The Olmsted City

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System:
Plan for the 21st Century

BUFFALO
OLMSTED PARKS
CONSERVANCY

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Thomas Herrera-Mishler,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WWW.BUFFALOOLMSTEDPARKS.ORG

Byron W. Brown,
MAYOR
WWW.CITY-BUFFALO.COM

Chris Collins,
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WWW.ERIE.GOV

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The **Olmsted** City

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System: **Plan for the 21st Century**

Edited by Robert G. Shibley and Lynda H. Schneekloth

On January 31, 2003, the Mayor of Buffalo declared the city to be "The Olmsted City"

FRONT COVER IMAGE:
The White Oak Tree in the Delaware Park Meadow

BACK COVER IMAGE:
The Humboldt Basin in Martin Luther King, Jr. Park from the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society image collection

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Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
City of Buffalo
County of Erie

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Trowbridge and Wolf, Landscape Architects
Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Engineers

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Jake Schneider, Schneider Design Architects
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Margaret L. Wendt Foundation
City of Buffalo
County of Erie

The Urban Design Project
School of Architecture and Planning

University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

The Urban Design Project
School of Architecture and Planning
University at Buffalo,
State University of New York
3435 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14214
(716) 829-3485 ext 218
www.urbandesignproject.org

The System Plan was completed by The Urban Design Project, School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo, under the guidance of the Long Range Planning Committee and the Olmsted Advisory Council of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy. The proposed designs build on the history of planning for the parks. Past plans commissioned by the City of Buffalo were supplemented by team and client charrettes and subsequent design development with community input. Cost estimating was done by Wendel Duchscherer, final artist renderings of the park plans were prepared by Trowbridge and Wolf, and system graphics were prepared by The Urban Design Project. All other graphics in the report without sources are from The Urban Design Project or the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy.

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PREFACE

It is with a great sense of pride and accomplishment that the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy presents **The System Plan** to you—our members, park users, decision makers and potential funders, along with the broader public. The preparation of a comprehensive restoration plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System has been the primary goal of the Conservancy since 2004, when we assumed primary responsibility for managing and operating the park and parkway system. This pivotal document, approved unanimously by the Conservancy's Board of Trustees and supported by the efforts of countless committed citizens over the last four years, provides the planning framework needed to guide the exciting renaissance of Buffalo's historic and picturesque system of parks and parkways designed by America's greatest landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.

Olmsted's vision for a series of parks throughout the city interconnected by a ribbon of green parkways and planted traffic circles, was built and improved during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Olmsted believed firmly that all city dwellers should have access to the healthful benefits of fresh air and natural landscapes provided by these green spaces. He also knew that well-designed and maintained parks and parkways would greatly enhance the real estate values and economic health of the city, thus providing additional resources through savings and increased property taxes. What Olmsted knew intuitively has been substantiated through a series of recent studies. Individuals with access to well-maintained and programmed parks benefit in numerous ways; they are less likely to suffer from obesity and its associated health problems and research shows a 27% reduction in juvenile delinquency rates. Great parks are an excellent investment, a true asset, not a luxury. The parks and parkways are an important element of what makes this city so livable, adding incalculable value to the quality of life, and economy of the Buffalo-Niagara region and all of Western New York.

Over the past few years the Olmsted Park System in Buffalo has seen the beginnings of a renaissance with greatly enhanced levels of maintenance and reinvestment from public and private resources. In the years leading up to this plan, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy has raised and invested over $13 million in the parks and parkways. The Olmsted system is the hallmark of Buffalo's urban landscape, providing some of the city's most memorable and enjoyable places. Over time, the strategic reinvestment articulately mapped out in this plan will allow this resource to thrive well into the future, providing future generations of Buffalonians and visitors to our region an incomparable open space resource. **The System Plan** allows us to re-envision our great city in the postindustrial age in ways that greatly enhance the integrity of the system, restoring and completing Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.'s remarkable vision for Buffalo.

Thank you for your support of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. We look forward to many, many more years of serving all park users.

Thomas Herrera-Mishler
Chief Executive Officer, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The System Plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System is a blueprint for the future of this unique 'cultural landscape.' The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, charged with the management and operations of these parks since 2004, initiated an inclusive and comprehensive planning process with the goal of restoring the system and enhancing the parks and parkways in ways that respect their status as important neighborhood, regional, national, and international resources. The goal will not be easily achieved, but the process is underway and the completion of the plan offers a new vision for Buffalo's historic park system well into the 21st century.

