



# WATERFRONT PARKS

## **3.0 WATERFRONT PARKS**

**3.1 Isle View Park**

**3.2 Black Rock Canal Park**

**3.3 Tow Path Park**

**3.4 Wendt Beach Park**

**3.5 Bennett Beach Park**



## ISLE VIEW PARK

### DESCRIPTION

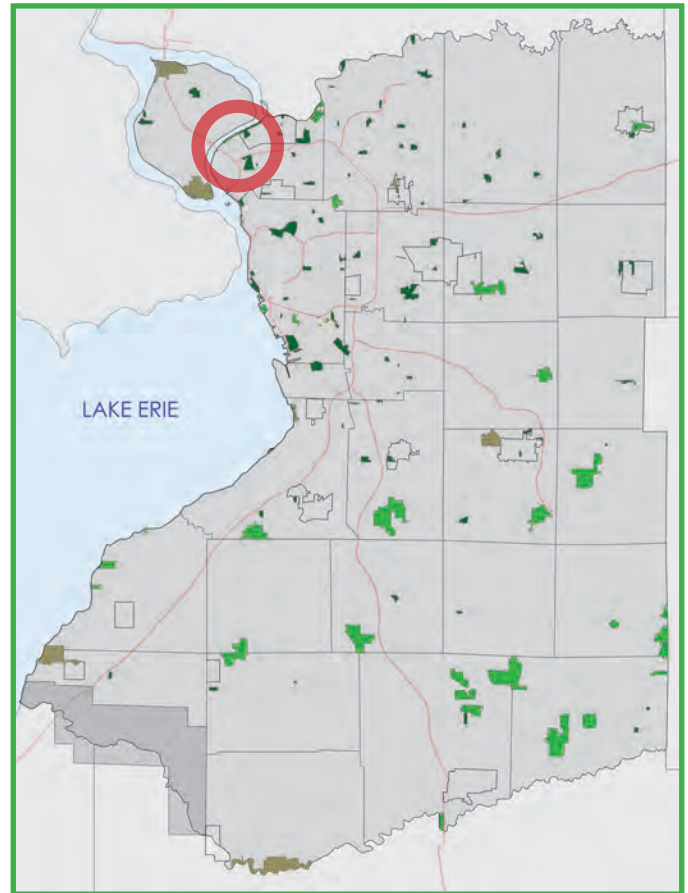
Isle View Park is a magnet for people on a warm summer evening. This 39-acre linear County-owned park in the Town of Tonawanda, is part of the Shoreline Trail System/Riverwalk and heavily used by bikers, joggers, walkers, roller-bladers and many others. A pedestrian bridge connects Isle View Park to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

### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

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

### LOCAL CONTEXT

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



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



Sunset over the Niagara River

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

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





Local context map

### RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

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

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

### CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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



Overlook area: Restore/repair pavement



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



Section of asphalt path missing





# MASTER PLAN ISLE VIEW PARK

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Specific Action Items - Ex. (A-J)

- ① (A: 3.0, C: 2.0-3.0) Replace and repair the many dilapidated picnic tables and benches scattered throughout the park. Place new benches in areas where they have been previously removed (if the concrete pad remains)
- ② (C: 9.0) Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.
- ③ (A: 4.0) Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area.
- ④ (C: 10.0) Small overlook areas off of trail are in need of general repairs and updating: leveling of pavers, ramps/access improvements, railing upgrades, interpretive signage opportunities, etc.
- ⑤ (A: 5.0) Maintain and enhance parking islands: Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens) Replace any damaged curbing
- ⑥ (C: 11.0) Place additional new playground equipment towards south end of park. Equipment can be placed closer to parking area making it easier for parents with small children to access play area.
- ⑦ (A: 6.0) Cut back, remove, and maintain overgrown vegetation, especially identified invasive species near shoreline edge.
- ⑧ (C: 7.0) Replace lighting fixtures at stone columns at main entrance of park. Restore and repaint columns as necessary.
- ⑨ (P: 3.0) Long term improvements could include providing additional (signature) overlooks: Overlooks could include donor pavement areas, viewing binoculars, and interpretive signage.
- ⑩ (P: 1.0) Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and repair buildings at main entrance as necessary.
- ⑪ (C: 8.0) Maintain and enhance paved Shoreline (Riverwalk) Trail. Make necessary improvements at all times to ensure the safety of all types of trail users.

### MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

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

### Legend:

- Potential Major and Minor Park Gateway Locations
- Playground
- Existing Trails
- Overlooks
- Destination
- Natural Features
- Park Boundary



## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

C - Capital project

### Structures:

- **(P: 1.0)** Upgrade existing park facilities; renovate and repair buildings at main entrance as necessary.
  - Restore Isle View Riverdogs shelter.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 7.0)** Replace lighting fixtures on stone columns at main entrance of park. Restore and repoint columns as necessary.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Greenway funding/In-House



Isle View Riverdogs: Restore and revert to shelter



Parks office and maintenance building



**Maintenance/Safety:**

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



View towards the Tribute Garden



Shoreline Trail/Riverwalk within the park





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

- **Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible. (2003 Master Plan)**
  - New renovations like improvements to overlooks and decks should be ADA accessible with railings and ramps where necessary.
    - Priority: Medium
    - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 9.0) Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.**
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Contractor
- **(A: 4.0) Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area.**
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Contractor/In-House
- **(C: 10.0) Small overlook areas off of trail are in need of general repairs and updating; leveling of pavers, ramps/ access improvements, railing upgrades, interpretive signage opportunities, etc.**
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Greenway funding/Contractor



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



- **(P: 3.0) Long term improvements could include providing additional (signature) overlooks;**
    - Overlooks could include 'donor' pavement areas, viewing binoculars, and interpretive signage.
      - **Priority: Low**
      - **Partner : Greenway funding/Stakeholders**
  - **(A: 5.0) Maintain and enhance parking islands;**
    - Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens)
    - Replace any damaged curbing
      - **Priority: Low**
      - **Partner: In-House**
- Recreation:**
- **(A: 2.0) Continue to improve and maintain playground structures throughout park.**
    - Provide or replenish fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.
    - Replace swings/play equipment as needed due to wear and tear.
      - **Priority: High**
      - **Partner: In-House**
  - **(C: 11.0) Place additional new playground equipment towards south end of park.** Equipment can be placed closer to parking area making it easier for parents with small children to access play area.
    - **Priority: Low**
    - **Partner: Greenway funding/Consultant**



