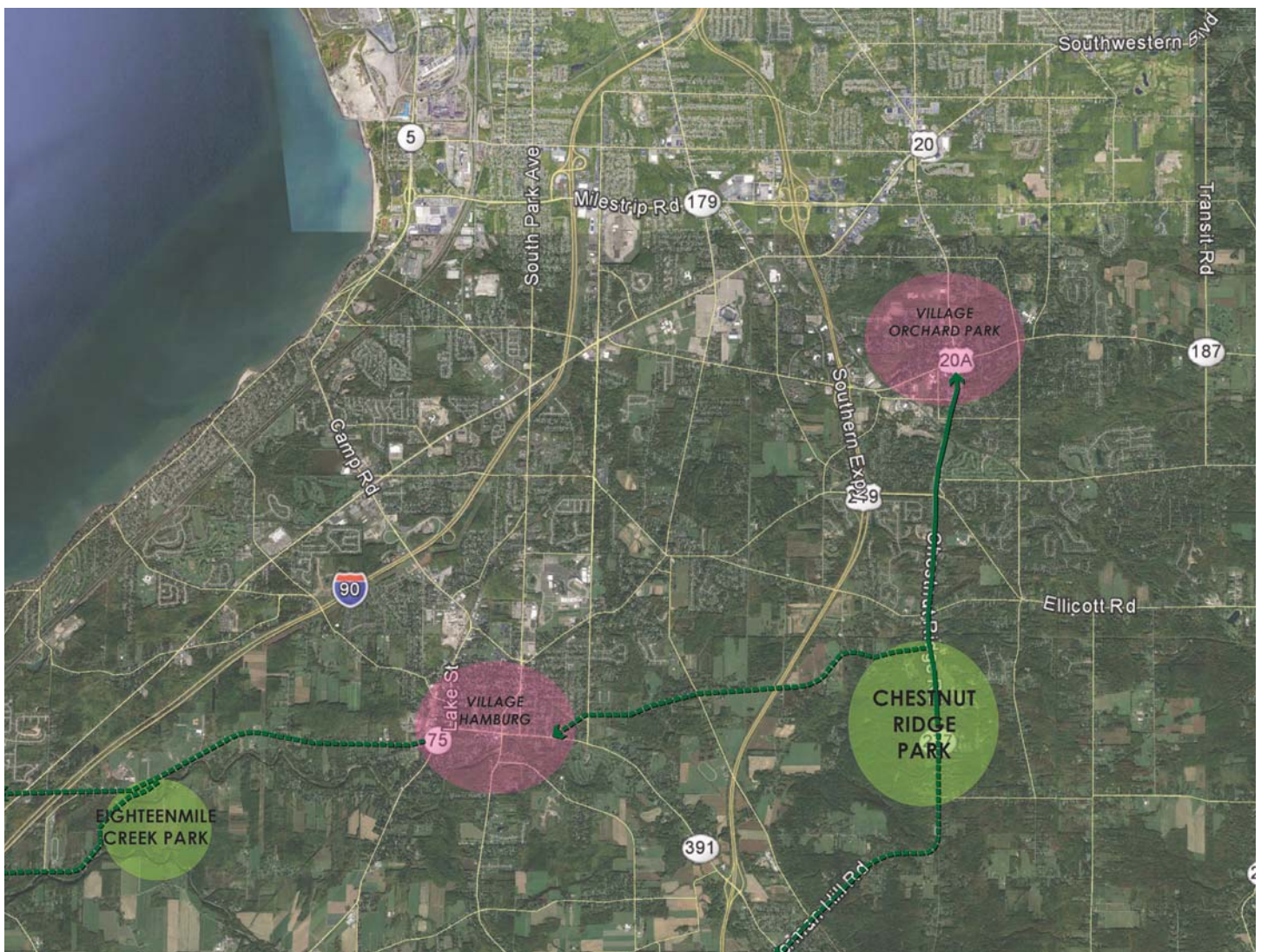
3.3.5 HAMBURG / ORCHARD PARK AREA

Potential recreational trails in the Hamburg / Orchard Park area tie the population areas of the Village of Hamburg, the Village of Orchard Park and North Boston to Chestnut Ridge County Park, Eighteen Mile Creek, and to the parks along Lake Erie. An on-road bike lane currently starts at the Village of Orchard Park on State Route 240, and continues south within the state right-of-way (which becomes NYS Route 277) until Chestnut Ridge Park, at which point the lanes become a narrower shoulder. Due to high speeds in this section of road, a wider shoulder would be recommended to continue along NYS Route 277 until it transitions to Herman Hill Road.

The Village of Hamburg could be better connected to Chestnut Ridge Park by a potential on-road shared lane along Newton Road. The Village of Hamburg could also be better connected to the waterfront by two separate approaches. The first is an off-road trail along North Creek Road and Lakeview Road

to Old Lake Shore Road. This off-road section would be proposed to be in the county right-of-way along these roads. An on-road shared lane could be proposed as a connection to Eighteen Mile Creek Park. The second approach could be an on-road shared lane route along Amsdell Road and Rogers Road to State Route 5. Trail proposals within the Village limits will require coordination with the municipality.

It is recommended to expand the Shoreline Trail in the Town of Hamburg to run along NYS Route 5 and Old Lakeshore Road by means of a trail or complete street modification. This would connect the Lackawanna sections of the Shoreline Trail to the Town of Evans.

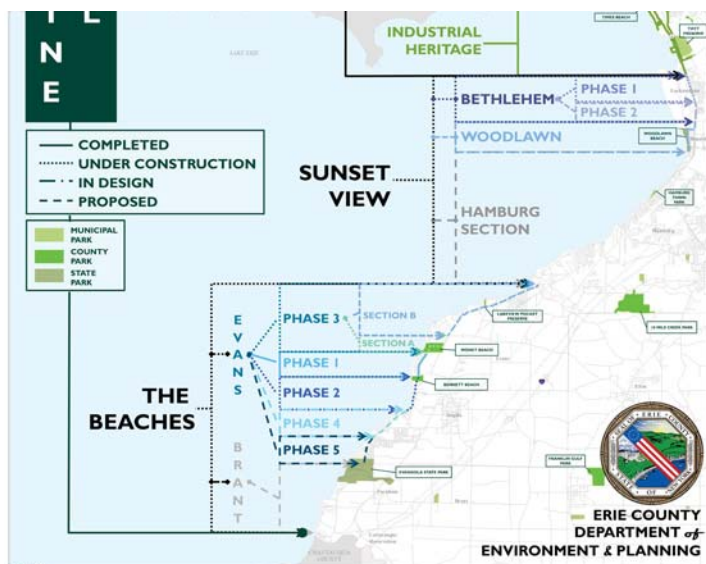


Potential trails map in the Orchard Park/Hamburg area



3.3.6 TOWN OF EVANS / BRANT AREA

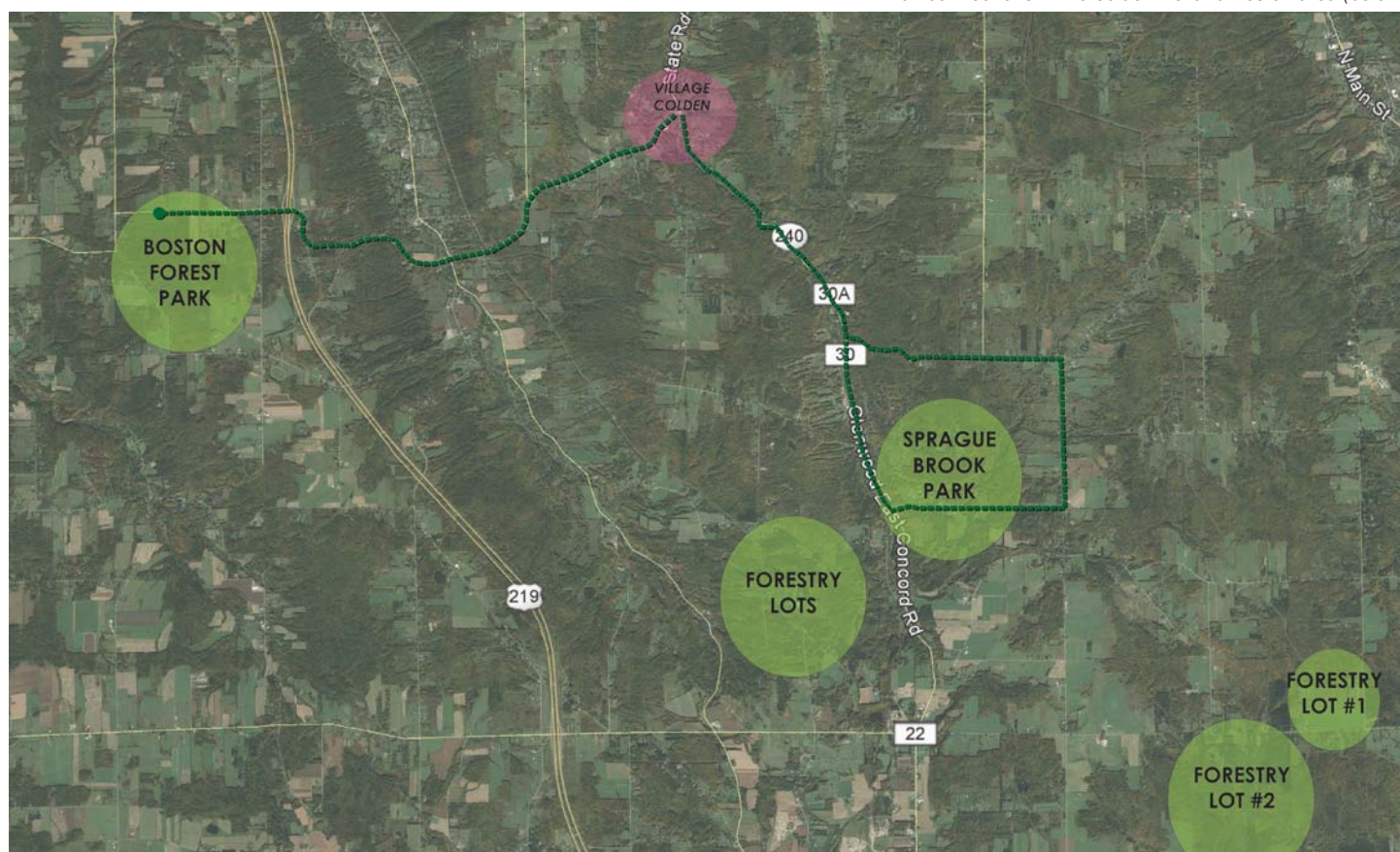
It is recommended to expand and construct the Shoreline Trail along Old Lakeshore Road into Evangola State Park. Continue the Kennedy Street Connector Project by adding a sidewalk to connect Lake Erie Beach to the Shoreline Trail. Provide complete street connection on Sturgeon Point Road between Old Lakeshore Road and the Marina.



Shoreline Trail Map - Connection to Evangola State Park

3.3.7 BOSTON / COLDEN / HOLLAND AREA

Due to the rural nature and smaller population centers in these areas, designated trails and linkages would not be highly emphasized. However, routes could potentially connect Boston Forest Park, Sprague Brook Park and several county forests with nearby population centers. Holland could be connected to Sprague Brook Park by using an on-road shared lane on Holland-Glenwood Road to Crump Road and then into Pratham Road to Foote Road, where the main entrance to the park is located. The population center of Colden could be better connected to Boston Forest Park, by using on-road shared lanes along Boston-Colden Road to an on-road bike lane through the Village of Patchin on Boston State Road back to on-road shared lanes on Trevett Road, Brown Hill Road and Feddick Road, where the Boston Forest Park is located.



Trail connections in the Colden-Holland-Boston area (below)

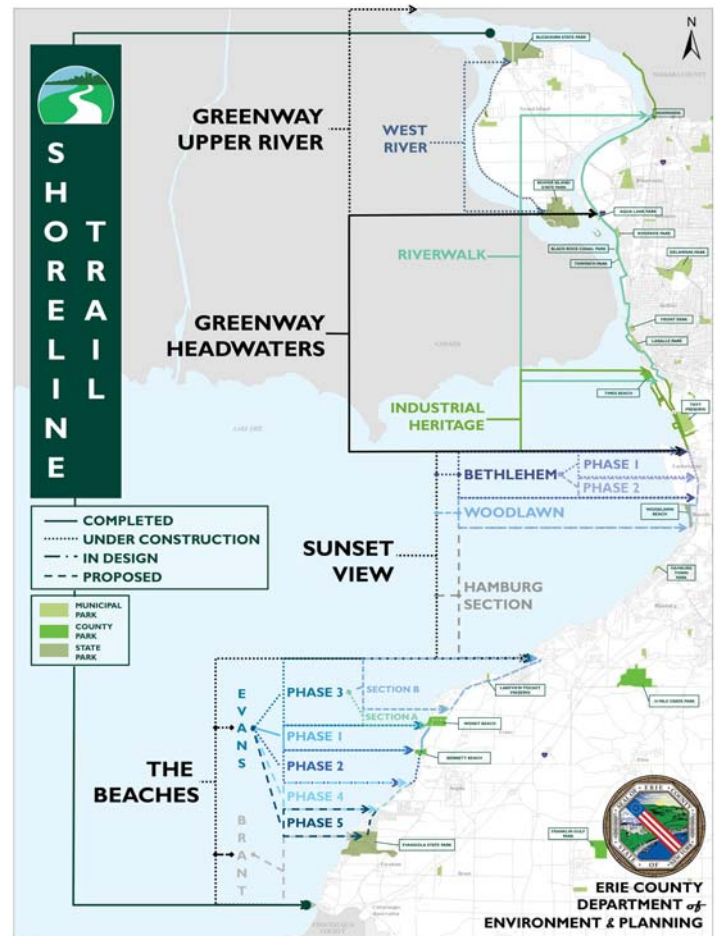
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WATERFRONT STRATEGY

4.1 COUNTY'S ROLE ON THE WATERFRONT

4.1.1 GENERAL

The potential for waterfront development continues to be the source of much attention and discussion within Western New York. Erie County has one of the most beautiful and historically significant waterfronts in all of the United States, including Lake Erie, the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers, Cattaraugus and Eighteen Mile Creeks and the Erie Canal. Given the large expense of maintaining waterfront properties, and the current or projected fiscal difficulties facing many towns, cities and counties across the state, Erie County cannot be expected to handle all waterfront responsibility. Partnerships for both funding and stewardship of waterfront parks and trails will need to be formed with local municipalities, and coordination with the State of New York will need to be made to maximize the potential of our significant regional waterfront assets.



The Shoreline Trail, in addition to the County's waterfront parks and trails, is increasing the connectivity between waterfront amenities throughout the County (Image: Erie County Department of Environment and Planning).

- Because of Shoreline Trail efforts, emphasis should be placed on strengthening partnerships between local municipalities and Erie County, and on encouraging more involvement from the State and Federal levels. Few counties and regions of the country have a linear trail system such as the Shoreline Trail, and this should be seen as a wise investment and long-term stewardship effort by the State of New York, to complement its many other area parks, recreation and historic preservation attractions.
- Erie County should partner with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) to enhance its role in the Eco-Tourism industry. This would elevate the County's visibility within the Niagara Region as a visitor destination for fishing, bird-watching, hiking, nature sight-seeing, water sports, and others.