Buffalo's Olmsted Park System includes six major parks, multiple parkways, circles, and small spaces, and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 as a cultural landscape, specifically a 'historic designed landscape.' This designation recognizes that this is **one of the most outstanding park systems in the United States,** conceived by one of the world's most famous landscape architects, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. Before Buffalo's parks were built, Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed Central Park in New York City (1857) and set the standard for great urban parks. When Olmsted came to Buffalo, he did more than design a great park: he designed the first park and parkway system in the nation. This vision connected unique parks with ribbons of green that ran through the city's residential neighborhoods, bringing the parks to the people.

The parks were designed over a 46-year period between 1869 and 1915. The inner ring of parks, Delaware Park (initially simply known as 'The Park'), Front Park (originally 'The Front'), and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (originally 'The Parade' and later, 'Humboldt Park') were the first built along with the northern portion of the parkway system. These were followed by the southern parks, South and Cazenovia, the southern parkways, and finally by Riverside Park at the city's northwest corner.

Unfortunately, over the years, the parks deteriorated, some parts were destroyed or modified, and others were transformed through the introduction of new buildings and hardscape features. Further, the system as envisioned by Olmsted and his sons, the Olmsted Brothers, was never fully completed: the north and south segments of the system were not connected, the waterfront connection to downtown was never built, and the linkages envisioned that tie the newest park, Riverside Park, into the network were not completed. Many factors contributed to the demise of the parks and the incompleteness of the parkway system. In part, the changes were a result of new ideas about what parks should be, but primarily, the demise of the parks resulted from the disinvestments in urban centers that occurred in the mid 20th century.

A group of citizens concerned about these historic parks organized the Friends of Olmsted Parks in 1978 to advocate for them. The Friends grew into the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, the organization now responsible for park management and development. As a part of their responsibilities, in 2005 the Conservancy commissioned The Urban Design Project, School of Architecture and Planning, UB, to develop **The System Plan,** supported through a grant from The John R. Oishei Foundation.

The main message associated with the restoration of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System is that these parks are community assets and resources, not liabilities or costs. Parks will, if properly managed, bring wealth to the region through adjacent investment. Moreover, parks and other green spaces provide immeasurable environmental services and save communities significant costs through their processing of stormwater and urban cooling as well as through improved health for a community because of increased physical activity. In other words, parks are not simply amenities, nice to have around; they actually bring real wealth to a city and region.

Through a series of public meetings, two design charrettes, monthly meetings with the Olmsted Long Range Planning Committee and ongoing discussion with the Olmsted Advisory Council, the consulting team assembled by The Urban Design Project has established guidelines for priorities, recommendations for each of the parks, parkways, small spaces and extensions, and a proposed design for the restoration of each.

The priorities are clear. Fix the 'basics' of the parks, attending to the landscape and vegetation, the operations and management, paths and trails, recreational opportunities, branding and signage, and amenities such as water, restrooms, and benches. At the same time, the historic restoration goals must also be a priority as these critical projects will enhance the Olmsted cultural landscape, building on a heritage tourism economy that is growing in the region.

Board of Trustees Guiding Principles for Restoration and Management

1. Protect and rehabilitate the Buffalo Olmsted Park System to preserve and restore the historic integrity of Olmsted's vision. "Brand" the system as a unique and historic landscape.
2. Promote safe, secure, diverse and equitable use of the park system.
3. Involve partners and ensure meaningful participation by the community.
4. Promote sustainable strategies: ecological diversity, green design, and best management practices.
5. Expand the system to connect to parks throughout the city and to connect to the Niagara River Greenway.
6. Use the parks and parkways as a community and economic development strategy for adjacent neighborhoods.
7. Manage and maintain the system through daily best practices to achieve historic integrity, public use, and sustainable practice.

The historic restoration objectives are always balanced by the condition that all of these parks are also neighborhood parks. Community development goals include opportunities for activities and diverse park use by neighbors as well as economic development opportunities in the adjacent community. The plan is responsive to community concerns so that, for example, when community members expressed concern about the removal of facilities that were added to the parks after the historic period of significance, the Conservancy established a policy that states that "Non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate." The proposed recommendations and plans have been vetted with, and shaped by, communities across the city and region.