Overlook with benches





Small playground with swings

#### Signage:

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

#### Connectivity:

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



**Environment:**

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



*Bridge from Isle View to Niawanda Park*



*Shoreline Trail signage as you enter the Isle View Park*



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



Shoreline conditions



Shoreline conditions



Natural area within the park



## ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS

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

## KEY:

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

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

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget



## ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	8.0	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	Repair damaged bench slats throughout the park	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
A	4.0	Restore yellow warning stripes near boat launch area.	Utilize parks staff to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	P.O.B.
A	5.0	Maintain and enhance parking islands; Provide additional plantings (possible rain gardens) Replace any damaged curbing	Utilize parks staff and volunteer groups to perform repairs and enhancements	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
A	6.0	Cut back, remove, and maintain overgrown vegetation, especially identified invasive species near shoreline edge to enable better views of the Niagara River and to ensure environmental stability.	Utilize parks staff, usergroups and volunteers to perform improvements	Medium	Ongoing	P.O.B.
C	2.0	Replace damaged benches throughout park	Engage a contractor to remove damaged benches and provide new benches	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,800
C	3.0	Replace missing benches throughout the park	Engage a contractor to provide new benches	Medium	3-5 Years	\$4,800
C	4.0	Replace damaged gutters and fascia on Comfort Station near Gazebo	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	\$5,000
C	9.0	Resurface asphalt section at east entry and parking near office/maintenance building.	Engage a contractor to perform repairs	Medium	1-2 Years	\$8,000





**ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

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

**KEY:**

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

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

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget



## ISLE VIEW PARK: ACTION ITEMS

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





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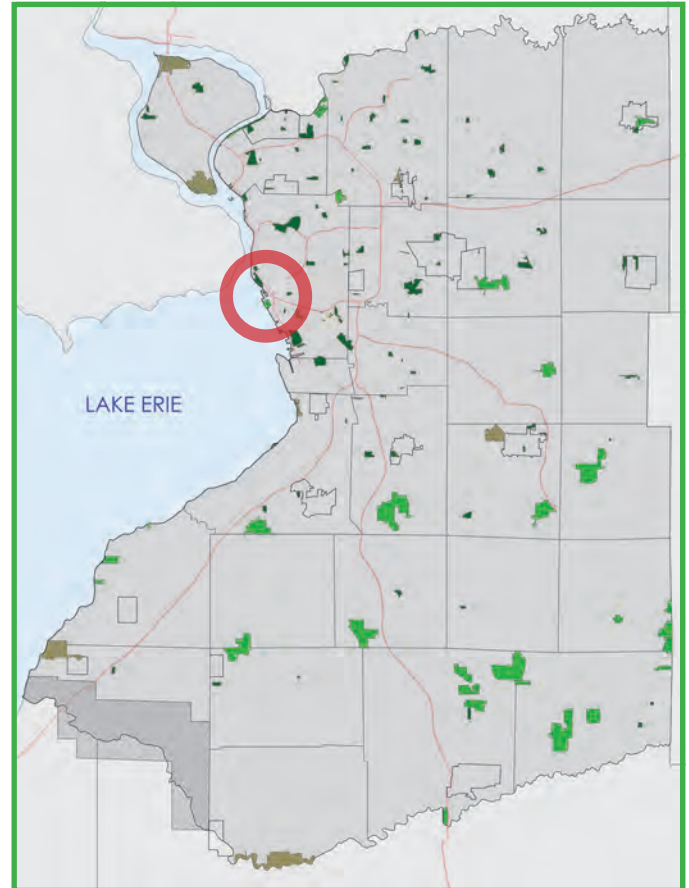
## BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK

### DESCRIPTION

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

### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

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



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



Entry plaza

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

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

## LOCAL CONTEXT

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

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

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

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



Local context map

## CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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



Promenade on a warm sunny day





# MASTER PLAN BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Specific Action Items - Ex. (A1)

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

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



### Legend:

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





View towards the Niagara River

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

C - Capital project

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



Frequent maintenance issues at the Bark Park



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



Black Rock interpretive area



Conditions under the I-190



Sidewalk connection to Niagara Street



Parking area

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



Gateway signage off of Niagara Street



## BLACK ROCK CANAL PARK: ACTION ITEMS

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

**KEY:**

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

C: Capital Project

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

POB: Parks Operating Budget



*Meandering path at the waterfront*



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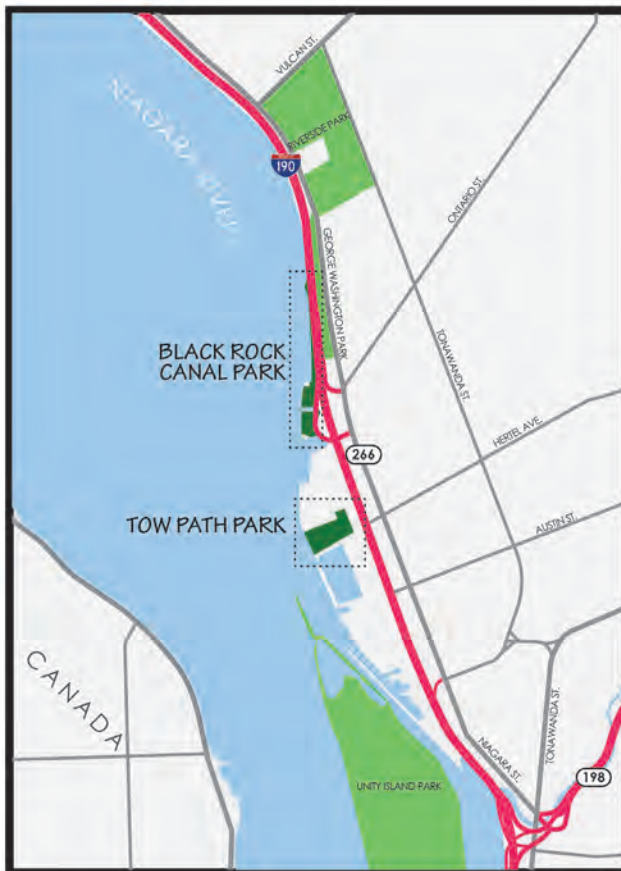
## TOW PATH PARK