Shoreline Trail along the Niagara River

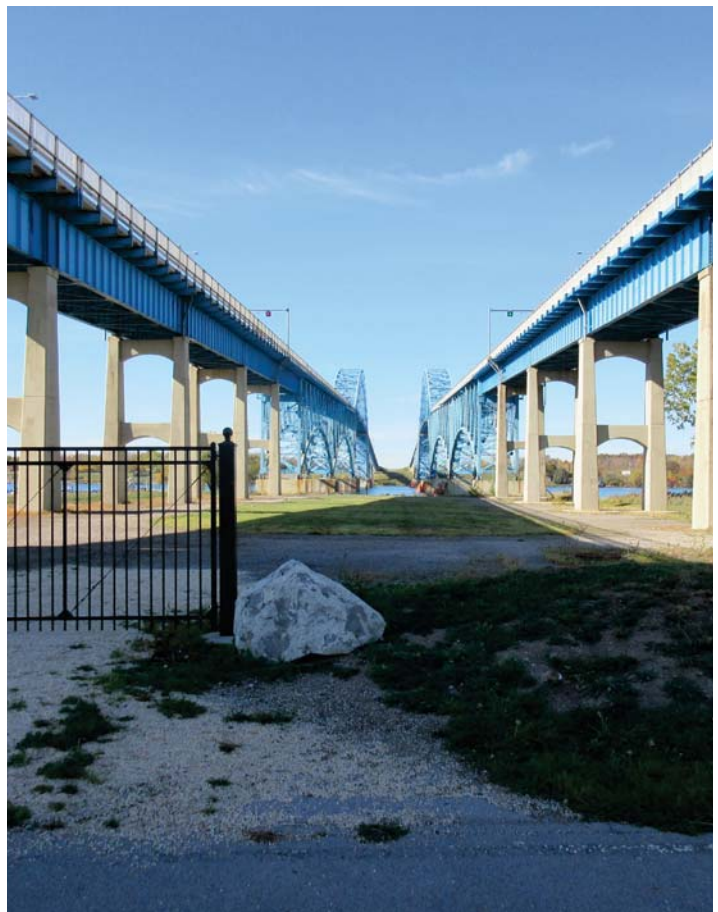
4.1.2 GREENWAY UPPER RIVER & RIVERWALK

North of the City of Buffalo, Erie County has major involvement and investment in the Shoreline Waterfront Trail System, which serves as the overall recreational “spine” linking numerous waterfront parks, including local, county and state facilities. The County also owns and operates Ellicott Creek Park along the Erie Canal, classified as a Heritage Park, and Isle View Park along the Niagara River.

- The County should continue to promote regional trail efforts, while looking to partner with the State of New York and Niagara River Greenway Commission for future trail enhancements, maintenance, and marketing. Isle View Park, a linear park and trail is certainly a regional asset that deserves attention and support at the highest levels of government. Given its significance, the County should look to develop partnering roles for the local communities, as well as with the State. Future emphasis should be placed on linkages to Niagara Falls.
- The Erie Canalway Trail system, which includes some existing County trail sections, is an integral part of the Erie Canal “National Heritage” corridor. A section of the trail passes through the County’s Ellicott Creek Park, and links directly to the Shoreline Trail system. Erie County should remain a partner with Niagara County, State of New York, Niagara River Greenway Commission, and Canal Corporation for all future planning efforts.
- Cherry Farm site is another significant property that deserves attention from both the county and state levels of government. This reclaimed brownfield property could be seen as a national model for land reclamation, shoreline/habitat restoration and waterfront recreation. Strategies for Cherry Farm have been developed as part of the Tonawanda Opportunity Area Plan.
- The County should revisit portions of the existing Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail alignment. Some stretches of the trail do not have much relationship to the water and travel along some very busy roadways (Along River Road from the Grand Island Bridge to Sheridan Drive). When constructed in the late 1970s, there were many impediments to linking the Riverwalk directly to the River due to active industries and land uses; changes in land uses along this section of the waterfront and other opportunities now exist in some areas for realignment and making a stronger and more aesthetically pleasing connection between the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail and the River.



Riverwalk Trail section of the Shoreline Trail within Isle View Park



View of the Grand Island Bridge

4.1.3 RIVERWALK & INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE (CITY OF BUFFALO)

Erie County's role in the central urban waterfront has been steadily increasing over the past few years. The County's Shoreline Trail extends from the Tonawandas into the City of Buffalo and meanders its way southward to the Erie Basin Marina, Canalside, and south to Union Ship Canal. Numerous park sites are linked by the Riverwalk, including two Olmsted Parks, Unity Island Park, Broderick Park and LaSalle Park. Currently the County operates and maintains Tow-Path Park and Black Rock Canal Park along the Shoreline Trail.

- Similar to the Northern section, the County should revisit much of the existing Riverwalk alignment and aesthetics along the City's urban waterfront due to some stretches of the trail traveling behind buildings, not having any relationship to the water, and are considered isolated and may be perceived as dangerous. When constructed in the late 1970s, there were many impediments to linking the Riverwalk directly to the River due to active businesses and certain private property obstacles.
- Broderick Park (City of Buffalo) is a small but extremely important site for Western New York. It is home to the Underground Railroad Freedom Memorial.
- One major waterfront park site is LaSalle Park (City of Buffalo). This 77-acre park sits at one of the most beautiful locations along the Erie County waterfront, and is home to many events, concerts and activities that serve a larger regional audience. A recently updated master plan has been established for LaSalle Park and multiple phases of construction are progressing. The Shoreline Trail also travels through LaSalle Park and is in need of significant repairs.
- The Outer Harbor area is Buffalo and Erie County's greatest potential for economic rebirth and waterfront redevelopment. The County should continue to support the momentum from the establishment of Buffalo Harbor State Park. Other notable developments in the Outer Harbor area include a National Industrial Heritage Corridor along the Buffalo River.



LaSalle Park, City of Buffalo

4.1.4 SUNSET VIEW & THE BEACHES

South of the Outer Harbor and City of Buffalo limits, Erie County has been involved in the advancement of a lakefront recreational trail that would link the Riverwalk and Outer Harbor to Evangola State Park. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging greater State of New York involvement and investment in this regional trail system, which serves as the overall recreational “spine” linking numerous waterfront parks, including local, county and state facilities. Two major county-owned facilities along the southern Erie County waterfront are Bennett Beach and Wendt Beach.

- Similar to the northern reaches of the County’s waterfront, the County should continue to promote

regional trail efforts along the southern shoreline areas, while looking to partner with the State of New York for future trail developments, enhancements, maintenance, and marketing. The proposed lakefront trail is considered a regional asset that deserves attention and support at the highest levels of government. Given its significance, the County should look to develop partnering roles for the local communities, as well as with the State.

- The County should consider working with State Parks and local municipalities on a seasonal marketing campaign that would link the major lakefront park properties of the Outer Harbor, Woodlawn Beach, Sturgeon Point, Wendt Beach, Bennett Beach, and Evangola State Park.



Outer Harbor trailway along Lake Erie

4.2 BACKGROUND STUDIES AND INITIATIVES

Erie County includes scenic lake and river systems, including extensive shoreline along Lake Erie and the Niagara River, which are significant regional attractions and economic assets. Waterfront land ownership is held by a number of interests, including State, County, local municipal governments and private landowners. It has been well recognized in New York State that a comprehensive approach to planning and development of the region's waterfronts is needed to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between the protection of natural resources, economic benefits, and recreational opportunities. A strategy to address the management and development of the County's waterfront parks was deemed an important component of this Master Plan.

The Erie County waterfront strategy needs to address all water's edges including lakes, rivers and canals. In particular the Lake Erie/ Niagara River shoreline, the Buffalo River and the Erie Canal are key corridors that have been identified as paramount to environmental conservation, tourism potential and economic renewal in Western New York. Several documents exist which provide over-arching or interrelated policies and guidelines to direct the waterfront strategy.

Out of these past studies and planning initiatives comes the

impetus for the current waterfront strategy, which includes an emphasis on some major guiding themes. These themes include:

- **Encouragement of greater New York State Involvement** along the waterfront, in partnership with Erie County and local communities. This regional cooperation would elevate the waterfront to a higher level of recreational and tourism potential and develop it into an asset of statewide significance.
- **Emphasis on waterfront access and trail linkages** between destination parks and other area waterfront attractions. Tie into the Seaway Trail marketing efforts by New York State.
- **Focus on maintaining and strengthening the momentum that has begun on Buffalo's Outer Harbor** with the establishment of a New York State Parks facility. Use parks and open space as a means to leverage public support and private investment.
- **Preserving and enhancing the unique environmental systems** along Erie County's waterfront as a part of a growing regional EcoTourism market.



Times Beach on the Outer Harbor

4.3 REGIONAL WATERFRONT SITES

The following is a synopsis of waterfront sites (from North to South) that include County owned and/or managed sites, along with other sites that represent the regional waterfront system. Many of the projects have been achieved or are moving forward with County involvement. In the future the County is likely to be increasingly asked to participate in waterfront projects of significance. The projects identified below are projects that may warrant some level of County involvement under a partnership or collaborative arrangement with the State and Local governments. Given the statewide significance of the Erie County waterfront, including the Lake Erie shoreline, the Niagara River and Erie Canal, emphasis should be placed on increasing New York State's future role in preserving and enhancing this vital waterfront asset. In addition, there may be specific sites, including the Erie Canal corridor that may warrant future Federal support and involvement.

TOWN OF GRAND ISLAND

1. BUCKHORN ISLAND STATE PARK

New York State (New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation - NYSOPRHP)

Buckhorn Island State Park is an 895 acre state-owned natural environment area located at the northwest tip of Grand Island, and separated from the rest of the island by Burnt Ship Creek. Comprised of marsh, meadows, and woods, the site affords some of the best wildlife viewing along the Niagara River.

2. WEST RIVER CONNECTOR TRAIL

New York State (NYSOPRHP)

The West River Parkway, which was a seasonal road, is being closed to traffic and converted into an eight-mile long trail for bicyclists and pedestrians. The trail will connect Buckhorn State Park to Beaver Island State Park and is a major piece of linkage between Buffalo and Niagara Falls.

3. BEAVER ISLAND STATE PARK

New York State (NYSOPRHP)

Beaver Island State Park is a 951-acre state-owned multi-purpose park located at the southern tip of Grand Island.

The park is open year round and offers beach swimming, picnicking, nature trails, cross-country skiing, sledding and tobogganing along with an eighteen hole golf course.

THE TONAWANDAS

4. ERIE CANALWAY TRAIL

Joint Venture

Stretching 363 miles from the Hudson River to the Great Lakes, with 57 locks, the Erie Canal has been recognized as one of the great engineering feats of the 19th Century, initiating an economic boom in the West. Today, it is also recognized as a significant heritage resource and a recreation amenity. The New York State Canal Corporation in conjunction with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, local and state government agencies, and local volunteers, are working to complete the Erie Canalway Trail. The 363-mile bicycle path will cross New York State following the towpaths of the existing and previous routes of the Erie Canal. At present, more than 300 miles of multi-use trail are open and available for public use. Through Erie County, the Erie Canal Trail is partially developed in the City of Tonawanda, and the Town of Amherst. The trails are used for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, and in some sections, for horseback riding.

5. ELLICOTT CREEK PARK

Erie County

Ellicott Creek Park is 165-acre County owned park in the Town of Tonawanda. One of the original County parks acquired and developed for multi-use in 1926, the park is located on the Erie Canal and is traversed by Ellicott Creek. It includes numerous heritage structures, a boat launch site for canoes and a dog park.

6. TONAWANDAS GATEWAY HARBOR PARK

City of Tonawanda/North Tonawanda

Gateway Park is a waterfront park on the Erie Canal in the Tonawanda's. The park includes a marina with transient boat docks. Many events are held including concerts, festivals, food trucks and holiday events.





View of Tonawanda Creek from Ellicott Island

7. SHORELINE TRAIL SYSTEM

Erie County

The Shoreline Trail extends along the Niagara River from the Tonawandas through Buffalo, and currently being constructed in different parts south of the City. Beginning near Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor Park, the Shoreline Trail traverses Niawanda and Isle View Parks before reaching Olmsted's Riverside Park in Buffalo. Continuing south and crossing to Unity Island, the trail continues to Broderick Park and Bird Island Pier before crossing back over the Black Rock Canal, and continuing past or near other key destination waterfront park sites; including Olmsted's Front Park and LaSalle Park. Rest areas include a River overlook near the General Motors facility, and periodic fishing spots along the historic Erie Canal retaining wall. Tow Path Park is a 2.3-acre county-owned facility at the foot of Hertel Avenue that also provides fishing opportunities.

8. NIAWANDA PARK

City of Tonawanda

Niawanda Park is a linear park located along the shore of the Niagara River on the site of the abandoned Erie Canal and Towpath, in the City of Tonawanda. The site connects to the County-owned Isle View Park at the outlet of Two-Mile creek and is primarily used for walking, biking, boat launching, fishing access, and picnicking. The multi-use Riverwalk trail traverses this narrow riverfront property.

9. VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK

City of Tonawanda

Veteran's Memorial Park is a large, multi-purpose park located on the banks overlooking the Niagara River in the City of Tonawanda. The site is adjacent to Niawanda Park and Two-Mile Creek, and lies near the north end of the County-owned Isle View Park. The Park is noted for its large trees, playground and picnic facilities, and athletic fields. These park fields are also utilized by the adjacent Tonawanda Jr. /Sr. School.

10. TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY

Erie County

In 1999, the Two Mile Creek Greenway was completed by the County, providing a key recreational link from the Riverwalk at Niawanda and Isle View Parks to Sheridan Park in Tonawanda. Two Mile Creek connects to the Sherwood Greenway which reconnects back to the Riverwalk at the foot of Sheridan Drive.



View of the Niagara River from the Shoreline Trail



11. ISLE VIEW PARK*Erie County*

Isle View Park is 49 acre county-owned developed park located on the site of the abandoned Erie Canal and Towpath, in the Town of Tonawanda. The site was acquired by the County in 1959 and is primarily used for boat launching, fishing access, and picnicking. The multi-use trail is used for biking, rollerblading, strolling and cross-country skiing, and is connected to Niawanda Park and the Two Mile Creek Greenway.

12. CHERRY FARM PARK**(Potential future park opportunity)***Town of Tonawanda*

Located on the Niagara River, the 55-acre Cherry Farm site on River Road was once used both for disposal of steel manufacturing waste and as an industrial landfill site. Using a comprehensive groundwater extraction and treatment system, combined with remedial measures to clean-up the shoreline and restore wetlands, the site was cleaned up to parkland standards through the joint efforts of the state, local agencies and the PRP Group (Potentially Responsible Parties). Future development of the site may include a range of outdoor recreation facilities, passive use areas, trails, and naturalization elements.

13. AQUA LANE PARK*Town of Tonawanda*

Aqua Lane Park is a 5-acre town-owned, developed park on the Niagara River at the foot of Sheridan Drive. This small site is situated beside the Tonawanda Boat Harbor and is connected to the Riverwalk bike path.

14. STRAWBERRY ISLAND/MOTOR ISLAND*NYSDEC*

The Strawberry Island and Motor Island Shallows is a 400-acre shallow-water habitat, located in the Niagara River, and officially designated as a New York State significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat. The area contains extensive beds of submerged aquatic plants and is used by a variety of migratory waterfowl and by muskellunge as spawning and nursery habitat, making the Niagara River muskellunge fishery one of the best in New York.



Dock at Isle View Park

CITY OF BUFFALO

15. OLMSTED'S RIVERSIDE PARK*City of Buffalo*

Riverside Park is a historic, 37-acre, city-owned park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., as part of the impressive park system within the City of Buffalo. Originally situated overlooking the Niagara River and the Erie Canal, the park is now separated from the River by the NYS Thruway (I-190). This multi-purpose, developed park offers many passive and active recreational activities, including walking, picnicking and playgrounds, as well as baseball/softball fields, ice skating, swimming pool and wading pool, and a seniors center. The Shoreline Trail passes near Riverside Park, connected by a pedestrian bridge over the highway. A series of river overlooks have been constructed along River Road providing views over the Niagara River. The park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

16. BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK*Erie County*

Black Rock Canal Park formerly known as the Ontario Street Boat Launch and Cornelius Creek Park, became 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, two separate fenced in 'bark park' areas (large dogs and small dogs), and an Avian walkway celebrating the international migratory of birds. The park's spectacular views of the Niagara River and shoreline attracts many from the community to enjoy the waterfront scenery and summer sunsets.

17. TOW PATH PARK*Erie County*

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. Towpath 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 Riverwalk system.

18. JESSE KREGAL PATHWAY*Joint Venture - County, State, City of Buffalo*

The Jesse Kregal Pathway (formerly known as the Scajaquada Trail) is an inland link connecting the Shoreline Trail to Olmsted's Delaware Park and Buffalo's Museum District.