The System Plan is an ambitious project, but not beyond this community's capacity. The costs for basic improvements as well as restoration, access and recreational projects were estimated in 2008 constant dollars and potential funding sources were explored. The estimated cost for total restoration of the parks and parkways within the formally designated cultural landscape is $252.5 million. Even over a 20-year time frame, this will be a challenge. But the Conservancy and the public are asking for more: the vision is that the Olmsted Park System will be enhanced through even greater connectivity that links the parks and expands the system to connect to other greenway systems. These additional elements, as well as other projects that take place outside of the parks, are estimated to cost an additional $175.5 million. This makes the total for **The System Plan** $428 million.

The report provides a Five Year Plan that identifies priorities in the near future that build on existing improvements, current funding opportunities, as well as potential sources of funding. The goal is to start with these recommendations and to accomplish as many as possible within the first five years. Some of these will be relatively easy and funding sources readily available; others will be much more complex and demand innovative capital investments and funding strategies. The total cost of implementing the Five Year Plan is $28.7 million, including $13.4 million for park basics and $15.3 million for critical needs with the expectation that close to 75 percent of those funds will be provided by the public sector at all levels of government and 25 percent through private donations.

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is an asset that is truly international in stature and significance. A regional treasure, its stewardship is also a regional responsibility. **The System Plan** outlines a vision, a process, and an implementation strategy for restoring and managing the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. That strategy relies on building on the successes of our historic public-private partnerships to sustain and restore the Olmsted legacy that enriches all our lives. The restoration of this critical historic resource and neighborhood asset will be this generation's legacy to our children and grandchildren.

INTRODUCTION

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System includes six major parks, multiple parkways, circles, and small spaces. It is a tremendous resource for the people of the Buffalo-Niagara Region. The entire system, conceived of by America's most famous landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., is recognized as a cultural landscape, specifically a historic designed landscape, on the National Register of Historic Places. It is also the backbone of Buffalo's park and open space system, representing nearly sixty percent of all the parkland in the city. The parks and the parkway system offer unique natural settings and recreational opportunities to neighborhoods across the city. The Olmsted parks and parkways are the inheritance of today's citizens; it is the responsibility of our public and private sectors of the community to preserve them and enrich them so that generations to come will have the same blessings.

In today's world we take parks for granted, but they are a new type of landscape that grew along with urbanization in the last two centuries. Olmsted was a leader in the 19th century movement to bring "nature" into the city to counter the ill effects of urban industrialization. Concerned with the plight of the ever-growing slum populations crammed into tenement houses, Olmsted and others in this popular reformist tradition emphasized the importance of urban green spaces and recreation. City parks, they believed, would counteract the mounting number of problems that plagued growing cities like Buffalo—overcrowding, pollution, noise, lack of access to recreation and nature, and a host of other troubles. Olmsted thus designed Buffalo's park system to be "the lungs of the city," bringing vital fresh air and other natural benefits to people sorely in need of them.

Today, Buffalo's Olmsted parks are just as essential to the city's well being as they were over 100 years ago when Olmsted designed them. But like many cities, Buffalo has faced overloaded and insufficient city budgets. Parks have been considered just another strain on the system. We now know better. As we move into the 21st century, studies have borne out what Olmsted believed to be true: well-maintained city parks are indispensable to a healthy and thriving populace. In particular, research has shown that parks make a vital contribution to the health, environment, and wealth of a city.

IMAGES

Opposite page:

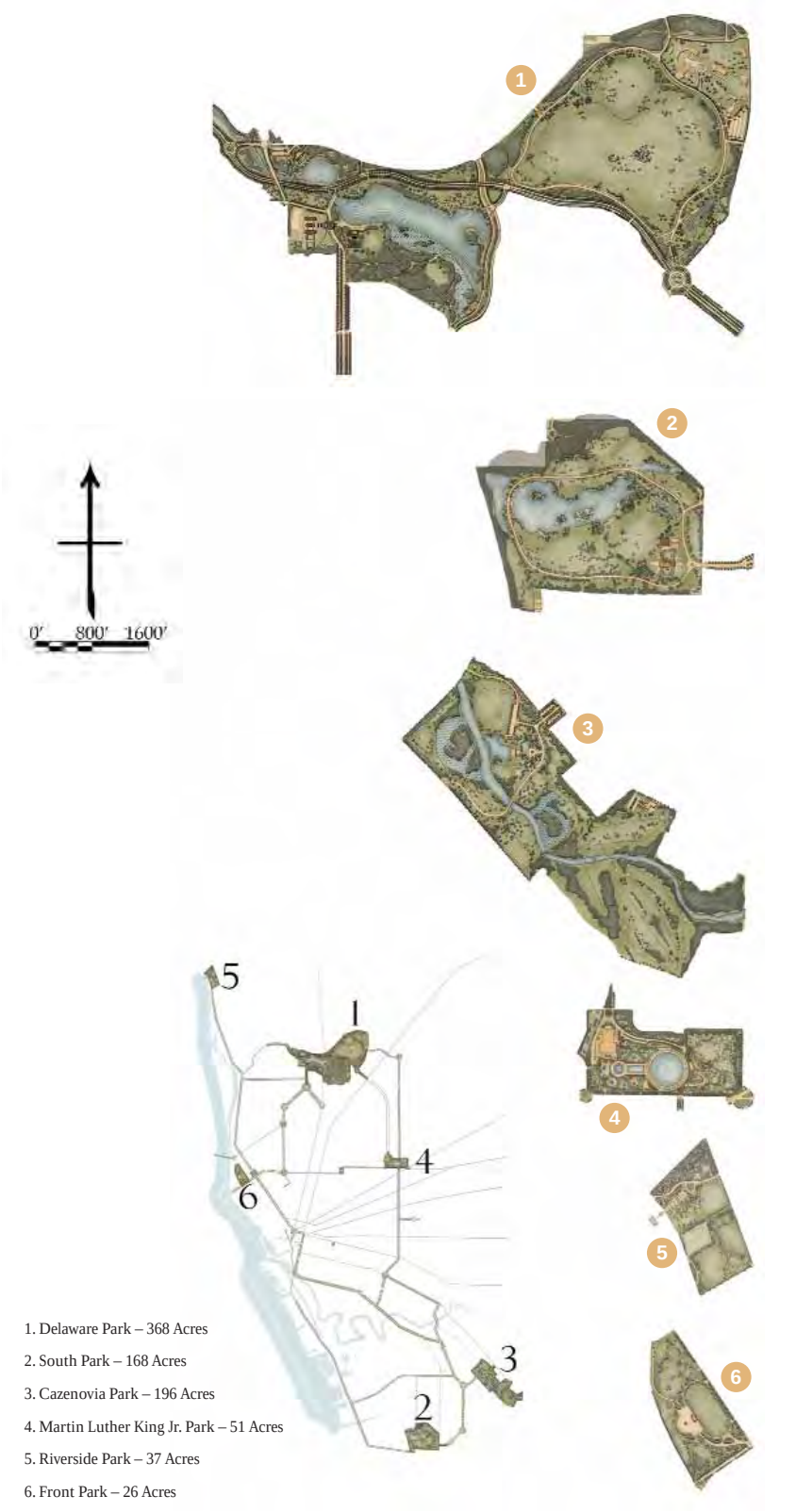
This historic White Oak tree stands above the Delaware Park Meadow.

Above [l to r]:

The Ivy Bridge is hidden away in the Rumsey Woods of Delaware Park.

This view of Lake Erie is the reason Olmsted chose this location for The Front.

Cazenovia Creek in Cazenovia Park is a great place for fly fishing in autumn.



The six restored Olmsted parks are shown at the same scale in this image to demonstrate their comparative size. Acreage totals are for the existing park size.

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, charged with the management and operation of the Olmsted Park System by the City of Buffalo and Erie County, has taken its responsibility seriously. **The System Plan** is their response to the historic legacy of the National Register cultural landscape designation, and their intention to manage these special parks for the use of the citizens of adjacent neighborhoods, the city, and the region. This plan has been several years in preparation; and has actively involved the Conservancy, the Olmsted Advisory Council, elected officials and municipal staff, and the community at large through public meetings, a consistent Web presence, newsletters, and other forms of communication. The recommendations that form the foundation of the restoration and management agenda have been forged through a series of conversations—sometimes difficult ones—about what these parks mean, what they should do, and how they should be treated.

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is a unique historic landscape comprised of diverse types of parks and connectors. Each park has its own special history, and over time has developed a set of uses and constituencies based on its location and size. As Olmsted knew, what happens in one park is not necessarily appropriate for all of them, yet together, they constitute an extraordinarily comprehensive park system.