### DESCRIPTION

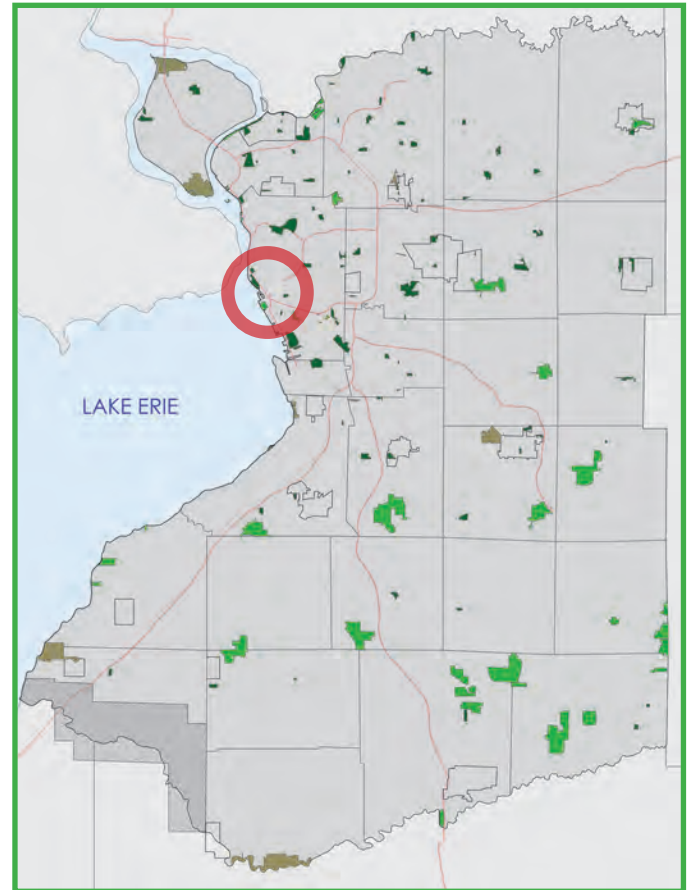
A hidden gem at the foot of Hertel Avenue along the shoreline of the Niagara River, Tow Path Park offers excellent westerly views of the Niagara River and adjacent Rich Marina. Tow Path Park is a small, 5-acre County-owned park, which is appropriately named for the historic towpath, which once passed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

### LOCAL CONTEXT

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



Local context map



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

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

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

### CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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





# MASTER PLAN TOW PATH PARK

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



- MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:**  
*Specific Action Items - Ex. (A1)*
- ① (A: 4.0) Potential signage at intersection of Herchel Avenue and Niagara Street to provide wayfinding and awareness of the park.
  - ② (A: 3.0) Provide a parks rules sign.
  - ③ (P: 3.0) Work with City of Buffalo to improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Herchel Avenue from Niagara Street. Improvements could include additional street trees, on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street, etc.
  - ④ (P: 4.0) Possible improvements to I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.
  - ⑤ (A: 2.0) Paint and/or update railing near shoreline; starting to show rust and deterioration.
  - ⑥ (P: 5.0) Possible partnership and long-term opportunity to design and build small facility within park; featuring restrooms; possible concessions; and additional small area to keep park maintenance equipment. Park is in strategic location along Riverwalk to feature such a facility.
  - ⑦ (C: 1.0) Upgrade or enhance park gateway sign to coordinate with other parks in the system.

- MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:**
- (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
  - (P: 2.0) Explore possible partnership opportunities with Niagara River Greenway to provide further enhancements and amenities to Tow Path Park.
  - (P: 1.0) Install security camera system - tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system. Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to have more of an on-site presence.

**Legend:**

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



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

## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

C - Capital Project

- **(A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.**
  - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
  - Prune deadwood from trees.
  - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
  - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.
  - Apply for funding from NYSDEC for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
    - Priority: High
    - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry



Promenade



Pathway leading to the waterfront





*Tow Path Park sign and interpretive signage*

- **(P: 1.0)** Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
  - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to have more of an on-site presence.
    - **Priority: High**
    - **Partner: City of Buffalo**
- **(P: 6.0)** Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;
  - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
  - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
    - **Priority: High**
    - **Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- **(P: 7.0)** Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.
  - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
  - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
  - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
    - **Priority: High**
    - **Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House**
- **(A: 3.0)** Provide a parks rules sign near entry signage.
  - **Priority: Medium**
  - **Partner: In-House**
- **(A: 4.0)** Install signage at intersection of Hertel Avenue and Niagara Street to provide wayfinding and awareness of the park.
  - **Priority: Medium**
  - **Partner: In-House**



- **(P: 2.0)** Explore possible partnership opportunities with Niagara River Greenway to provide further enhancements and amenities to Tow Path Park (i.e. additional landscaping/planting areas, viewing binoculars, etc.)
  - Priority: Medium
  - Partner: Niagara River Greenway
- **(P: 3.0)** Work with City of Buffalo to improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Hertel Avenue from Niagara Street. Improvements could include additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: City of Buffalo
- **(P: 4.0)** Improve I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Albright Knox Public Art Curator/ Buffalo Arts Studio/Private Businesses
- **(A: 2.0)** Clean, prime, and paint railing near shoreline; starting to show rust and deterioration.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 1.0)** Upgrade or enhance park gateway sign to coordinate with other parks in the system.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **(P: 5.0)** Possible partnership and long-term opportunity to design and build small facility within park; featuring restrooms, possible concessions, and additional small area to keep park maintenance equipment. Park is in strategic location along the Shoreline Trail to feature such a facility.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Greenway funding/Empire State Trail funding