Promenade at Black Rock Canal Park





View of the Niagara River from Unity Island

19. UNITY ISLAND PARK

City of Buffalo

Unity Island Park is a city-owned waterfront property located adjacent to the Black Rock Canal Locks and accessible by bridge from Niagara Street. Unity Island Park is part of the Shoreline Trail System and is a naturalized park for fishing, birdwatching and picnicking.

20. BRODERICK PARK - UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM MEMORIAL

City of Buffalo

Broderick Park and the banks of the Niagara River hold a special place in Buffalo's history. During the early to mid-1800's, this area was one of the crossing points for escaping slaves on their journey to freedom across the river in Canada. In 2000, the Broderick Park site took on national significance as the Underground Railroad Freedom Memorial, which includes a heritage memorial, commemorating the island's role as one of the staging areas and destinations for the Underground Railroad. This impressive site is also a popular fishing access point, and offers informal seating areas, naturalized plantings and a small concession building.

21. BIRD ISLAND PIER

United States Army Corps of Engineers

The breakwater between the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal is known as the Bird Island Pier. The pier is accessible from Broderick Park and can be walked for almost 2 miles along the river's edge. This pedestrian route affords unique and awesome views of the Lake, River and Canal from beneath the Peace Bridge and off-shore from LaSalle Park. To highlight, the Niagara River is an Important Bird Area (IBA), and is one of the best places in North America for viewing gulls and waterfowl. The site is well known by Niagara Region birders as one of the few viewing locations along the built-up Buffalo riverfront. It is also a popular spots for fishing.

22. OLMSTED'S FRONT PARK

City of Buffalo

Front Park is a 25.5-acre city-owned Olmsted park in the City of Buffalo listed on the National register of Historic Places. Located overlooking the Niagara River and Lake Erie (and NYS Thruway), the park was once widely used for ceremonies and other civic displays, but is now increasingly encroached upon by the surrounding road network, which includes access to the Peace Bridge. Today, the framework of the historic Olmsted design remains, although roadway alterations and the addition of playing fields and park maintenance structures have changed its character and uses.

23. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BOATHOUSE

Joint Venture – City of Buffalo/Erie County

A Frank Lloyd Wright-designed boathouse, originally designed for the University of Wisconsin but never constructed, was built on the Black Rock channel in 2007. The boathouse is adjacent to the West Side Rowing Club.

24. COLONEL WARD PUMPING STATION

City of Buffalo

Located at the north end of LaSalle Park the Colonel Ward Pumping Station building is a magnificent industrial heritage structure.

25. LASALLE PARK

City of Buffalo

LaSalle Park is a 77-acre city-owned multi-purpose park in the City of Buffalo, strategically located on Lake Erie at the junction of the Niagara River. Currently Buffalo's premier waterfront park, the site houses festivals and concerts, and provides numerous sports fields, as well as biking, rollerblading and strolling on the Riverwalk.

26. BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY NAVAL MILITARY PARK

City of Buffalo

The Naval Military Park and Museum is located on the Buffalo River and is home to the destroyer U.S.S. Sullivans (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), the missile cruiser U.S.S. Little Rock, and a submarine, the U.S.S. Croaker. The Park is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and is operated as a non-profit organization supported by memberships and donations, admission fees, ship's store, events bookings. The park hosts overnight encampments for up to 225 youth, berthed aboard the USS Little Rock.

27. ERIE BASIN MARINA

City of Buffalo

Erie Basin Marina is one of the favorite spots for Western New Yorkers during the warmer months. The park is a city-owned facility offering seasonal and transient docking, a boat launch and other services for recreational watercrafts in the City of Buffalo. Located at the foot of Erie Street near the heart of Buffalo's downtown, the Erie Basin lands include an observation tower and public greenspace. It is located close to Waterfront Village, a mixed use development located adjacent to Buffalo's Central Business District. The Buffalo River frontage also serves as the departure point for cruise boats that tour the Black Rock Canal and Lake Erie.



LaSalle Park



28. BUFFALO RIVER CORRIDOR - INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TRAIL

City of Buffalo

The historic grain elevators are located along the Buffalo River just south and east of Downtown Buffalo. Once a bustling industrial area, the elevators and industrial buildings stand as fascinating reminders of the area's history as one of America's greatest working waterfronts. These impressive structures have been studied and admired worldwide by architects, structural engineers and history buffs as one of the great innovations in architectural design form and use of materials.

29. BUFFALO RIVER PARKS

Erie County

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 Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park, Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park and Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park.



Passive trail at Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park



View of the Buffalo River at Red Jacket Riverfront Park

30. SOUTH BUFFALO REDEVELOPMENT AREA*Joint Venture – City of Buffalo/County, State*

The City of Buffalo is proceeding with the South Buffalo Redevelopment project, which is one of the largest brownfields initiatives in New York state and has maintained its commitment to the redevelopment of the former steel/industrial lands.

31. HISTORIC BUFFALO LIGHTHOUSE*Buffalo Lighthouse Association*

The Buffalo Lighthouse is located at the mouth of the Buffalo River at the north end of the Outer Harbor lands adjacent to the Coast Guard Station. Built in 1833 to replace a smaller lighthouse constructed in 1818, the lighthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

32. TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE*City of Buffalo/County*

Times Beach is strategically located near the north end of the Outer Harbor on Lake Erie, at the mouth of the Buffalo River. It is at the north end of Fuhrmann Boulevard. The site is developed with boardwalks and trails for birding (particularly shorebirds) and other wildlife viewing. The park is owned by the City of Buffalo and is maintained by both the City and the County of Erie.

33. WILKESON POINTE*City of Buffalo*

One of the latest and most popular open space and public access initiatives along Buffalo's Outer Harbor on Lake Erie. This brownfields redevelopment project utilized innovative methods for on-site material capping and stormwater run-off, and incorporated unique artistic wind sculptures and

sculptural landforms into the design. A large mound with a spiral pathway allows for bicycle and pedestrian access to a lake overlook with unprecedented sunset views over the stone breakwall to the open lake. Unique "fort-like" earthwork formations are part of a natural playground and environmental education area. The project was one of Buffalo's first parks designed to be a naturalistic "no-mow" landscape with all native plantings and minimal maintenance requirements.

34. BUFFALO OUTER HARBOR WATERFRONT TRAIL*City of Buffalo*

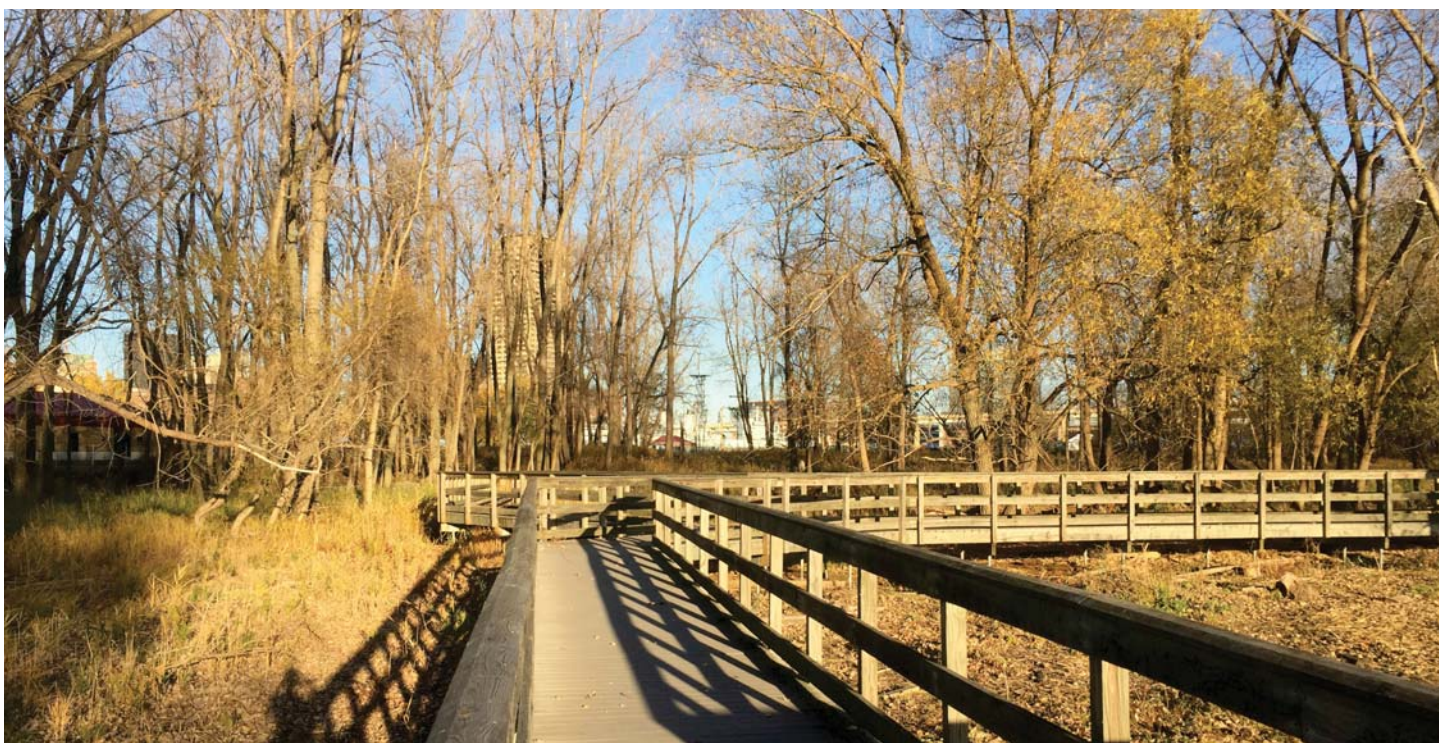
A key feature of the Outer Harbor, the multi-purpose waterfront trail connects joggers, bikers, and roller bladers with destinations like Buffalo Harbor State Park, Wilkeson Pointe, and the Historic Buffalo Lighthouse.

35. BUFFALO HARBOR STATE PARK*New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation*

The newest state park in the system, Buffalo Harbor State Park is the first state park in the City of Buffalo. Boasting beautiful views of Lake Erie, the park is home to a 1,000 slip marina, a restaurant, boat launches, personal watercraft launches, fish cleaning station, restrooms and a beach for strolling and sunbathing. Towards the south end of the park is a playground, two picnic pavilions, a stage area, bike racks and landscaping.

36. TIFFT NATURE PRESERVE*City of Buffalo /Buffalo Museum of Science*

Tift Nature Preserve is 264-acre city owned nature preserve in the South Buffalo area. Located on brownfield lands formerly occupied by industrial canals and slips, the Preserve includes



Boardwalk at Times Beach Nature Preserve



75-acre of marshland, and open water ponds, along with woodlands, thickets, and grassy fields, and is on a primary migration route for waterfowl, warblers and passerines. The site is the largest nature preserve in the City of Buffalo and one of the largest and only urban nature preserves within any city in the United States. This site is managed by the Buffalo Museum of Science. The City of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan recommends the improvement of connections between the Tifft Nature Reserve and Times Beach at the mouth of the Buffalo River.

CITY OF LACKAWANNA

37. REDEVELOPMENT OF BETHLEHEM STEEL PROPERTY

Erie County

The former Bethlehem Steel Company occupied over 2000 acres of land in Lackawanna. In 1998, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation announced a comprehensive Land Redevelopment Plan that could eventually convert 1,100 acres of its landholdings into a commercial/ industrial area, with a distribution and transshipment center. The development would include 485 acres of greenway and recreational uses designed to reconnect the community with the waterfront, including: a new regional marina, the realignment of Smokes Creek; enhancement of the Route 5 corridor; new public access via a Greenway along Smokes Creek.

38. Shoreline Trail - Bethlehem Steel

Erie County

New Shoreline Trail extension will extend trail from the Outer Harbor to eventually a future connection with Woodlawn Beach State Park and the Town of Hamburg.

TOWN OF HAMBURG

39. WOODLAWN BEACH STATE PARK

New York State /Town of Hamburg

Woodlawn Beach State Park offers a one-mile long sand beach with lovely panoramic views and spectacular sunsets. It is the largest sand beach closest to Buffalo. A small corridor of underbrush that covers the dunes along the beach provides cover for migrant birds in spring and fall. Two small streams empty into Lake Erie near the north end. A beach-related facility including restrooms, concessions and meeting rooms was recently completed by the State. The park is operated by the Town of Hamburg through a partnership agreement with NYSPRHP.

40. ATHOL SPRINGS LAKEFRONT AREA

Town of Hamburg

Athol Springs is a small portion of the Town of Hamburg, a little less than 8 miles south of Downtown Buffalo and 2-miles south of Woodlawn Beach State Park. Situated on a bluff overlooking Lake Erie, the area is promoted by birders for observation of gulls and other waterfowl.



Wilkeson Pointe at sunset

41. HAMBURG TOWN PARK*Town of Hamburg*

Hamburg Town Park is a 13-acre town-owned developed park located on Lake Erie, in the hamlet of Mount Vernon just south of Athol Springs. The park includes a beach, walking/biking and nature trails, picnicking and other related facilities and is promoted along with Athol Springs for its birdwatching opportunities. The sandy beach is patrolled and offers safe swimming, a snack bar, change rooms and rest rooms. Adjacent to the swimming area is a boat launch; with a special area reserved for windsurfers. The park is limited to use by Town of Hamburg residents only.

42. EIGHTEEN MILE CREEK*Erie County*

The New York State Open Space Plan identifies this as a significant area. Protection of the creek mouth and gorge within a nature preserve area. Eighteen Mile Creek is a jewel along the Erie County waterfront and is renowned for its geological and prehistoric significance.

TOWN OF EVANS**43. STURGEON POINT MARINA***Town of Evans*

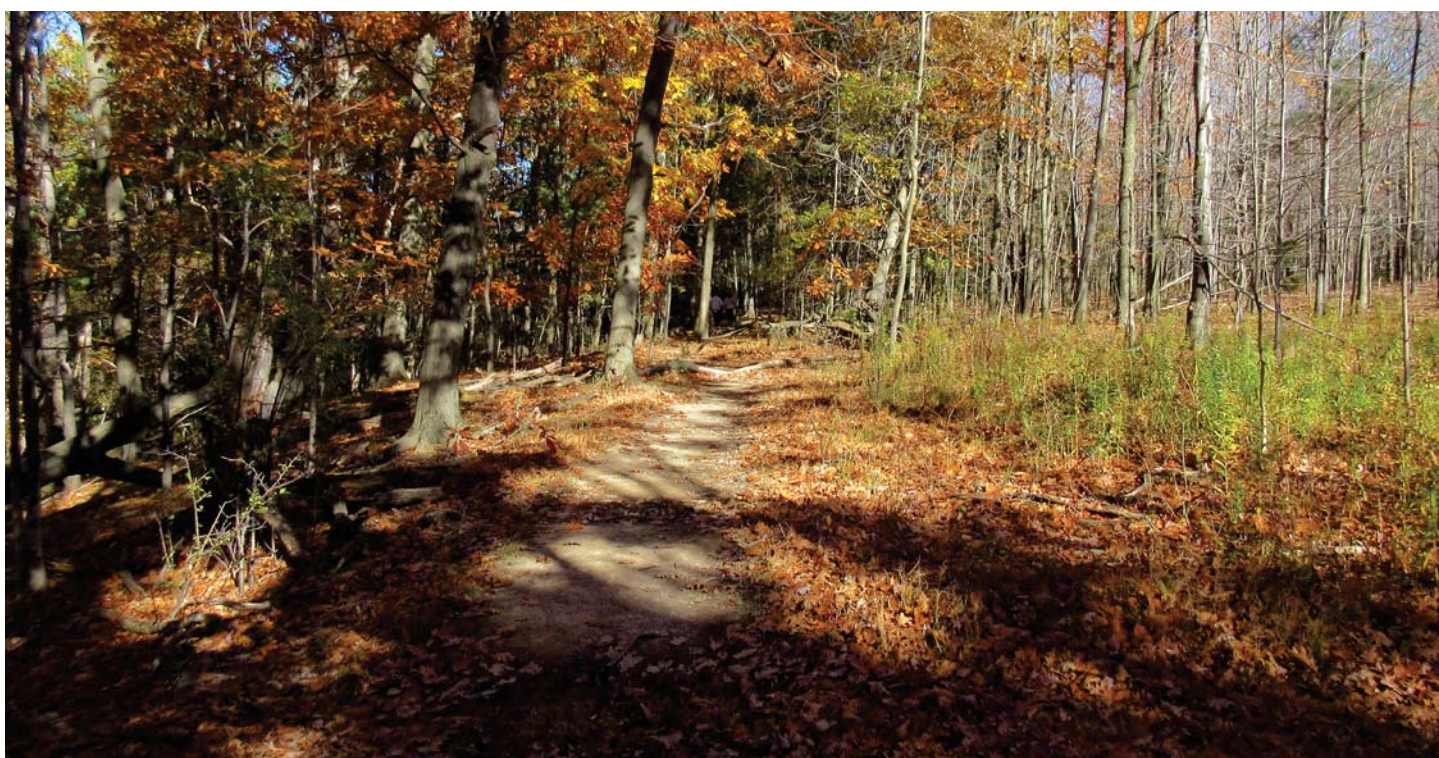
Sturgeon Point Marina is a town-owned facility offering docking, mooring, loading and other services for recreational watercrafts in the Town of Evans. Owned, operated and maintained by the town, the site includes hard surface launching ramps, parking for 100 boat trailers. Fishing, picnicking and a nature trail are also available.