Promenade - View towards Niagara River





*Railings need repairs and painting*



*Bench facing the River*



*Portable restroom at the park*



## TOW PATH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

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

**KEY:**

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

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

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget

## TOW PATH PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	2.0	Provide further enhancements and amenities to Tow Path Park (i.e. additional landscaping/ planting areas, viewing binoculars, etc.)	Possible partnership opportunity with Niagara River Greenway	Medium	3-5 Years	\$5,000
C	1.0	Establish enhanced gateways	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
P	3.0	Improve road conditions and pedestrian connectivity on Hertel Avenue from Niagara Street.	Coordinate with the City of Buffalo on improvements which could include additional street trees, and on-road bike lane connection to Niagara Street.	Low	3-5 Years	\$100,000
P	4.0	Improve I-190 underpass to park; potential public art/murals, additional lighting to improve safety, etc.	Coordinate with Albright Knox Public Art Curator/ Buffalo Arts Studio/Private Businesses	Low	6-10 Years	\$5,000
P	5.0	Construct small facility for restrooms, possible concessions, and additional small area to keep park maintenance equipment.	Coordinate with Niagara River Greenway Commission and Empire State Trail agencies	Low	6-10 Years	\$270,000





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## WENDT BEACH PARK

### DESCRIPTION

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

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

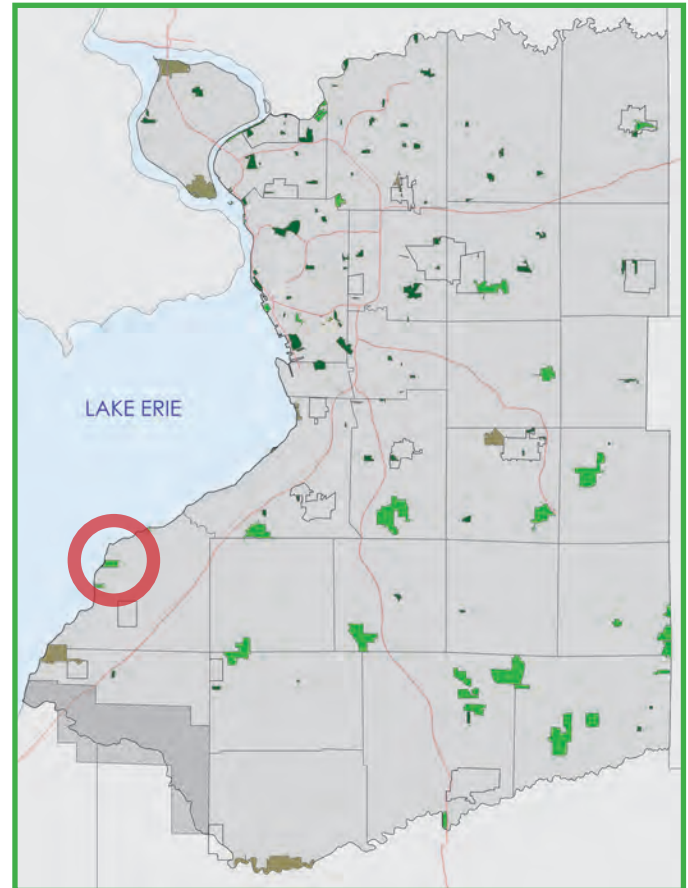
### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

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

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



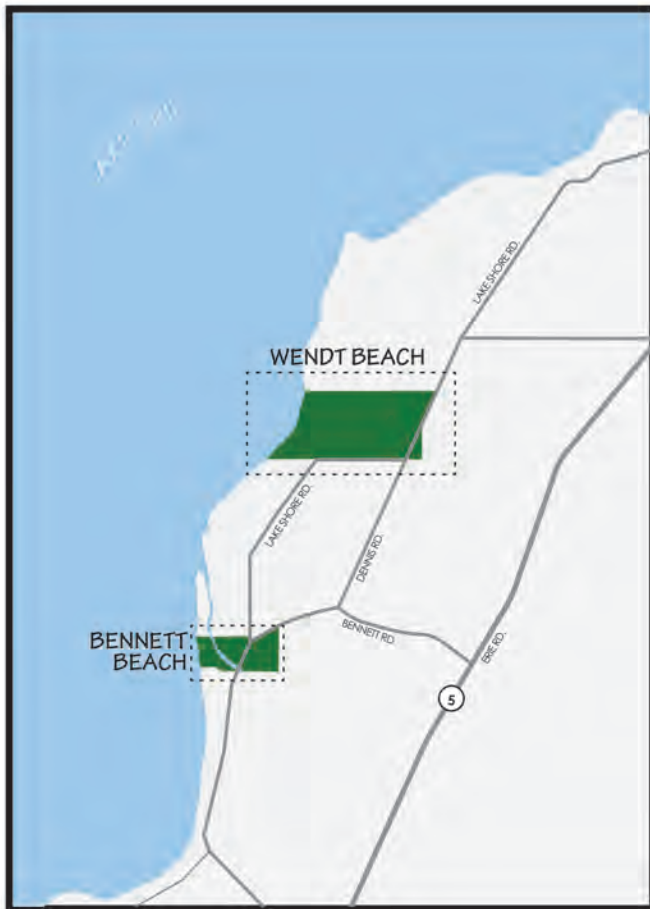
Beautiful views of Lake Erie



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

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

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



Local context map

## LOCAL CONTEXT

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

## RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

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

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



Historic Wendt Mansion is boarded up and is not accessible



Drainage issues at parking lot



Rough rocky shoreline and limited staff prevents swimming here



## CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

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



*Some scattered picnic tables throughout the park*





# MASTER PLAN WENDT BEACH

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: *Specific Action Items - Ex. (A1)*

- 1 (P: 1.0) If feasible (significant investment required), restore the historic Wendt Mansion. This is a very important "heritage" area within the County parks System. Identify potential adaptive re-use that compliments the park uses.
- 2 (C: 2.0) Formalize and repair large parking area near mansion and other buildings. Size of parking area may be excessive; there may be opportunities to reduce pavement by introducing rain gardens and planting medians to capture runoff and reorganize lot.
- 3 (P: 2.0) Possible adaptive reuse of barn structure/horse stable to open up to the arts community or other local stakeholder groups. May be able to rent out space for weddings and large gatherings to generate potential revenue.
- 4 (C: 4.0) Relocate maintenance facility away from historic mansion and to a more inconspicuous spot adjacent to the superintendent's house (off the back of the parking lot); (2003 Plan)
- 5 (C: 3.0) Undertake dune restoration; although Wendt Beach is actually a very rocky beach, it still has a use and charm that is very attractive. Engage consultant to perform studies and analysis of existing dunes and provide procedures for restoration/protection; Maintain current access point through dunes to the beach off the trail. Enhance access point with signage to encourage usage.
- 6 (P: 7.0) Maintain and enhance soccer fields; partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer to adequately provide safe playing fields/conditions for the children.