44. WENDT BEACH*Erie County*

Wendt Beach is a 178 acre county owned multi-purpose park located on Lake Erie and connects to regional waterfront parks and attractions via the Shoreline Trail. The park is located on the former Wendt estate and includes the old Wendt mansion, a historic structure that was also once used as a stagecoach stop. The park includes two distinct halves; the western section includes the mansion and its various outbuildings, a shale beach, vegetated dunes, natural woodland areas, and other beach related facilities. The easternmost section includes wide open, level lawn areas that is primarily used for soccer.

45. BENNETT BEACH*Erie County*

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



Trail at Eighteen Mile Creek Park



47. EVANS TOWN PARK*Town of Evans*

Evans Town Park is an 11-acre town-owned developed park located on Lake Erie. This multi-purpose park offers many diverse forms of recreation, including swimming and beach activities, tennis, volleyball, basketball, baseball, roller hockey, horseshoes, picnicking and playgrounds. These activities are supported by a comfort station.

48. LAKE ERIE BEACH*Town of Evans*

Lake Erie Beach Park is 5.3 acre town-owned and developed park in the Town of Evans. Facilities include a guarded beach, play areas, picnicking and fishing access. A pedestrian bridge over Muddy Creek was constructed, to allow public access to approximately 5.0-acres of shoreline. The project includes a picnic area, lighting, landscaping and other associated site improvements.

TOWN OF BRANT**49. EVANGOLA STATE PARK***New York State*

Evangola State Park is 733-acre state-owned park located in the Towns of Brant and Evans. Its main attraction is its beautiful shoreline and natural sand beach, lined with low shale cliffs, located on Lake Erie. The park offers a guarded beach for safe swimming, nature trails, picnic facilities, baseball and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts and 80 campsites. Snowmobiling, hunting and cross-country skiing are also offered.



Wendt Beach Park

4.4 POLICY DIRECTION

4.4.1 WATERFRONT PLANNING

The waterfront strategy for the Erie County parks should build on the goals and recommendations provided in previous waterfront plans for the Erie County Waterfront. Due to changes in the economic picture over the last ten years, specific components relating to market demand and economic projections need to be updated. Notwithstanding this, the principles and underlying framework for a comprehensive and linked system of waterfront activity centers are still viable. Progress is being made and a number of significant projects, by all levels of government, along Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and the Erie Canal. These individual projects continue to build toward an overall waterfront recreational system. Efforts toward a linked system of waterfront recreation sites and amenities needs to be coordinated within a planning strategy that promotes sound decisions in land use planning, transportation and environmental management.

4.4.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE WATERFRONT RECREATION SYSTEM

The waterfront County Parks and their inter-linking recreational trails and greenways are key destinations within the overall waterfront plan, which also includes state and local parks and landholdings. In 1999 the County agreed to take over management of three City of Buffalo waterfront parks: Broderick Park, Ontario Street Boat Launch, and Tow Path Park. Although small in scale, these sites nonetheless contribute as ‘windows on the water’ or as part of the linear Shoreline Trail System contribute to the overall waterfront greenway system. Management of Broderick Park has since been returned to the City of Buffalo. The County has also partnered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on several sites along the Buffalo River that were targeted for environmental clean-up and/or demonstration projects.

Notwithstanding the City of Buffalo’s difficulties in the past, and the transfer of management of several of its waterfront sites to the County, future County decisions concerning new waterfront land acquisitions, or the assumption of management, should ensure adherence to the mission and mandate of the Erie County Parks System. The County may wish to revisit the management of the smaller waterfront sites and the linear parks along Buffalo’s waterfront with the City, or consider increasing operations and maintenance budgets to ensure a high quality standard of management.

4.5 WATERFRONT PARK SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

The following are general recommendations that apply to the County waterfront landholdings. Specific park by park recommendations for key waterfront sites can be found in Volume 2.

4.5.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Niagara River has been designated the First Globally Significant Important Bird Area (IBA) in the region (as identified by the National Audubon Society, US partners in the global IBA program). Significant habitat sites, or “stopovers” already exist on Grand Island (Buckhorn Island State Park) and at the Tifft Nature Preserve.

Several of the County waterfront parks: the Buffalo River Parks, Wendt Beach, and Bennett Beach, include natural environment areas that contribute to the system. These sites and other County waterfront parks and open space areas could also provide some contributions to the IBA. The County should incorporate an underlying ecological framework for its waterfront park system, and the development of wildlife areas and specialized waterfowl and migratory bird habitat enhancement areas should be considered in the development/redevelopment of new waterfront sites. For existing small parks and open space areas, this may be limited to the encouragement of meadow and regeneration areas through reduced mowing in specific locations. For larger sites, the design should incorporate measures that target specific habitat types, such as wetland or forest habitat.

4.5.2 ACCESS AND LINKAGES

The existing network of waterfront parks is now more easily accessible from the main streets and because of the cohesive system of directional signage of the Shoreline Trail System. The Shoreline Trail comprehensive family of signs are located along major roads and throughout neighborhoods to cue visitors and ‘remind’ residents that the waterfront (Lake or River) is nearby, and to offer wayfinding to highlighted waterfront destinations.

Through the ongoing efforts of the County, New York State, and the Niagara River Greenway Commission; the Shoreline Trail continues to expand and connect users of the Trail to waterfront assets. The Shoreline Trail is the connecting feature of the entire waterfront parks system throughout Erie County.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

Given its role within the overall planning of the region, the County needs to assume a leading position in working with other levels of government, and specifically the Niagara



River Greenway Commission to ensure that waterfront development is undertaken in a comprehensive and unified manner. The waterfront strategy should build on past waterfront planning efforts, and work towards the underlying principles of economic renewal, public accessibility, recreation enhancement and environmental conservation.

The Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC) should be considered a major partner for the County in its planning efforts of the waterfront. The NRGC prioritizes the completion and enhancement of multi-use trails, designed to encourage connectivity to link upland and interior communities to access the waterfront, as well as working to restore ecological health to the shoreline.

It would appear that there is a role to be played for all levels of government, Local, County, and State, both in planning and implementing the waterfront recreation system as well as in managing and maintaining the existing parks and the ones to follow. Capital investment that is not followed by adequate maintenance is money wasted, and will not achieve the vision of a premier waterfront park system. Therefore, it will be important for all stakeholders to rationalize the roles and responsibilities not only for purchase and capital development, but for the ongoing management of the various sites, to be in keeping with their mandate for the provision of recreation. The County should continue to encourage the State to assume a prominent role in the management of significant sites that are in keeping with the overall State Park system and open space conservation objectives.

The County-owned and/or managed waterfront park system already represents a significant part of the County Park operational costs. The ability of any planned waterfront revitalization to generate tourism potential and economic renewal for the region will be substantially based on the quality of the recreational experience for prospective residents and visitors. This will require a high standard of park development, accompanied by a high standard of management and maintenance.

Future County decisions concerning new waterfront land acquisitions, or the assumption of management of existing parks and open space areas, should therefore consider the mission and mandate of the Erie County Parks System, and should ensure the provision of adequate funds to manage and operate them to a high standard.

Specific recommendations for parks improvements are provided in Volume 2. However, as a general note it is recommended that visual and physical connections within the existing waterfront park and trail system be improved, through:

- **Improvements to physical trail connections - road crossings, trail corridors, (shade, fencing, views to lake, rest areas), revisiting trail routing where land uses have changed;**
- **Improved opportunities to access the water for general viewing purposes and potential water related recreational activities.**



Big Sister Creek at Bennett Beach

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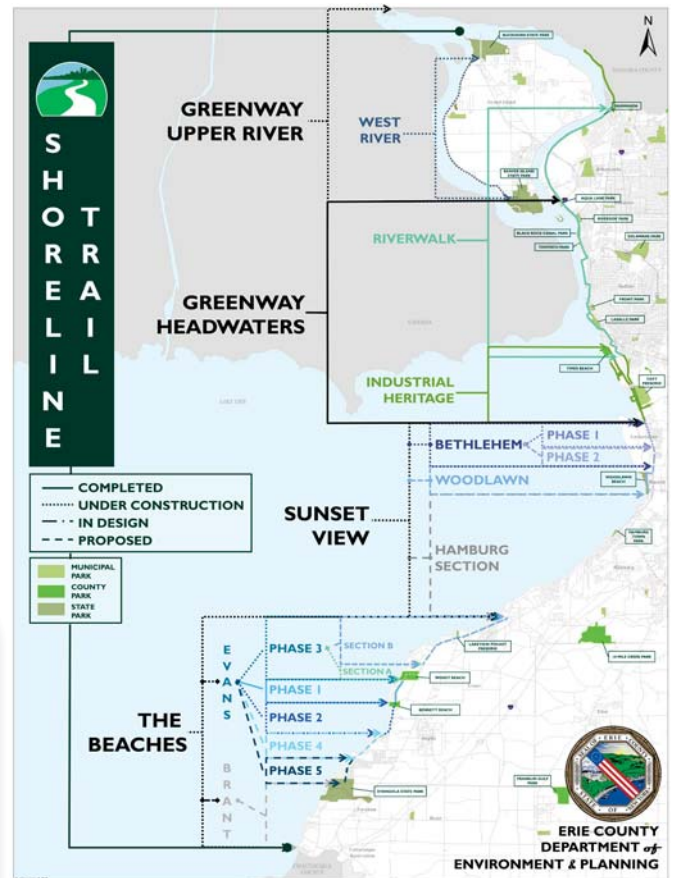
WATERFRONT TRAIL SYSTEM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to provide the framework to facilitate the planning, funding, design and construction of future waterfront trail connections and the expansion of the Shoreline Trail as well as other trail systems across the County and Region. The Shoreline Trail System is a continuous network of pathways connecting parks, waterfront areas, businesses and neighborhoods. The Shoreline Trail is both a backbone for waterfront connectivity and the embodiment of a principle. The principle is the belief that open space and waterfront areas are public assets and that generous, green, easily accessible space at the water's edge is a necessary part of any waterfront development. This study reinforces the vision that someday the recreational trails will pass through all waterfront activity centers throughout the County.

Waterfront trail expansion will provide the following specific benefits to the residents of the County as well as the tourists who visit the area:

- Increased public access to the waterfront.
- Unprecedented linkage of local attractions, most of which are currently seen as disconnected and isolated from each other and from adjacent land- uses.
- Increased economic development by increasing traffic, and therefore the commercial potential of the waterfront. The Shoreline Trail System is a low-tech, relatively inexpensive way to expand the use and profitability of the County and its waterfront.
- Reduced traffic congestion by allowing and encouraging safe bicycle and pedestrian travel between neighborhoods, the waterfront and various attractions.
- Increased recreational opportunities and green space for the region's residents, for whom the Shoreline Trail System will be a symbol of their inclusion in waterfront life.
- Increased integration of the County's recreational opportunities including the City's magnificent Olmsted Parks which will be linked to the waterfront and to each other through the greenway network.
- Increased educational opportunities through elements such as the Industrial Heritage Trail on the Buffalo River, historic markers along the Trail, linkage to the Cobblestone Historic District in downtown Buffalo and through the impact of simply bringing the public to areas with such a rich and varied history.
- Enhanced quality of life and health to the Great Lakes human and wildlife communities as waterfront access leads to public concern for the areas significant natural resources.



Shoreline Trail Map

5.2 DESCRIPTION AND STATUS

The entire Trail System is comprised of a network of individual trail segments that are at various stages of development ranging from early conceptual planning to built and in-use. The following text will serve to describe each segment and its current status. The format places emphasis on the primary waterfront alignment beginning at the Erie Canal to the north and moving south along the Niagara River, the Inner Harbor and then Lake Erie. Each segment is identified with numbers 1 - 13. Letters are used to identify the significant connecting linkages from adjacent communities to the primary trail, again, beginning in the north and moving south. These linkages include:

- A. The Ellicott Creek Trail in the Town of Amherst
- B. Two-Mile Creek Trail in the Town of Tonawanda
- C. The Sherwood Greenway in the Town of Tonawanda
- D. The Beaver Island Bike Path in the Town of Grand Island
- E. The West River Trail in the Town of Grand Island
- F. The Jesse Kregal Pathway in the City of Buffalo
- G. The Industrial Heritage Trail in the City of Buffalo
- H. The Buffalo River Greenway in the City of Buffalo
- I. The Lake Road Trail in the Town of Evans

5.3 PRIMARY WATERFRONT RECREATION TRAIL SEGMENTS

(See *Waterfront Trail System map at end of section for mapped routes*)

1. ERIE CANALWAY TRAIL – EMPIRE STATE TRAIL: CONSTRUCTED/PROPOSED/ IN USE

Approximately 400 miles of the Empire State Trail already exists in discrete, disconnected segments. Empire State Trail funding will be utilized to connect existing trails into a continuous statewide trail. For example, the Erie Canalway Trail between Buffalo and Albany is 80% done – Trail funds will “close the gaps”. Wherever possible, the Trail is “off -road,” utilizing historic railway routes (e.g. rail-trails) and canal tow paths along sections of the Erie and Champlain canals. For the 550 miles from Manhattan to Buffalo, 85% of the Empire State Trail will be off -road.