- 7 (C: 7.0) Establish picnic groves in areas of the park not conflicting with soccer fields and heritage area; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.
  - 8 (C: 9.0) Possibly expand and enhance small playground currently featured near the soccer fields. Provide additional equipment suitable for all ages and abilities.
- #### MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:
- (2.0-2.1) Reduce mowing in non-recreational areas between beach and soccer fields. Expand no-mow areas and provide meadows and interpretive signage, emphasizing the ecologic benefits.
  - (C: 6.0) Provide formalized trails in wooded areas of park especially south of the main park road. Tie new trails into Shoreline Trail. Trails would have to be sensitive to wetland areas, and use the boardwalk template of the Shoreline Trail.
  - (P: 4.0-5.0) Upgrade the east side of Wendt Park to include more formalized, "structured" parking opportunities (stone or asphalt lots) and a support facility (i.e. permanent restrooms, concessions, storage) for the very large soccer crowds.

**Legend:**

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





## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

C - Capital project

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

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

or tea room, meeting facility, etc.;

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

■ **Priority: High**

■ **Partner: Investor/PBN/VBN/Wendt Foundation**



Wendt Mansion restoration would require significant investment, and partnership opportunities



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



Horse Stable building



Need to reorganize and reduce large parking area



All buildings at Wendt need improvements and repairs

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





View towards the beach

- **(C: 4.0) Relocate maintenance facility away from historic mansion** and to a more inconspicuous spot adjacent to the superintendent's house (off the back of the parking lot); (2003 Plan)
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 5.0) Reorganize roadway and pedestrian zones to separate future "mansion" functions from public beach area** (2003 Master Plan).
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Consultant
- **Develop and enforce west side of park as passive beach zone**, i.e. picnicking, walking a dog, reading a book, etc.
  - Provide Adirondack chairs along the beach similar to Wilkeson Pointe and the Outer Harbor;
  - Introduce small parking/ picnic areas south of the mansion along the driveway, with turn-around loop;
  - relocate current boat storage to a more inconspicuous location, still allowing for easy access to the beach.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House



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





Cabin is featured overlooking the Lake



Much of the park is mowed



Soccer fields which are used by Lakeshore Youth Soccer

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

#### Active Recreation (East Section):

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



- **(A: 2.0-2.1) Reduce mowing in non-recreational areas between beach and soccer fields.** Expand no-mow areas and provide wildflowers and meadows; Install interpretive signage emphasizing the ecologic benefits.
  - **Priority:** High
  - **Partner:** In-House
- **(C: 6.0) Provide formalized trails in wooded areas of park especially south of the main park road.**
  - Tie new trails into Shoreline Trail. New park trails can form loops from the Shoreline Trail to provide added interest and opportunities for park users.
  - New trails would have to be sensitive to wetland areas, and would need to be an elevated boardwalk like the Shoreline Trail portion.
    - **Priority:** Medium
    - **Partner:** Consultant/In-House
- **Enhance opportunities for winter activities at Wendt beach. The park is a perfect setting for numerous cross-country ski trails, etc. (2003 Master Plan)**
  - **Priority:** Medium
  - **Partner:** In-House
- **(P: 4.0-5.0) Provide larger formalized, “structured” parking opportunities (stone or asphalt lots) and a support facility (i.e. permanent restrooms, concessions, storage) for the very large soccer crowds.**
  - Parking areas should be restricted to the north side of the park road due to construction of the Shoreline Trail.
  - Coordinate with Lakeshore Youth Soccer for funding and planning for these expanded features.
    - **Priority:** Medium
    - **Partner:** Lakeshore Youth Soccer
- **(A: 4.0-4.2) Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:**
  - Intersection of Sturgeon Point Road and Erie Road
  - Lakeshore Road and Sturgeon Point Road
    - **Priority:** Medium
    - **Partner:** In-House



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



- **(C: 7.0) Establish picnic groves in areas of the park not conflicting with soccer fields and heritage area;** if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 8.0) Enhance park entrance and identity at Lakeshore Road, with entrance feature.** Provide a distinct transition zone between the two park sections and distinctive entrance to the heritage area of the site, i.e. possibly establish a secondary entrance feature past the soccer fields which would lead people towards the historic mansion and lake;
  - Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 9.0) Possibly expand and enhance small playground currently featured near the soccer fields.**
  - Provide additional equipment suitable for all ages and abilities
  - Relocate existing playground near horse stable building to new location near soccer fields.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House



*Small playground area near soccer fields*



*Gateway sign near Lakeshore Road*



**WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees. Develop an annual tree planting program.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	2.0	Establish “Low Mow Zones” to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Expand no-mow areas and provide wildflowers and meadows	High	3-5 Years	In-House
A	2.1	Establish “Low Mow Zones” to reduce overall maintenance and provide wildlife habitat	Provide necessary signage along the “Low Mow Zones” to inform the public the reasons behind the practice and also to identify the areas to park personnel.	High	1-2 Years	In-House, Highway
A	3.0	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
C	3.0	Undertake dune restoration; Engage consultant to perform studies and analysis of existing dunes and provide procedures for restoration/protection	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	6-10 Years	\$40,000
P	1.0	Prevent further deterioration and restore Wendt Mansion; Identify potential adaptive reuse that compliments park uses	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	\$2,400,000 (2013 Mansion Study)

**KEY:**

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

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

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget

**WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	2.0	Prevent further deterioration and restore Horse Stable structure; Identify potential adaptive reuse that compliments park uses	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	Recommended to complete formal estimate study and analysis
P	3.0	Prevent further deterioration to remaining out-buildings in the 'heritage' area: Identify adaptive reuse opportunity	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	High	6-10 Years	Recommended to complete formal estimate study and analysis
P	7.0	Maintain and enhance soccer fields; partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer to adequately provide safe playing fields/conditions.	Partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	8.0	Actively manage and protect the potential for grassland habitats which provide grassland birds protection and assistance.	Consult with NYSDEC, ECSWD, and other professional experts.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	9.0	Remove and address invasive species. Plant and provide pollinator friendly (native) plants, including nectar sources for migrating Monarch Butterflies.	Consult with NYSDEC, ECSWD, and other professional experts.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
A	4.0	Provide directional signage to the park at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
A	4.1	Intersection of Sturgeon Point Road and Erie Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House





**WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

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

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**WENDT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
C	7.0	Establish picnic groves in areas of the park not conflicting with soccer fields and heritage area; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$200,000
C	8.0	Enhance park entrance and identity at Lakeshore Road, with entrance feature. Provide a distinct transition zone between the two park sections and distinctive entrance to the heritage area of the site	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$35,600
C	9.0	Possibly expand and enhance small playground currently featured near the soccer fields. Provide additional equipment suitable for all ages and abilities Relocate existing playground near horse stable building to new location near soccer fields.	Engage a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$60,000
P	5.0	Construct a support facility near soccer fields; permanent restrooms, concessions, storage)	Partner with Lakeshore Youth Soccer	Low	3-5 Years	\$350,000
P	6.0	Renovate the Log Cabin /Lifeguard station. This facility could be maximized to include a meeting room (for environmental and historic related discussions, etc.) and other potential uses.	Refer to partnership opportunity with PBN, coordination with possible investor, grant money	Low	6-10 Years	\$500,000







ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE





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## BENNETT BEACH PARK

### DESCRIPTION

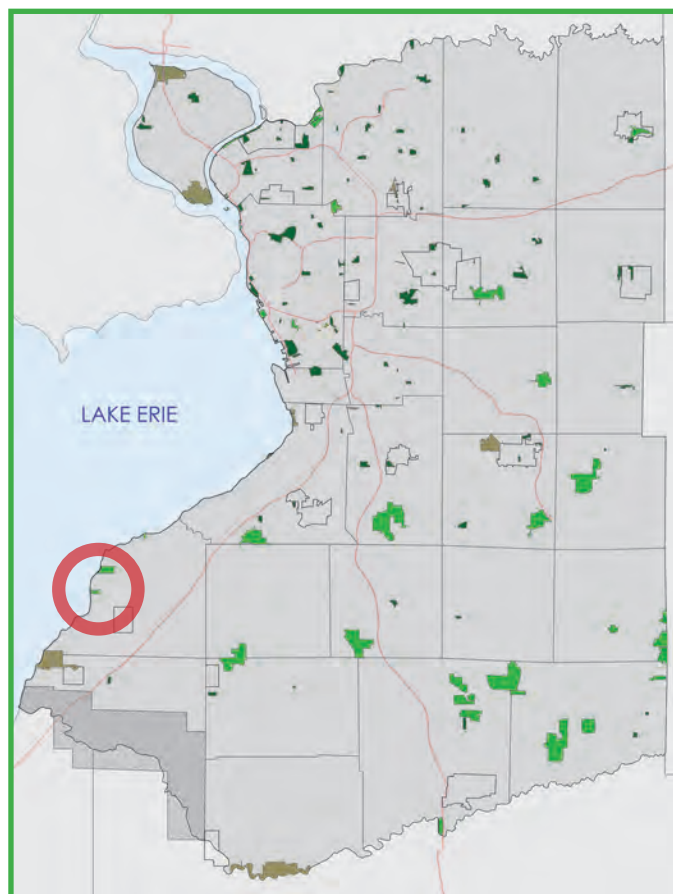
Bennett Beach is a special place along the eastern shoreline of Lake Erie, having one of the last remaining natural sand beaches and dunes. This unique lakefront park is approximately 50 acres in size and is located in the Town of Evans. Lakeshore Road splits the park into two halves, with the western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