The Erie Canalway Trail is 360 miles of mostly flat, multi-use trail and on-road segments. The trails eastern terminus is in Albany, NY and connects to The Riverwalk in the City of Tonawanda, adjacent to Gateway Harbor. The Erie Canalway Trail and Riverwalk are co-branded from Gateway Harbor to the Buffalo and Erie County Naval Museum.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Amherst Museum
- Amherst Veterans Canal Park
- Ellicott Creek Park
- Gateway Harbor Park
- The Riverwalk

2. THE RIVERWALK/SHORELINE TRAIL: CONSTRUCTED/IN USE

Probably the most heavily used segment of the entire network, the Riverwalk is approximately 13 miles in length (from the Tonawandas to the City of Buffalo) and traverses the east shore of the Niagara River from the Erie Canal/Tonawanda Creek



Proposed Empire State Trail Map





Ohio Street Rendering - Now constructed

south to downtown Buffalo. This popular segment consists of a generous 13 foot wide pavement that is off-road the entire length with one exception along Niagara Street. This exception travels “on- road” or “on sidewalk” along Niagara Street from Ferry Street to Hampshire Avenue. This condition is proposed to be improved with the City of Buffalo Niagara Gateway project.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Niawanda Park
- Two Mile Creek Greenway
- Veterans Memorial Park
- Isle View County Park
- The Grand Island Bike Path
- The Sherwood Greenway
- Riverside Park
- Black Rock Canal Park
- Towpath Park
- The Jesse Kregal Trail
- Unity Island Park
- Broderick Park / Bird Island Pier
- The Peace Bridge And Canada’s Trailway Network
- Front Park
- Lasalle Park
- Erie Basin Marina
- Buffalo And Erie County Naval Park And Canalside

- Downtown Commercial Areas
- The Industrial Heritage Trail

3. OHIO STREET: CONSTRUCTED IN USE

This segment begins in downtown Buffalo at Canalside. The off-road multi-use trail passes behind the DLW Terminal and connects to Ohio Street at the intersection of Michigan Avenue. This segment terminates at Fuhrmann Boulevard at the entrance to Buffalo Harbor State Park.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Canalside
- River Fest Park
- Conway Park
- Nysdec Kayak Launch
- Tifft Nature Preserve
- Buffalo Harbor State Park

4. **BUFFALO HARBOR STATE PARK/FUHRMANN BLVD:** CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This segment runs along the west side of Fuhrmann Boulevard and directly adjacent to the Gallagher Beach area.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Small Boat Harbor
- Gallagher Beach

5. **TIFFT STREET CONNECTION:** CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

10' wide off-road segment along the west edge of Fuhrmann Boulevard from Gallagher Beach south to the existing pedestrian bridge over the Union Ship Canal.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Gallagher Beach
- Tifft Nature Preserve
- The Future Union Ship Canal Development
- The Tifft Street Play Fields 0.4 Miles To The East

6. **UNION SHIP CANAL TO MILESTRIP ROAD:** UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Erie County recently took ownership of a portion of the former Bethlehem Steel Site. The County is currently constructing a 12' wide trail, starting near the City of Lackawanna/ Buffalo border, running along to the former Bethlehem property. It will be located within a 50' new right-of-way west of Route 5, terminating at the new Dona Street extension.

The key linkages along this segment include:

- UNION SHIP CANAL
- THE FUTURE BETHLEHEM STEEL DEVELOPMENT
- WOODLAWN BEACH STATE PARK

7. **WOODLAWN BEACH:** CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This 0.5 mile existing asphalt multi-use trail was in approximately 2000, as part of the Milestrip/Route 5 interchange improvements. It meanders along the west side of Route 5 directly adjacent to Woodlawn Beach State Park.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Woodlawn Beach State Park

8. **HOOVER ROAD AREA:** PROPOSED

Approximate one mile segment, running from the Woodlawn trail at the north end of Hoover Road and Route 5 south to Old Big Tree Road and Route 5 (approximately 2/3 of a mile) and on-road (approximately 1/3 of a mile) trail segment.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Woodlawn Beach Area
- Hoover Beach Residential/Restaurant Area

9. **OLD BIG TREE ROAD TO OLD LAKE SHORE ROAD:** PROPOSED

This 4.5 mile segment is currently being studied by the NYSDOT for reconstruction of Route 5 between Old Big Tree Road to the north and Old Lake Shore Road to the south. The study is further analyzing three design options, all of which include an on-road bicycle accommodation, either a 14' wide shared lane or a 5' wide dedicated bike lane. An off-road trail is not possible in this segment due to the proposed travel lane designs in relation to the width of the right-of-way and the desires of the waterfront residents along the segment. Sidewalks, however, are proposed on both sides of the road.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Hamburg Town Park And Beach

10. **OLD LAKE SHORE ROAD IN HAMBURG:** PROPOSED

This segment is defined by Old Shore Road at Route 5 on the north end, along Old Lakeshore Road south to Eighteen Mile Creek, all within the Town of Hamburg. When substantial maintenance is planned, the County should consider widening segment to allow for dedicated bike lanes in this section.

11. **TOWN OF EVANS MULTI-USE PATH:** UNDER CONSTRUCTION/PROPOSED

Key linkages of this segment include:

- Phase 3B – Eighteen Mile to Sturgeon Point Road
 - Preliminary Design/Not Funded
 - On-road section/expanded shoulder proposed
- Phase 3A – Sturgeon Point to Roat Drive
 - Under Construction/Funded
 - Completion Dec, 2018 – Off-road 10' wide trail, with boardwalk in Wendt Beach
- Phase 1 – Road to Bennett Beach
 - Constructed/In Use
- Phase 2 – Bennett Beach to Evans Town Park
 - Designed/Not Funded
- Phase 4 – Evans Town Park to Lake Erie Beach
 - Proposed/Conceptually Designed
- Phase 5 – Lake Erie Beach to Evangola
 - Proposed/Conceptually Designed





Lakeshore Shoreline Trail Phase 3 Plan and photograph of constructed pedestrian bridge in Town of Evans Shoreline Trail

12. EVANGOLA STATE PARK: CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

There is an existing 1.2 mile, 8' wide off-road multi-use asphalt trail in this segment of the Regional Waterfront Trail System. New York State owns and maintains this trail as it runs along Old Lake Shore Road through Evangola State Park. There are other trails in Evangola State Park that connect this trail to the beach.

13. EVANGOLA PARK TO THE CATTARAUGUS INDIAN RESERVATION: NEITHER PROPOSED OR FUNDED

This 1.1 mile segment along Old Lake Shore Road between Evangola State Park and the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, is the final gap in the entire Waterfront Regional Trail System. To date, there is no proposal to complete the link, however, there appears to be ample space to continue the off-road pathway from Evangola State Park along the west side of Old Lake Shore Road.

The following segments represented by letters and beginning in the north and moving south, identify the significant connecting linkage from the adjacent communities to the primary waterfront trail.

A. ELLICOTT CREEK TRAILWAY: CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

Constructed mainly within the Town of Amherst, this very popular off-road multi-use trail link is approximately 5 miles long and runs from the Maple Road/North Forest trailhead, northwest along the meandering Ellicott Creek to Niagara Falls Boulevard across from Ellicott Creek Park. The Town of Amherst maintains this segment. An extension of this trail through Ellicott Creek Park in Tonawanda was completed in 2001. It terminates at the Erie Canalway Trail.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Amherst Memorial Hill Grove
- Town Of Amherst Municipal Golf Course
- Amherst Pepsi Center
- University At Buffalo, North Campus
- Route 62, Niagara Falls Boulevard
- Ellicott Creek County Park
- Erie Canalway Trail



Ellicott Creek Trailway within Ellicott Creek Park



B. TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY:
CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This trail linkage, approximately 2 miles in length, is situated along Two Mile Creek through the Town and City of Tonawanda. The south end, approximately 0.5 miles is on-road, adjacent to the Town golf course, with the balance of the trail off-road, meandering along either side of the Creek northward to the Niagara River and the Riverwalk. This Greenway is maintained by the Erie County Parks Department.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Sheridan Park/Golf Course
- The Sherwood Greenway
- Veterans Memorial Park
- Isle View County Park And Riverwalk
- Niawanda Park



Two Mile Creek Greenway

C. SHERWOOD GREENWAY:
CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This trailway linkage is 1.8 mile off- road multi-use recreational pathway that extends the Two Mile Creek Greenway to the Riverwalk at Sheridan Drive.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Sheridan Park/Golf Course
- Two Mile Creek Greenway
- The Riverwalk

D. BEAVER ISLAND BIKE PATH:
CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This off-road segment runs from the South Grand Island Bridge along South Parkway to Beaver Island State Park. The bike path is approximately 3.5 miles in length. It runs through a residential area of the island providing easy access to Beaver Island State Park. The path connects Grand Island and its parks to the Niagara Riverwalk in the Town of Tonawanda.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- The Riverwalk
- I-190
- Beaver Island State Park

E. WEST RIVER TRAIL:
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

This segment runs approximately 9 miles along the Niagara River from the existing trail at Beaver Island State Park to Buckhorn Island State Park.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Beaver Island State Park
- Nike Base Park
- Buckhorn Island State Park

F. JESSE KREGAL TRAIL:
CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This trail linkage connects Delaware Park with Niagara Street and the Riverwalk. The 10' wide asphalt off-road pathway meanders along the north bank of the Scajaquada Creek intersected by two at grade crossings on Grant and Niagara Streets.

The key linkages of this segment include:

- Delaware Park And The Surrounding Cultural Institutions
- Buffalo State College
- Grant/Amherst Community
- Riverwalk

G. INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TRAIL: PORTIONS CONSTRUCTED / IN USE

This trail linkage is unique in that it is a proposed tour route for pedestrian, bicyclist and motorists along the City streets and sidewalks in and around the mouth of the Buffalo River. The impetus behind this trail is the display and interpretation of the many existing grain elevators on Kelly Island and along South Park Avenue, Ohio Street, Smith Street and St. Clair Street. The proposed plan was developed in 1996 by the Industrial Heritage Committee, Inc., who are continually looking for potential funding sources. A small section is being funded and constructed as part of the Inner Harbor Project.

The key linkages along this segment includes:

- The Buffalo Inner Harbor
- Downtown Commercial And Industrial Areas
- The Buffalo River Greenway

H. TOWN OF EVANS BIKE PATH: PLANNED/ NOT FUNDED

This 1.3 mile stretch of pathway is planned to connect the proposed bike path along Old Lake Shore Road to the Village of Angola. The off-road pathway would run along the north side of Lake Avenue. Once completed it will be owned and maintained by the Town of Evans.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The following conclusions and recommendations are made to advance Erie County's planning of the waterfront as a regional asset:

- It is clear there is a strong desire by most waterfront municipalities to improve their existing, or plan, design and build new linkages to create a continuous waterfront trail system. An organized process and program needs to be developed and followed for optimum coordination between these municipalities and the County to facilitate completion of the trail.
 - One such avenue is coordination with the GBNRTC Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and the NYSDOT in the continued development of the Shoreline Trail.
- In order to efficiently advance a completed Waterfront Trail System, a plan should be developed to educate the public about trail systems, with emphasis on the improved quality of life issues and answers to the most common concerns raised by the public. An education program geared for disseminating factual information would off-set the misinformation being commonly held, particularly regarding safety, security, and property value concerns.
- To prepare for a public awareness process, case study research and documentation should be performed. This effort would promote factual and understandable information to the public in a consistent manner throughout the County, regardless of what municipality a trail is proposed in. Issues that need to be addressed include, but are not limited to: maintenance responsibilities/ procedures, liability concerns, property value impacts, safety/ security issues, etc.
- In order to promote trail system expansion to the public, consistent supervision and proper maintenance of the existing waterfront trails is of utmost importance. For example, there is a marked difference between the Ellicott Creek Trail and the Jesse Kregal Trail and how each is managed. Inter-municipal agreements and procedures need to be developed and followed in order to have a consistent Trail System.
- Promote and implement Shoreline Trail signage standards where ever possible.
- Where possible, through the greenspaces adjacent to the system, develop secondary connector trails to the Shoreline Trail. For example, new trails in Evangola State Park would connect the beach to the waterfront.



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INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL

DESCRIPTION

The Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail, is a 6.5 mile multi-purpose path which travels along the Niagara River in the Town of Tonawanda and the City of Tonawanda, and down through the City of Buffalo. The trail connects with many parks within Erie County and the City of Buffalo including Niawanda Park, Isle View Park, Riverside Park, Black Rock Canal Park, Tow Path Park, Unity Island, Broderick Park, LaSalle Park, and terminates near Canalside as it transitions to the South Towns of Buffalo as the Shoreline Trail. The Shoreline Trail has enormous potential to evolve as a prominent regional greenway; to capitalize on proximity and views of the water; be a catalyst for new development and housing; and form important connections and links with nearby parks and amenities. The Shoreline Trail have grown in popularity in recent years as recreation trends have shifted towards a more active lifestyle of biking, jogging, walking, etc. Better amenities, trail upgrades, and future trail expansion/connections will help transition the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk as a regional destination.

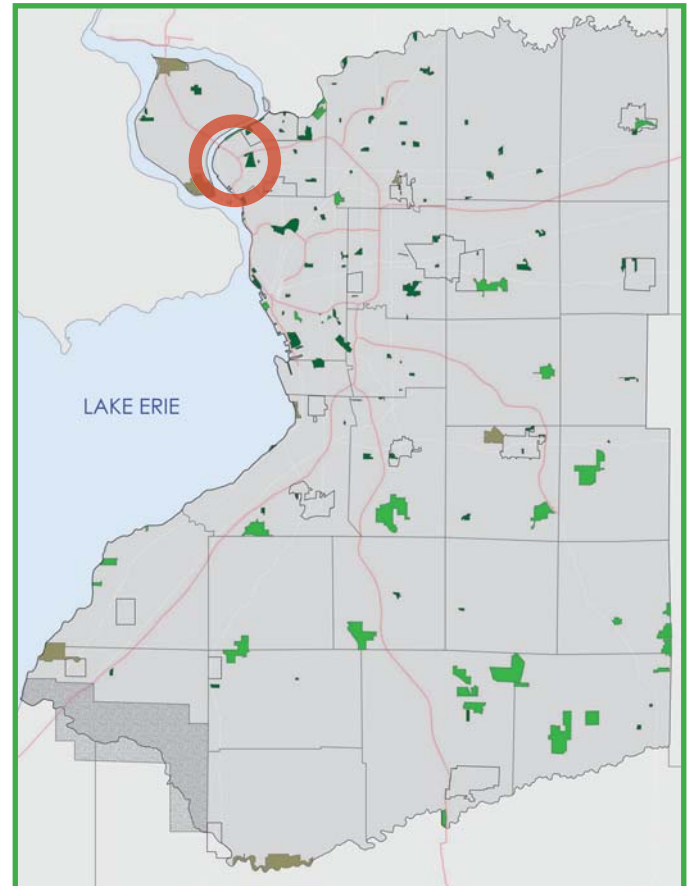
HISTORY AND CONTEXT

The Shoreline Trail system has improved public accessibility to the water and provides an almost continuous corridor. Formerly built as the Riverwalk, it is now 40 years old and, when built, traversed behind numerous active businesses with little relationship to the water's edge. However, land uses have changed in some areas of the trail, providing opportunities for the County to revisit the trail alignment and potentially improve the aesthetics of the overall trail setting and experience, with respect to aesthetic fencing, buffers, and shaded rest areas. Additionally, to preserve the waterfront for public access and ecological responsible use.

There is a growing interest by the public in low intensity, water and nature based recreation, and a number of the County's river and canal front parks are well situated to support this. The waterfront park system should be examined for additional opportunities to provide additional fishing access points, nature trails, potential safe kayak launches, and other passive recreational activities.

FUTURE PLANNING

By 2020 the Shoreline Trail is set to become part of a greater state initiative, as New York State begins construction and implementation of the Empire State Trail. This bike/walking trail will eventually connect New York City to Canada, and Albany passing through Buffalo. The 750-mile trail aims to connect bikers,



Location Map: Erie County portion of the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk starts in the City of Tonawanda and travels south until it enters the City of Buffalo.

TRAIL SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- **Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed** including trail resurfacing, possible widening, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail corridor.
- **Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor.** Introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail.
- **Identify future opportunities to create new trail segments off of River Road to the waterfront.**
 - Work with businesses on River Road, and local agencies to begin planning efforts.
 - The Cherry Farm site is one possible area where the trail can loop in towards the river and back out to River Road.

hikers, and cross-country skiers with destinations and cultural districts throughout New York State. This will be a significant economic driver for the State, and the City of Buffalo as the Shoreline Trail, from the Tonawandas south to Outer Harbor State Park, will become a significant part of the trail network.

LOCAL CONTEXT

The Shoreline Trail stretches from the Tonawandas southward to the City of Buffalo. Much of the trail within the Town of Tonawanda is within a major industrial sector, with little proximity to any residential areas. As the Shoreline Trail enters the City of Buffalo, it runs parallel with Interstate 190 and Niagara Street. Niagara Street is one of the primary commercial corridors in Downtown Buffalo, and is undergoing streetscape upgrades/enhancements within the next several years, including dedicated bike lanes. The I-190 'casts a shadow' on most of the Shoreline Trail, as it is a deterrent to community connectivity.