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

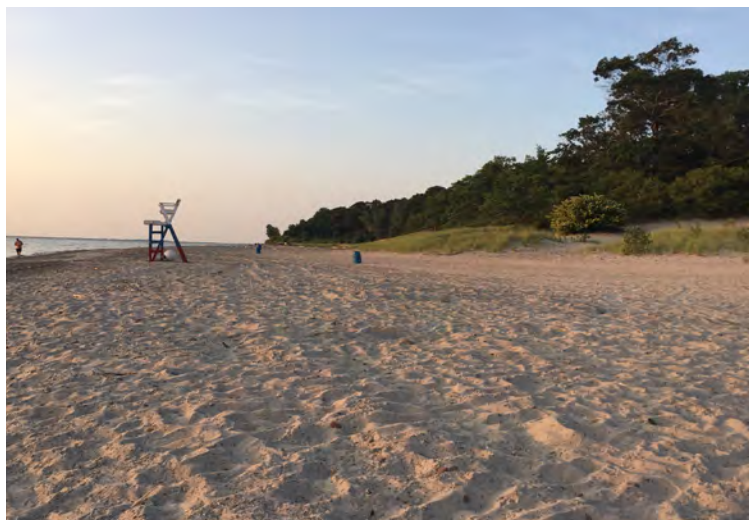
### PARK AND AREA HISTORY

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

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



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



*Nice sandy beach at Bennett Beach Park*

### PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

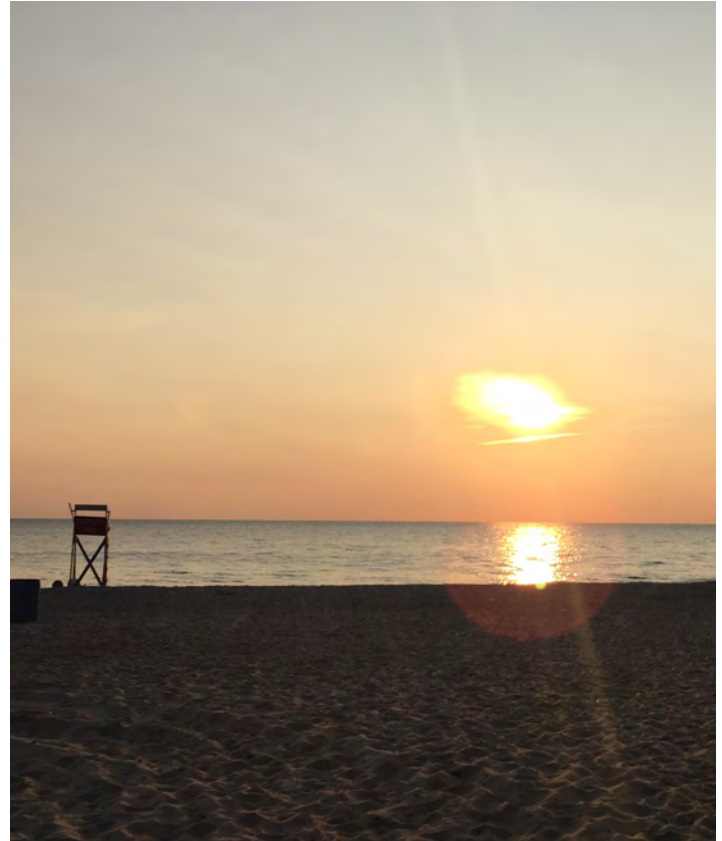
- ***Preserve and enhance overall dune environment; Protection of these unique natural features along the Lake Erie shoreline should be prioritized.***
- ***Prioritize the protection of archaeological sensitive areas.***
  - *Determine specific areas of significance and provide proper protection;*
 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

## LOCAL CONTEXT

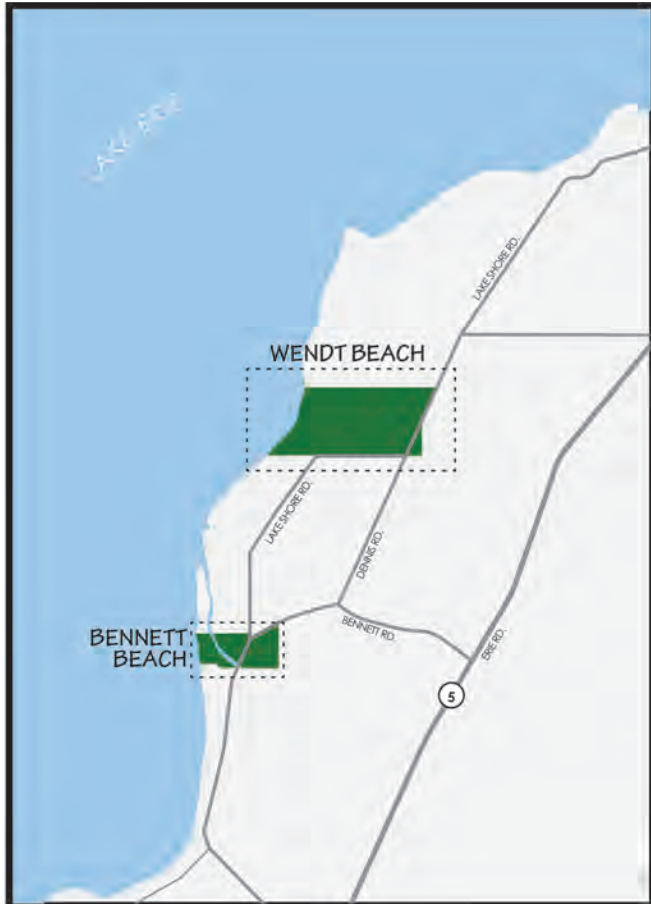
Bennett Beach is located approximately 23 miles south of Downtown Buffalo, at the intersection of Old Lakeshore Road and Bennett Road. The beach-front properties to both the north and south of Bennett Beach are primarily single family residential, with most housing historically “summer” or “seasonal”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

## RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

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



Sunset over Lake Erie



Local context map

## RECENT PARKS DEPARTMENT PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS

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

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



## ARCHAEOLOGY PARTNERSHIP -

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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



*Parking area*



*Sandy entrance to the beach*





# MASTER PLAN BENNETT BEACH

## ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: *Specific Action Items - Ex. (All)*

- 1 (C:3.0) Preserve and enhance overall dune environment; Protection of these unique natural features along the Lake Erie shoreline should be prioritized. Incorporate new beach grasses and vegetation on the waterfront side of the dune to assure long term sustainability. Engage dune/ecological expert to properly define dune environment and place fencing to protect these natural features. Provide necessary signage to educate park patrons about sensitivity of the dune areas.
- 2 (P:1.0) Engage consultant and local universities to undergo investigation of archeological artifacts and historically significant features. Determine specific areas of significance and provide proper protection; Provide possible interpretive signage as warning of sensitive areas.
- 3 (C:4.0) Long-term goal to establish an ADA accessible boardwalk system/or series of paths/trails through the existing "cut" in the natural sand dune to reduce further impacts and degradation of the dunes.
- 4 (C:2.0) Reorganize and improve parking area; consider using a natural crushed stone surface as a more environmentally friendly surface material. Consider paving the lot in the future. Define boundaries and provide new tree plantings around the lot. Define lot with possible planting buffers/medians