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Within the Tonawandas there is limited access to the water, except for the trail segment within Isle View Park. Most of the trail runs along River Road.
- Some parts of the path have trail striping, other areas are fading.
- Nice trail leads off from the trail near the Grand Island Bridge. The area near the water is poorly maintained. Benches have been removed and there is graffiti on the bike poles. There are also old pavers which need to be replaced or re-laid.
- Small path branches off after the Grand Island Bridge. Small sign alerts users of a plaque commemorating the former Erie Canal. Area could be further enhanced in the future.
- There is a small gazebo and rest area near River Grill Restaurant. Gazebo area is in need of upgrades and repair.



Local Context Plan



Overlook at Grand Island Bridge - in need of upgrades



- Small set of concrete steps goes down to the water's edge near gazebo area, this possibly was a formalized fishing access point at one time. Steps are overgrown with vegetation, and railing is in disrepair. Needs to be blocked off or repaired.
- General lack of maintenance on trail.
- Many buildings and overgrown vegetation block users from seeing the water/views.
- Trail needs more rest areas, destinations, and amenities. For inexperienced riders there is very little access to amenities/restrooms and connections to the neighborhoods.
- Seems to be a lack of safety features on the trail, such as no emergency phones.
- Lack of street trees and natural buffers separating trail from fast-moving traffic on River Road.
- Large areas of mowed lawn in certain areas of the corridor.
- Lack of bicycle parking.
- Only two public restrooms; at Isle View Park and Aqua Lane Park.



Shoreline Trail signage



Tripping hazards in the trailway



Large mowed lawn area between the path and River Road

POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS

- **GObike Buffalo** – Partner with GObike Buffalo in an effort to maintain and enhance connectivity to the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk. Use their resources and efforts to sponsor bike events on the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk section, which would be a great marketing opportunity.
- **Great Lakes Seaway Trail Inc.** – 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.
- **NYS Parks/NYS DOT/NYS Canal Corp** – Work with agencies during Empire State Trail Plan funding process and implementation. Portion of the trail could include a small facility – (such as restrooms, drinking fountains, bike repair)
- **Niagara River Greenway Commission** – Work with Niagara River Greenway to improve path/trail, gateway improvements, and expand future trail connectivity east of the trail into key neighborhoods. Combine efforts to identify sources of funding to implement new projects and improvements.
- **Private Businesses** – Identify key businesses along the corridor to provide potential volunteering efforts, aesthetic improvements, etc. to improve trail in various locations.
- **Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper** – Partner with Waterkeeper to continue shoreline efforts, habitat restoration, invasive species removal, etc.
- **Town/City of Tonawanda** – Work with the Town and City to strategize and implement future projects that could enable the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail to connect with trails/paths to the east.
- **Tonawanda Tomorrow** - Group is very interested in enhancing connectivity throughout the area; partner and collaborate to implement potential new trails/pathways in the Tonawandas, linking County Parks.

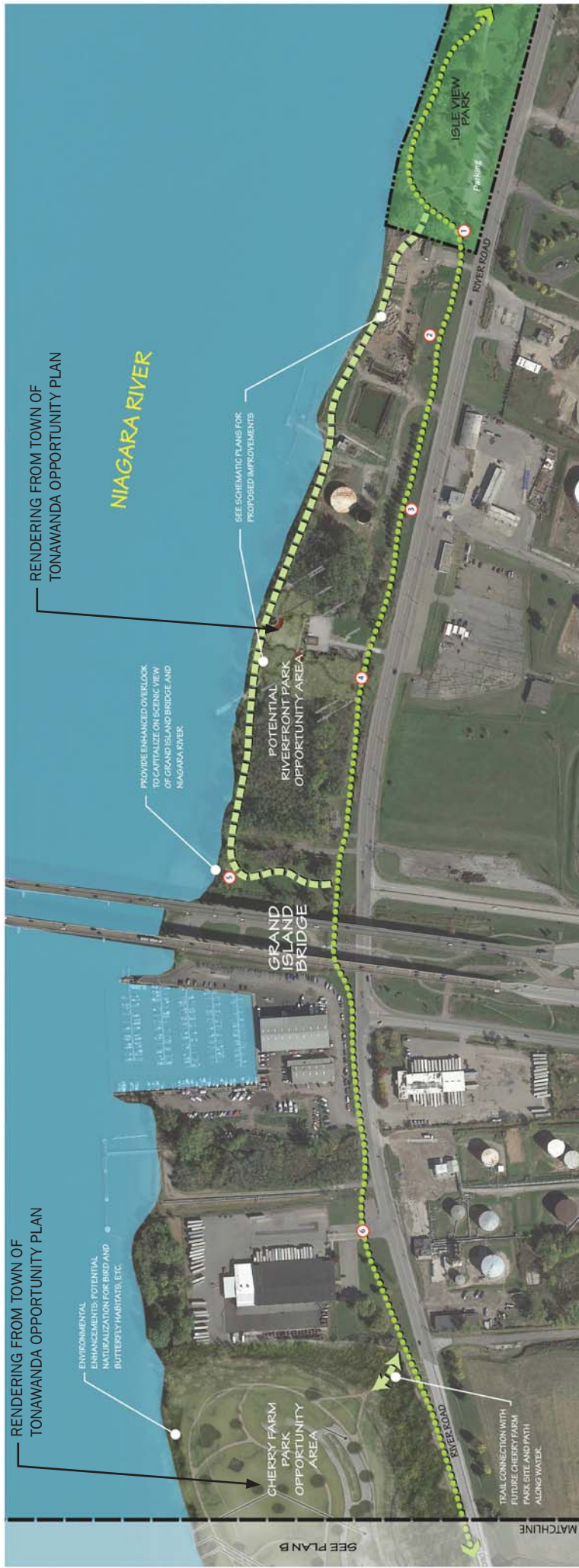




MASTER PLAN

SHORELINE TRAIL/RIVERWALK: PLAN A

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:



Recommendation: Maintain Shoreline Trail signage.



Recommendations: (A: 1.0-1.2) Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor; introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail.



Recommendations: (A: 2.1) Add plantings and street trees, especially in locations where path nearly abuts River Road. More trees and other natural design features (rain gardens, bio-retention strategies) can enable trail to function more as a linear park, rather than just a path. Work and partner with local businesses on River Road to plant trees in their property frontages.



Recommendation: Partner with Town of Tonawanda to tie Shoreline Trail into possible Riverfront Park opportunity area. Need to identify additional areas along trail to create new trail segments along the water.



Recommendation: (C: 6.0) Work with NYSDOT and Town of Tonawanda to establish and upgrade existing park/green space area at the Grand Island Bridge overlook site. Create overlook area near shoreline; repave pathway, replace or relay pavers; remove old bike parking bollards; place new site furnishing features (benches, picnic tables, bike racks, etc.).



Issue: No striping in areas that require warning to on-coming trucks and vehicles.
Recommendation: (P: 1.0) Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed including trail resurfacing, possible widening, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire Riverwalk corridor.

Legend:

- Shoreline Trail
- New Potential Trail Connections





MASTER PLAN

SHORELINE TRAIL/RIVERWALK: PLAN B

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:



Recommendations: (A: 2.1) Add plantings and street trees, especially in locations where path nearly abuts River Road. Work and partner with local businesses on River Road to plant trees in their property frontages.



Recommendation: (P: 7.0) Improve connection between Riverwalk and former Erie Canal site. Improve visibility of the destination. Enhance area with additional interpretive signage and connections out to Cherry farm site.



Recommendation: (C: 1.0) Partner with Town of Tonawanda to tie Riverwalk into possible Cherry Farm and Niagara Riverworld opportunity areas. Need to identify additional areas along Riverwalk to create new trail segments along the water.



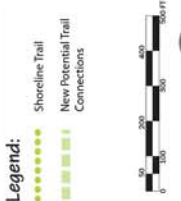
Recommendation: (A: 1.0-1.2) Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor; introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail. Identify areas for rain gardens.



Recommendation: (A: 2.0) Improve the tree health throughout the corridor. Several dead trees were observed specifically in front of Niagara River World, and Mid River Marina.



Recommendation: (C: 8.0) Improve or provide alternative trail alignment along segment located in front of Tonawanda Coke site. Adjacent site to the trail is currently vacant and could accommodate a new path alignment with potential elevated boardwalk over wetland area.





MASTER PLAN

SHORELINE TRAIL/RIVERWALK: PLAN C

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:



Recommendation: (P: 2.0) Maintain and enhance existing drinking fountain area in front of Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) property. Replenish stone pad or provide hardscaped area around fountain with permeable pavers. Provide possible bench/rest area



Recommendation: (A: 1.0-1.2) Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor; Introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail. Identify areas for rain gardens.



Recommendation: (P: 4.0) Work with Mid River Marina to improve property frontage near River Road. Provide fencing and landscaping to improve current appearance near trail. Install tree plantings and possible shrubs in select areas.



Issue: Barbed wire fence and minimal landscape treatment detracts from appeal of Riverwalk corridor.
Recommendation: (P: 5.0) Work with owners of former Huntley property to provide additional landscaping and screening techniques.



Issue: Uneven areas of pavement are potential tripping hazards.
Recommendation: (P: 1.0) Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed including trail resurfacing, possible widening, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire Riverwalk corridor.



Recommendation: (P: 5.0) Work with property owners of former Huntley property to remove or improve unsightly barbed wire fence which abuts Riverwalk trail. Possibly remove fence and/or move fence back to provide possible landscape enhancements and tree plantings to beautify this part of the corridor. Provide decorative fencing in lieu of the barbed wire fencing that is there currently.

Legend:

- Shoreline Trail
- New Potential Trail Connections





MASTER PLAN

SHORELINE TRAIL/RIVERWALK: PLAN D

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:



Recommendation: (C: 2.0) Improve Shoreline Trail parking area at the foot of Sheridan Drive. Define boundaries, repave lot, and provide landscape enhancements. Provide pedestrian connection to trail.



Recommendation: (P: 6.0) Partner with Town of Tonawanda to enhance Aqua Lane Park along the Riverwalk. Park is neglected, and needs upgraded playground equipment, site furnishings, and overall maintenance improvements. Aqua Lane Park could be a destination/rest stop along the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk. Create a more deliberate trail connection into Aqua Lane Park.



Recommendation: (P: 3.0) Partner with River Grill and other businesses on Aqua Lane to enhance and brighten this portion of the Riverwalk/Shoreline Trail as it goes behind the I-190. Provide tree plantings and landscaping treatment. Provide possible artwork along path.



Recommendation: (C: 3.0) Maintain and enhance small gazebo and surrounding landscape near River Grill Restaurant. Gazebo structure should be expanded in the near future; there is significant rust and graffiti on the structure, and is in overall poor condition. Existing bicycle rack is also seeing significant rust and may need replacing.



Recommendation: (A: 1.0-1.2) Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor; introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail. Identify areas for rain gardens.



Recommendation: (C: 5.0) Use Greenway/NYPA funding to provide overlook areas within the segment of the Riverwalk from the Riverside Grill down to Riverside Park. Overlook areas can be similar to those featured at Isle View Park.

Legend:

- Shoreline Trail
- New Potential Trail Connections



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

Environment:

- **(A: 2.0) Improve the tree health throughout the corridor.**
 - Several dead trees were observed specifically in front of Niagara River World, and Mid River Marina.
 - 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 a tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff, and volunteer group plantings.
 - Develop an annual tree planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural image of the park.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House/Forestry
- **(A: 1.0-1.2) Reduce lawn mowing to provide a more natural setting along the River Road industrial corridor; Introduce possible meadows and low maintenance planting areas to provide buffers along the trail.**
 - Include signage like “Regeneration Area”, or “No-Mow Zone” to engage park users to learn about the landscape management techniques;
 - Identify areas for rain gardens which can treat and stop run-off from entering the Niagara River.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **(P: 9.0) 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



Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail (adjacent to Cherry Farm site)



Large area of mowed lawn

- **(P: 10.0) 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: 2.1) Add plantings and street trees, especially in locations where path nearly abuts River Road.**
 - Natural buffers and new plantings can help transition the Riverwalk as a 'park-like' trail amenity. More trees and other natural design features (rain gardens, bio-retention strategies) can enable trail to function more as a linear park.
 - Work and partner with local businesses on River Road to plant trees and/or planting areas in their property frontages.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Private businesses



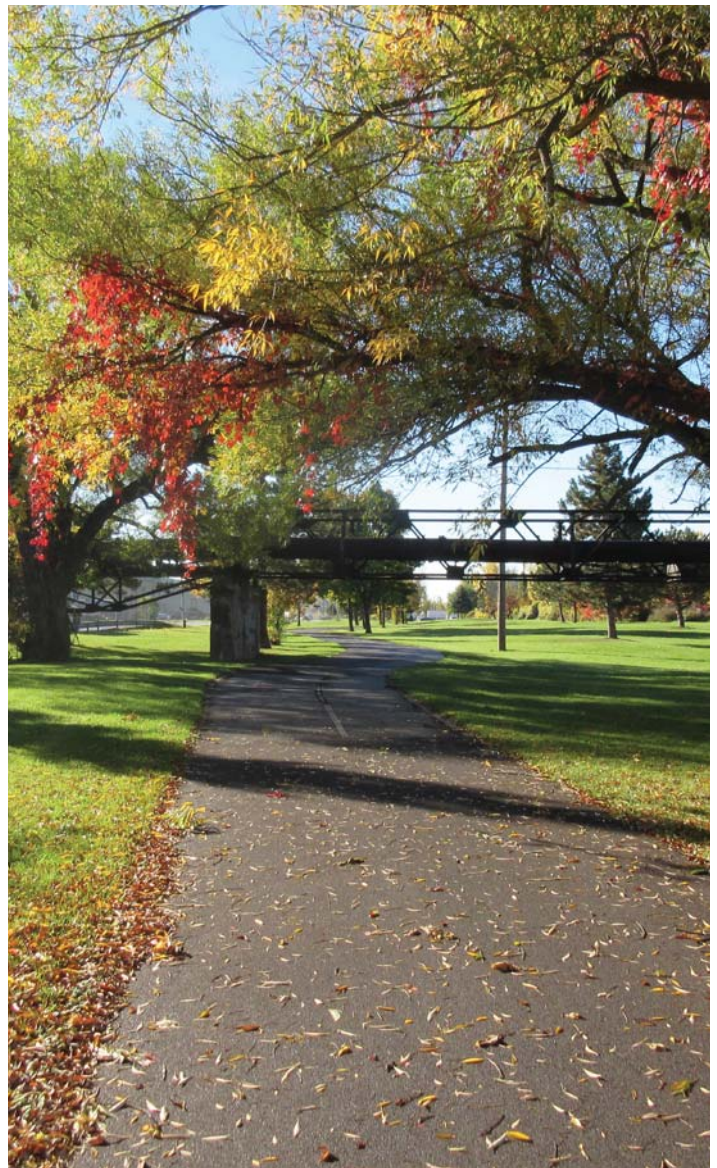
Provide additional areas access/view the water





Pathway improvements like restriping is needed within the corridor

- **Encourage and improve east-west neighborhood connections.** Buffalo's Bicycle Network Master Plan as well as the Town of Tonawanda's Connectivity Plan identify these connections as vital to the growth and expansion of the Shoreline Trail as a destination within the regional fabric of Erie County and Western New York. Users require multiple safe entrances and connections to access the path throughout the system.
 - This will in turn be advantageous to adjoining neighborhoods as it provides safe routes for people on foot/bikes to explore different communities.
 - These can be new trailhead locations which include possible 'gateway signage', small parking areas, and other possible additional features.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Town and City of Tonawanda**



Good pathway conditions in this area

Connectivity:

- **(C: 1.0) Identify future opportunities to create new trail segments off of River Road to the waterfront.** Loops along the water would give users variation and new destinations to take advantage of.
 - Work with businesses on River Road, and local agencies to begin planning efforts. Much of the Riverwalk in Tonawanda is away from the River.
 - The Cherry Farm site is one possible area where the trail can loop in towards the River and back out to River Road.
 - Partner with Town of Tonawanda to see how Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail can tie into future opportunity areas identified by the Town.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: Greenway funding, Private businesses**