### Legend:

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





## MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

C - Capital project

### Beach/Dunes:

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

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



Sensitive dune areas at Bennett Beach





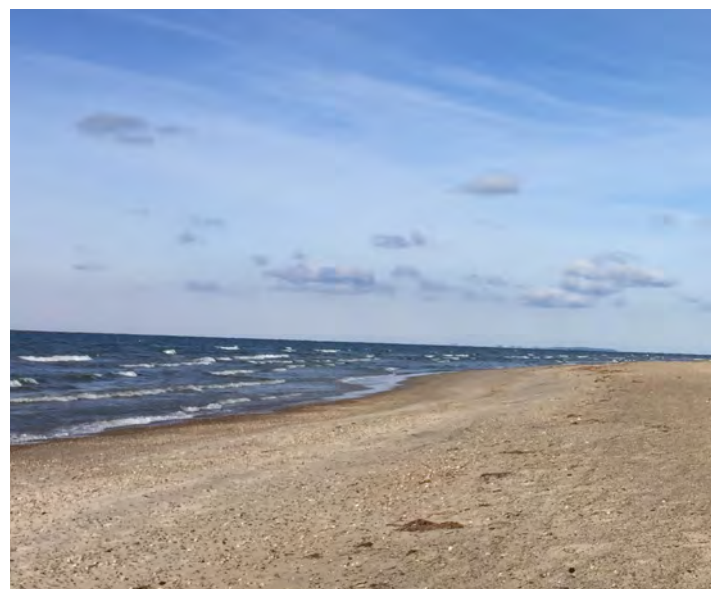
Pictured on the left is the existing sand trail to the beach at Bennett, and the picture on the right is of an accessible boardwalk system installed at Walnut Beach Park in Ashtabula, Ohio.

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

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

■ **Priority: Low**

■ **Partner: In-House/Grants**



View along the beach



- **(C: 1.0) Provide interpretive signage and opportunities** about the lakefront environment, harsh weather conditions, dune restoration, creek habitat, local history, Bennett House history, etc. An entire signage package should be developed, similar to that at Woodlawn Beach.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House/Historical Society

- Pursue a usergroup/local investor who can lease the existing water treatment plant adjacent to the park property. The UB Archeology program could use it as a field station and spur investment into the rest of the park.

- Priority: Low
- Partner: University at Buffalo

#### Creek/Forested Areas:

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



Existing sign with park information



Big Sister Creek





Trail access to the Creek



Pedestrian bridge over Big Sister Creek

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



**Park Area:**

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



*Small playground area*



*Parking area should be formalized and enhanced*



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



Comfort station



Large open space area between Creek and parking lot



Ponding of water in parking lot



- **(C: 6.0) Establish picnic groves on east side of Creek;** if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 7.0) Update and improve restroom facility;** Retrofit building to include stone work and 'lakefront style' design to fit better in with County Parks System character.
  - Expansion of building could include area for concessions and expanded restroom/changing areas.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- **(C: 8.0) Relocate the park entrance road to the south for better site distances and safety;** consider the unsafe conditions at the current entrance/ intersection.
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: Consultant/In-House
- **Provide emergency access;** Given the three distinct zones of the park (beach, back of dune to creek area, and between the creek and road),
  - provide emergency access through the water treatment facility area (Schwert Road) to the beach;
  - off Schwert Road for the back-dunes;
  - and off Lakeshore Road for the main park area.
    - Priority: Low
    - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 9.0) Establish a more dominant gateway into the park from Lakeshore Road. Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.**
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House
- **Improve ADA access throughout the park wherever is reasonable and feasible, especially within the walk to the beach.**
  - Priority: Low
  - Partner: In-House



Entry signage off of Lakeshore Road

**BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.1	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	2.0	Continue to develop Shoreline Trail System to link with other lakefront parks and nearby communities.	Coordinate planning efforts with Town	High	Ongoing	Project specific
A	3.0	Improve playground safety	Provide or replenish engineered fiber fall surfaces at playgrounds annually.	High	Ongoing	P.O.B.
C	3.0	Preserve and enhance overall dune environment; Engage dune/ecological expert to properly define dune environment.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	6-10 Years	Conduct a formal study and cost estimates
P	1.0	Engage consultant and local universities to undergo investigation of archaeological artifacts and historically significant features.	Partnership with University At Buffalo, Penn Dixie, Hamburg Historical Society	High	6-10 Years	Partnership
P	3.0	Management and monitoring of invasive species is imperative to the health of the park. Address and remove threatening invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
P	4.0	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	5.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner

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**BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.2	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. . Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Develop an annual tree planting program.	Medium	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	4.0	Provide directional signage <u>to the park</u> at strategic locations:	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
A	4.1	Intersection of Bennett Road and Dennis Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
A	4.2	Bennett Road and Erie Road	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
C	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park:	Coordinate with historical society to develop copy and obtain images for the interpretive content.	Medium	6-10 Years	\$3,500
C	2.0	Improve safety and functionality of main parking lot, reduce size of lot, provide asphalt surface, striping, accessible parking spaces, planting medians, and rain gardens	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$100,000
C	5.0	Provide expanded playground equipment to replace existing play structure which is too small to accommodate a large number of children during the summer months.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$40,000

**KEY:**

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**BENNETT BEACH PARK: ACTION ITEMS**

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
C	6.0	Establish picnic groves on east side of Creek; if funding is available, provide small to medium sized shelters. Shelters would see frequent rentals due to popularity over summer months.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	6-10 Years	\$100,000
C	4.0	Long-term goal to establish an ADA accessible boardwalk system/or series of paths/trails through the existing "cut" in the natural sand dune to reduce further impacts and degradation to one of the last surviving natural sand dunes on the eastern Lake Erie Shoreline.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$240,000
C	7.0	Update and improve restroom facility; Retrofit building to include stone work and 'lakefront style' design to fit better in with County Parks System character. Expansion of building could include area for concessions and expanded restroom/changing areas.	Engage a consult to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	\$100,000
C	8.0	Relocate the park entrance road to the south for better site distances and safety; consider the unsafe conditions at the current entrance/ intersection.	Engage a consult to develop plans and have DPW construct the improvements	Low	6-10 Years	P.O.B.
C	9.0	Establish a more dominant gateway into the park from Lakeshore Road. Provide landscaping with seasonal interest.	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape typology for each location.	Low	6-10 Years	\$17,800
P	2.0	Improve the health of Big Sister Creek	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Low	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD





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