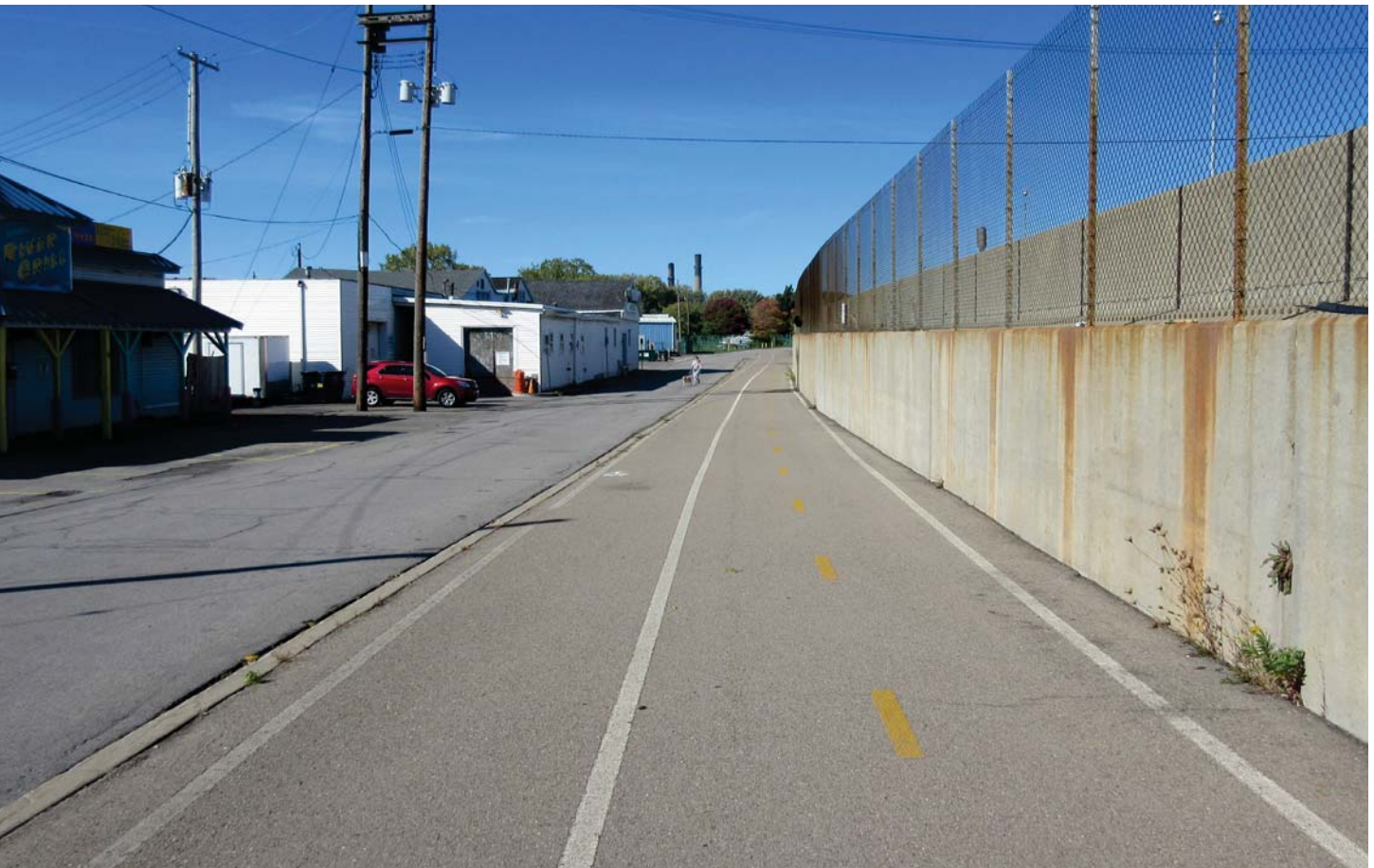
- **Partner with Town of Tonawanda to tie Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail into possible Riverfront Park opportunity area.** Need to identify additional areas along trail to create new trail segments along the water.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Town of Tonawanda
- **Within the City of Buffalo portion of the Shoreline Trail/ Riverwalk it is recommended that the Trail become a more integral part of Niagara Street with the push for the Niagara Street Improvement Plans.** Include Shoreline/Riverwalk trail signage to increase awareness and usability of trail on Niagara Street.
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: City of Buffalo



Drinking fountain in front of Erie County Water Authority property

Trail/Maintenance:

- **(P: 1.0) Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed** including trail resurfacing, possible widening, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire Riverwalk corridor.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: Greenway funding, Town of Tonawanda, In-House
- **(C: 2.0) Improve Shoreline Trail parking area at the foot of Sheridan Drive.**
 - Define boundaries, repave lot, and provide landscape enhancements.
 - Provide pedestrian connection to trail.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: In-House



Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail as it heads behind the I-190 becomes a sea of asphalt and concrete



- **(C: 3.0) Maintain and enhance small gazebo and surrounding landscape near River Grill Restaurant.**
 - Gazebo structure should be expanded in the near future; there is significant rust and graffiti on the structure, and is in overall poor condition.
 - Existing bicycle rack is also seeing significant rust and may need replacing.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House, Private Businesses**
- **(P: 2.0) Maintain and enhance existing drinking fountain area in front of Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) property.**
 - Replenish stone pad or provide hardscaped area around fountain with permeable pavers.
 - Provide possible bench/rest area
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House/ECWA**
- **(P: 3.0) Partner with River Grill and other businesses on Aqua Lane to enhance and brighten this portion of the Riverwalk section as it goes behind the I-190.**
 - Provide tree plantings and landscaping treatment
 - Provide possible artwork along path.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Private Businesses/In-House**
- **(P: 4.0) Work with Mid River Marina to improve property frontage near River Road.**
 - Provide fencing and landscaping to improve current appearance near trail.
 - Install tree plantings and possible shrubs in select areas.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Mid River Marina**



Viewing area south of River Grill - Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail needs more areas like this

- **(P: 5.0) Work with property owners of former Huntley property to remove or improve unsightly barbed wire fence abutting Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail.**
 - Provide landscape screening techniques;
 - Possibly remove fence and/or move fence back to provide possible landscape enhancements and tree plantings to beautify this part of the corridor;
 - Provide decorative fencing in lieu of the barbed wire fencing that is there currently.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Huntley/NRG Energy Group**
 - **(P: 6.0) Partner with Town of Tonawanda to enhance Aqua Lane Park along the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail.** Park is neglected, and needs upgraded playground equipment, site furnishings, and overall maintenance improvements. Aqua Lane Park could be a destination/rest stop along the trail.
 - Create a more deliberate trail connection from Riverwalk path into Aqua Lane Park.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Town of Tonawanda**
 - **(C: 4.0) Strategize basic site furnishings along the trail including benches, bicycle racks, lights, garbage receptacles, etc.**
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Greenway funding**
- NYPA/Greenway Improvements:**
- **Reach out to State and Federal agencies regarding possible grants and funds to revitalize many areas of the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail in connection to the construction and implementation of the Empire State Trail** (i.e. basic trail improvements; resurfacing, new striping, plantings, additional signage, additional amenities, bicycle parking, possible trail realignment, trail easements).
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: NYS Parks, NYS DOT, NYS Canal Corp**
 - **(P: 7.0) Improve connection between Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail and former Erie Canal site.** Improve visibility of the destination. Enhance area with additional interpretive signage and connections out to Cherry Farm site.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Town of Tonawanda/Greenway funding**



Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail before it enters the City of Buffalo

- **(C: 5.0) Use Greenway/NYPA funding to provide overlook areas** within the segment of the Riverwalk section from the Riverside Grill down to Riverside Park.
 - Overlook areas can be similar to those featured at Isle View Park.
 - Selective clearing of overgrown plant material in this area should be prioritized to maintain views of the water.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Greenway funding**
- **(C: 6.0) Work with NYSDOT and Town of Tonawanda to establish and upgrade existing park/green space area at the Grand Island Bridge lookout site.** Create overlook area near shoreline; repave pathway, replace or relay pavers; remove old bike parking bollards; place new site furnishing features (benches, picnic tables, bike racks, etc.)
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Greenway funding**
- **(P: 8.0) Identify possible partnership opportunity to design and build small facility within the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail system** to include restrooms, possible concessions (vending machines), basic bicycle maintenance tools/equipment, and drinking fountain.
 - Small restroom is located at Aqua Lane Park in Tonawanda. Possibly partner with the Town and other stakeholders to enhance and upgrade building to include additional amenities, etc. if separate facility is less feasible.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Town of Tonawanda, Greenway funding**



Walkway to outfall should be fenced off or repaired for safe access

Signage:

- **(C: 7.0) Identify partnerships and funding opportunities to design and construct interpretive signage along path.**
 - Could include historical accounts of the industrial past of the Tonawandas along River Road, history and significance of the Erie Canal, history and ecological facts about the Niagara River, etc.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Greenway funding, Great Lakes Seaway Trail Inc.**

Safety:

- **(A: 3.0) Guardrails or trail realignment should be considered within areas of the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail without proper pedestrian buffers.**
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House/Highways**
- **(A: 4.0) Fence off walkway to outfall.**
 - Or possibly repair or improve area to provide a safe landing and walkway.
 - Remove overgrown vegetation which is penetrating into the stairwell.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **(C: 8.0) Improve or provide alternative trail alignment along segment located in front of Tonawanda Coke site (3875 River Road).** This portion of the trail currently has little to no buffer from fast traffic on River Road.
 - Install possible guardrail along this trail segment.
 - Site adjacent to the trail is currently vacant and could accommodate a new path alignment. Engage consultant for design and feasibility. Install possible elevated boardwalk over wetland areas.
 - Trail could extend into Tonawanda Coke Site and then tie back into trail at Erie County Water Authority property.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Consultant/Contractor**



Shoreline Trail signage before reaching the Grand Island Bridge

RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.1	Establish “Low Mow Zones” along River Road corridor 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
A	1.2	Establish “Low Mow Zones” along River Road corridor to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Identify areas for rain gardens which can treat and stop run-off from entering the Niagara River.	High	1-2 Years	In-House
A	2.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the River Road corridor. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.	Develop an annual tree planting program. 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
C	1.0	Identify future opportunities to create new trail segments off of River Road to the waterfront.	Work with businesses on River Road, and local agencies to begin planning efforts. Much of the Shoreline Trail/ Riverwalk in Tonawanda is away from the River.	High	3-5 Years	Project Specific
P	1.0	Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed	Provide trail resurfacing, possible widening, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking throughout entire Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail corridor. Work with Niagara River Greenway Commission	High	1-2 Years	\$120,000
P	9.0	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
P	10.0	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



RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	2.1	Add plantings and street trees, especially in locations where path nearly abuts River Road.	Natural buffers and new plantings can help transition the Riverwalk section as a 'park-like' trail amenity. More trees and other natural design features (rain gardens, bio-retention strategies) can enable trail to function more as a linear park.	Medium	1-2 Years	\$15,000
A	3.0	Guardrails or trail realignment should be considered within areas of the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail without proper pedestrian buffers.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House, Highway
A	4.0	Fence off walkway to outfall.	Or possibly repair or improve area to provide a safe landing and walkway. Remove overgrown vegetation which is penetrating into the stairwell.	Medium	1-2 Years	In-House
C	2.0	Improve Shoreline Trail parking area at the foot of Sheridan Drive.	Define boundaries, repave lot, and provide landscape enhancements. Provide pedestrian connection to trail.	Medium	1-2 Years	\$25,500
C	3.0	Maintain and enhance small gazebo and surrounding landscape near River Grill Restaurant.	Gazebo structure should be expanded in the near future;	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
P	2.0	Maintain and enhance existing drinking fountain area in front of Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) property.	Replenish stone pad or pave area in front of fountain. Provide possible bench/rest area. Coordinate with ECWA	Medium	1-2 Years	\$2,500
P	3.0	Partner with River Grill and other businesses on Aqua Lane to enhance and brighten this portion of the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail as it goes behind the I-190.	Provide tree plantings and landscaping treatment. Provide possible artwork along path. Coordinate with private businesses	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,000
A	1.0	Establish "Low Mow Zones" along River Road corridor 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

RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
C	4.0	Strategize basic site furnishings along the trail including benches, bicycle racks, lights, garbage receptacles, etc.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	3-5 Years	\$20,000
C	5.0	Provide overlook areas within the segment of the Riverwalk section from the Riverside Grill down to Riverside Park.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,000
C	6.0	Establish and upgrade existing park/green space area at the Grand Island Bridge lookout site. Create overlook area near shoreline; repave pathway, replace or relay pavers; remove old bike parking bollards; place new site furnishing features (benches, picnic tables, bike racks, etc.)	Work with NYSDOT and Town of Tonawanda	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,000
C	7.0	Provide interpretive signage along the corridor	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
C	8.0	Improve or provide alternative trail alignment along segment located in front of Tonawanda Coke site (3875 River Road).	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$60,000
P	4.0	Work with Mid River Marina to improve property frontage near River Road.	Provide fencing and landscaping to improve current appearance near trail. Install tree planting and possible shrubs in select areas. Coordinate with Mid River Marina	Low	3-5 Years	\$10,000
P	5.0	Work with property owners of former Huntley property to remove or improve unsightly barbed wire fence abutting Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk trail.	Provide landscape screening techniques; Possibly remove fence and/or move fence back to provide possible landscape enhancements and tree plantings to beautify this part of the corridor; Work with Huntley/NRG Group	Low	6-10 Years	\$15,000

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RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	6.0	Partner with Town of Tonawanda to enhance Aqua Lane Park along the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail.	Park is neglected, and needs upgraded playground equipment, site furnishings, and overall maintenance improvements. Aqua Lane Park could be a destination/rest stop along the Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk.	Low	6-10 Years	\$20,000
P	7.0	Improve connection between Riverwalk section and former Erie Canal site.	Improve visibility of the destination. Enhance area with additional interpretive signage and connections out to Cherry Farm site.	Low	6-10 Years	\$18,000
P	8.0	Design and build small facility within Riverwalk trail system to include restrooms, possible concessions (vending machines), basic bicycle maintenance tools/equipment, and drinking fountain.	Coordinate with Niagara River Greenway and Town of Tonawanda	Low	6-10 Years	\$350,000

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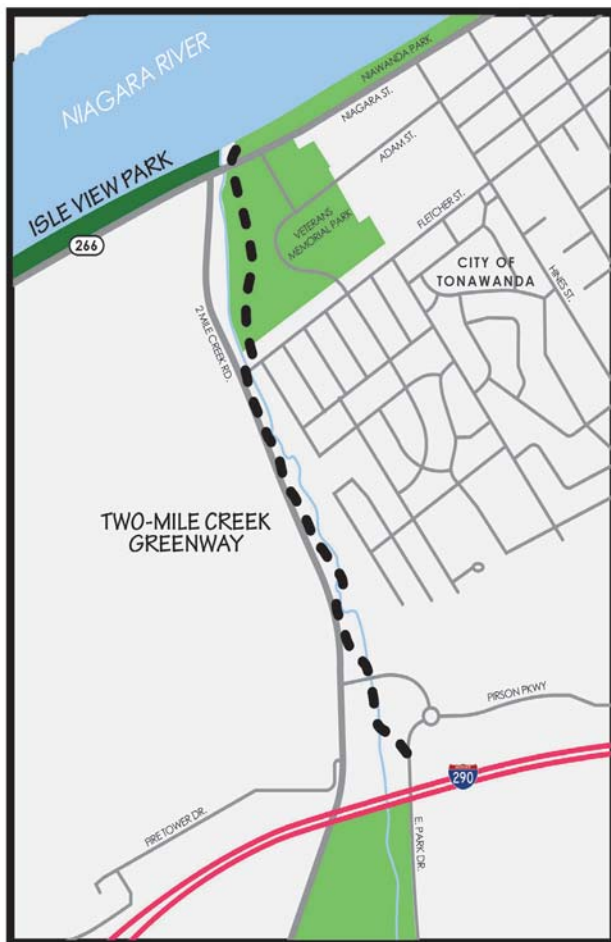
TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY

DESCRIPTION

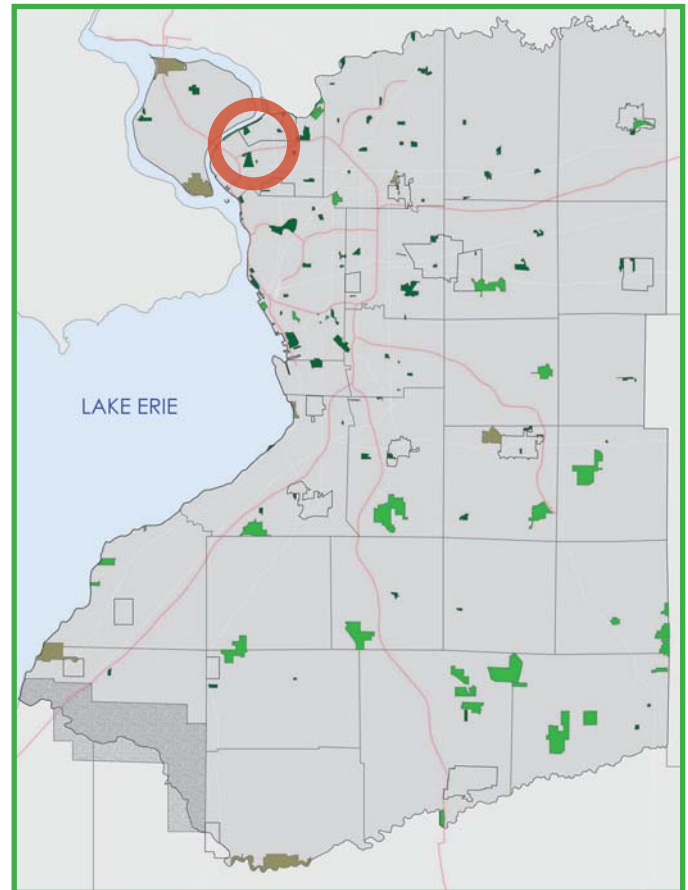
Two Mile Creek Greenway is a paved asphalt pathway, approximately 2 miles in length, within the City and Town of Tonawanda. The north/south trail can be accessed at the northern end from Isle View and Niawanda Park via the Shoreline Trail, as it travels south along Twomile Creek through Veterans Memorial Park and parallel to Two Mile Creek Road. The southern terminus of the trail ends at East Park Drive just north of the I-290. The trail connects to residential communities to the east at Fletcher Street and Brookside Terrace West. Contextually, there are industries and factories to the west of the trail, and Sheridan Park to the south of the trail.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Nearby trails and parks include the Shoreline Trail, Sherwood Greenway, Sheridan Park/Golf Course, Veterans Memorial Park, Niawanda Park and Isle View Park.



Local Context Map



Park Location Map: Two-Mile Creek Greenway is located in the City and Town of Tonawanda.

TRAIL SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- **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.
- **Monitor and remove invasive species around creek edge.**
- **Establish meadows and low mow zones along trail corridor.** Identify areas for rain gardens which can filter run-off before entering Twomile Creek.



MASTER PLAN TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Trail has a lower use volume than the Riverwalk, so has less wear and tear.
- There is no trail signage; way-finding , etc.
- No apparent/clear connection from southern terminus of trail to Sheridan Park and Sherwood Greenway Trail.

POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS

- **GObike Buffalo** – Partner with GObike Buffalo in an effort to maintain and enhance connectivity to the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail and other local/regional trails.
- **Niagara River Greenway Commission** – Work with Niagara River Greenway to improve path/trail, gateway improvements, and expand future trail connectivity east of the trail into key neighborhoods. Combine efforts to identify sources of funding to implement new projects and improvements.
- **Praxair, Inc. and Elbers Landscape Service** - Work with companies to continue maintenance partnership of southern section of trail. Engage in plans to add additional landscape enhancements and plantings.
- **Town/City of Tonawanda** – Work with the Town and City to strategize and implement future projects.
- **Tonawanda Tomorrow** - Group is very interested in enhancing connectivity throughout the area, partner and collaborate to implement potential new trails/pathways in the Tonawandas linking County Parks.

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: 2.0) 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.
 - Refer to native plant policy and updated donation policy on proper guidance for planting and care for memorial trees.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House/Forestry**
- **(A: 1.0-1.2) Establish meadows and low mow zones along trail corridor.**
 - Identify areas for rain gardens which can filter run-off before entering Twomile Creek.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **(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**

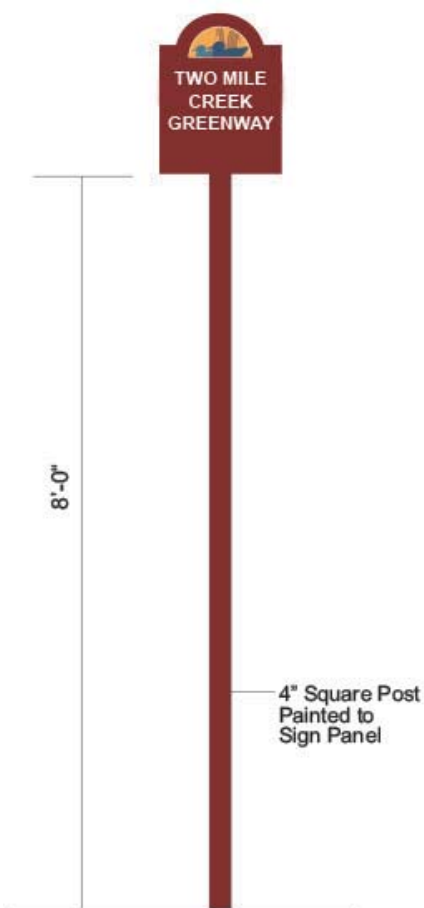


Typical trailway conditions

- **Monitor and remove invasive species around creek edge.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: WNY Prism
- **(A: 3.0) Install kiosk with trail map and sign at small parking area off of East Park Drive.**
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: In-House
- **(P: 1.0) Partner with Praxair on the implementation of additional trails and connections being constructed at the southern end of the trail, north of Pirson Parkway.**
 - Create possible trailhead off of Brookside Terrace.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Praxair/In-House
- **(A: 4.0) Improve and maintain small parking areas off of Two Mile Creek Road near tree service company. Provide adequate stone surface to ensure safe parking area.**
 - Install signage at the front of lot off of Two Mile Creek Road.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: In-House



Portion of trail maintained by Praxair and Elbers Landscape



Sign example: modified from Niagara River Greenway Manual



Parking area is in need of improvements



- **(C: 1.0) Provide Two Mile Creek Greenway branding signage along the trail similar to the Shoreline Trail signage. Place at several locations along the trail.**
 - Engage consultant to design sign;
 - Could be on-site pole mount with trail name and logo.
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: In-House
- **(P: 2.0) Partner with Town of Tonawanda and Riverview Solar Technology Park on connecting Two Mile Creek Greenway to a potential trail along an abandoned rail corridor west of Two Mile Creek Road.**
 - Install pedestrian crossing and warning signs on Two Mile Creek Road
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: Town of Tonawanda
- **Identify future opportunities to create connections with local trails like the Sherwood Greenway.**
 - Look at a more deliberate connection over I-290 down through Sheridan Park to connect with Sherwood Greenway Trail.
 - Install way-finding signage alerting users where the Sherwood Greenway Trail is.
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: Greenway funding, Private businesses



Parking area at the southern terminus of the trail



New trail spur connection to Two Mile Creek Greenway

- **(P: 3.0) Basic trail/pathway improvements will be needed in the long-term** including trail resurfacing, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Consultant, Town/City of Tonawanda
- **(C: 2.0) Provide possible overlooks/access points to Twomile Creek.**
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- **(C: 3.0) Implement additional basic site furnishings along the trail** including benches, bicycle racks, lights, garbage receptacles, etc.
 - Priority: Low
 - Partner: Greenway funding, Town/City of Tonawanda



Bench and memorial/donated trees along the trail



Bench and memorial/donated trees along the trail



TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.1	Establish “Low Mow Zones” along River Road corridor 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
A	1.2	Establish “Low Mow Zones” along River Road corridor to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Identify areas for rain gardens which can treat and stop run-off from entering Twomile Creek	High	1-2 Years	In-House
A	2.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the River Road corridor. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.	Develop an annual tree planting program. 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
P	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
A	3.0	Provide kiosk with large trail map at East Park Drive trailhead	Coordination between Parks and Highways to develop and produce directional sign panels, trail maps and markers	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	4.0	Improve and maintain small parking areas off of Two Mile Creek Road near Al's Tree Service. Provide adequate stone surface to ensure safe parking area.	Install signage at the front of lot off of Two Mile Creek Road, coordinate with Parks and Highways.	Medium	1-2 Years	\$15,000

KEY:

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TWO MILE CREEK GREENWAY: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	1.0	Implement additional trails and connections from constructed trails at the southern end, north of Pirson Parkway. Create possible trailhead off of Brookside Terrace.	Partner with Praxair	Medium	3-5 Years	\$10,000
P	3.0	Basic trail/pathway improvements are needed in the long-term.	Provide trail resurfacing, mileage markers, restriping, and bicycle parking. Work with Niagara River Greenway Commission, City/Town of Tonawanda	Medium	3-5 Years	\$25,000
A	1.0	Establish "Low Mow Zones" along River Road corridor 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
C	1.0	Provide Two Mile Creek Greenway branding signage along the trail similar to the Shoreline Trail signage. Place at several locations along the trail.	Engage consultant to design sign; Could be on-site pole mount with trail name and logo.	Low	3-5 Years	\$15,000
C	2.0	Provide possible overlooks/ access points to Twomile Creek.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
C	3.0	Implement basic site furnishings along the trail including benches, bicycle racks, lights, garbage receptacles, etc.	Engage contractor to install improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
P	2.0	Connect Two Mile Creek Greenway to a potential trail along an abandoned rail corridor west of Two Mile Creek Road.	Partner with Town of Tonawanda and Riverview Solar Technology Park	Low	6-10 Years	\$6,000

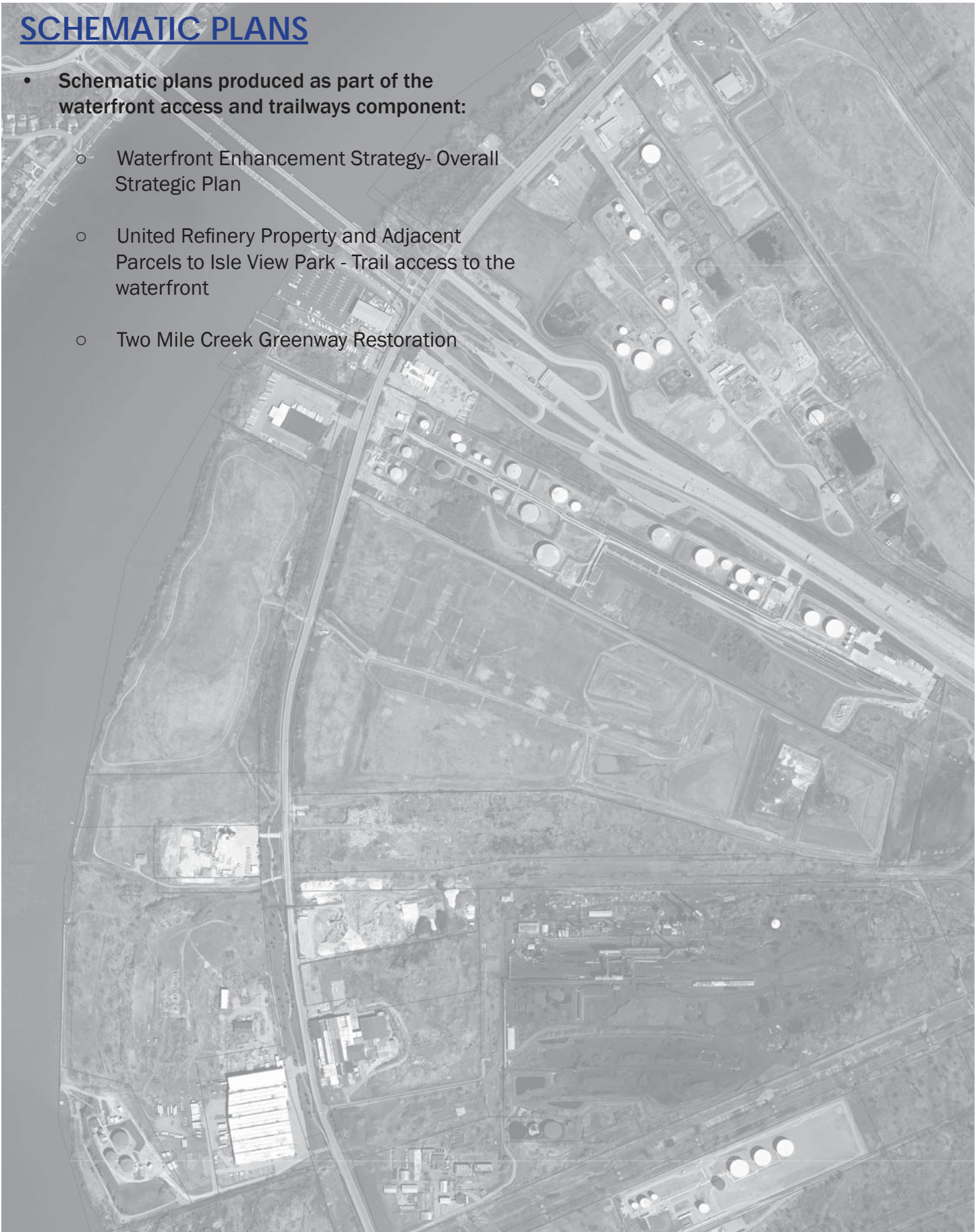


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SCHEMATIC PLANS

- Schematic plans produced as part of the waterfront access and railways component:
 - Waterfront Enhancement Strategy- Overall Strategic Plan
 - United Refinery Property and Adjacent Parcels to Isle View Park - Trail access to the waterfront
 - Two Mile Creek Greenway Restoration





SCHEMATIC PLAN

RIVERWALK SECTION OF THE SHORELINE TRAIL - WATERFRONT CONNECTIONS

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE





Erie County

Two Mile Creek Greenway Restoration



Corporation of Engineers
1000 West 10th Street
Buffalo, NY 14201
P 716.886.0700 F 716.886.0625
www.wendel-engineers.com



Professional Engineer
No. 10000
Civil Engineering
State of New York
Expiration Date 12/31/2017

NO.	REVISION	DATE
1	ISSUED FOR PERMIT	12/13/2017

SITE IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
North Arrow

L201



ALTERNATE - SITE IMPROVEMENT NOTES

1. PARKING LOT PAVING, RE 5, L501
2. ACCESSIBLE PARKING SIGN, RE 6, L501
3. NO PARKING ANYTIME SIGN, RE 6, L501
4. ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE PAINTED SYMBOL, COLOR BLUE, RE 6, L501
5. 4" WIDE PAVEMENT MARKING, 45-DEGREES TO STALL, 24" O.C. COLOR BLUE
6. TIMBER GUARDRAIL, RE 7, L501
7. STEEL BOLLARD FILLED WITH CONCRETE, RE 6, L501

SITE IMPROVEMENT NOTES

1. 12-FOOT WIDE BIKEWAY TRAIL, RE 1, L501
2. 24" SQ. CATCH BASIN, RE 2, L501
3. 12" RCP STORM PIPE, 40' L, @ 0.5% SLOPE, RE 3, L501
4. END SECTION AND RIP RAP, RE 4, L501

GENERAL NOTES:

1. ALL WORK SHALL COMPLY WITH THE MOST RECENT VERSION OF THE NYS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN MANUAL, LATEST EDITION, AND ANY OTHER APPLICABLE REGULATIONS.
2. ALL DISTURBED AREAS RESULTING FROM CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES NOT NOTED TO BE PAVED SHALL RECEIVE 4" MINIMUM DEPTH TOPSOIL, FINE GRADE, SEED AND MULCH.

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