This planning document first gives an overview of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System—its history, importance, controversial issues, and organizational context. This information provides the foundation for the second part and most extensive part of the document: plan recommendations for each park and the rest of the system. The third section describes the plan making process and history. The fourth section offers an implementation plan that includes cost estimates and strategies for prioritization and funding.

The System Plan, prepared by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, outlines goals and aspirations for this unique park system so that it may, indeed, be part of our generation's legacy to the future.

The Origin of the Olmsted Park System

Parks and green spaces developed in Buffalo and other U.S. cities along with urbanization and industrialization in the 19th century. Although today the wide open meadows, wooded thickets, and winding waterways of Buffalo's parks often appear as precious bits of preserved nature that somehow survived the course of urbanization, in reality, they were carefully designed and constructed by people who saw parks as integral components of city building.

Buffalo's park system was designed by one of the country's great landscape architects, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. (1822-1903). Olmsted was largely responsible for the grand vision that transformed unused lands, farms, rugged pastures, creeks, and marshes in cities across the land into the "natural" landscapes we know and use today.

Buffalo's relationship with Olmsted began in 1868 when William Dorsheimer, a prominent Buffalo attorney, sought him out to develop a plan for a park within the city. Olmsted was approached because of his successful completion of Central Park in New York City; Buffalo wanted a similar grand space. Olmsted soon visited the area and recommended not just one park, but a comprehensive public park system. This vision was backed by a committee of five prominent Buffalonians, including Dorsheimer, Pascal P. Pratt, Sherman S. Jewett, Richard Flach, and Joseph Warren, and was quickly supported by Buffalo's mayor, William F. Rogers. In 1870, the Olmsted firm was retained to design the new park system.[1]

Buffalo's Olmsted Park System came into being in two phases. The first phase, in the late 1860s and 1870s, saw the development of the three inner ring parks known as The Park (now Delaware Park), The Front (now Front Park), and The Parade (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Park). The second phase came later in the 19th century with the addition of the three outer ring parks: South Park, Cazenovia Park, and Riverside Park. These first two phases of design and construction

IMAGES

Above:

The trees in Delaware Park were once only saplings.

Right:

The lake in Cazenovia Park was constructed in 1896. (Source – City of Buffalo. (1900) *Buffalo Park Commissioner Report: 1893-1900.* Buffalo, NY: Haas & Klein Printers)

extended into the first quarter of the 20th century and included some redesigns and modifications to the original parks. These years are considered the park system's period of significance—the period of time in which the Olmsted parks made their historical mark on the City of Buffalo.

Olmsted, in collaboration with the architect Calvert Vaux and later the Olmsted Firm, designed each of the six parks to serve a particular purpose. This approach both confirmed the unity of the park system while, at the same time, gave each park an identity that set it apart from the other parks and defined its role in the overall system. With the first three inner ring parks, Olmsted struck a balance between what he saw as the most important needs of residents in a rapidly growing city like Buffalo: nature and leisure, a celebration of the city's origins, and public ceremony. Delaware Park was designed for immersion in a peaceful natural environment. Front Park, with its majestic view of the Niagara River and Lake Erie, highlighted what made Buffalo so dynamic—the water and its connections. And Martin Luther King Jr. Park was intended for public ceremonies such as military parades and civic functions.

IMAGES

Above:

The Olmsted Park System as it was in 1896. (Source – The Buffalo Free-Net < http://freenet.buffalo.edu/bah/>)

Below:

The Vaux-designed Parade House was built as part of The Parade (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Park). (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society)

Because these parks were designed as a unified system, not disparate recreation areas, Olmsted was able to be generous with each of several uses. Delaware Park was genuinely big enough for quiet, pastoral reflection by the lake or in the large grassy meadow. Front Park was wholly dedicated to honoring the waterways that had made Buffalo a leading trade center. And Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, with its wide and august grounds, was perfectly suited for formal ceremonies. Each park offered neighborhood residents opportunities for recreation, and together they defined a complete and integrated system.

The second three outer ring parks complemented and extended the park system already in place by adding a world-class botanical garden, water recreation, and a direct link to the Niagara River. These parks displayed a wide range of classic Olmstedian pastoral landscape elements, and yet each had a unique feature. For example, South Park's Lord & Burnham Conservatory and expansive botanical gardens sat harmoniously in the midst of rolling meadows, dense wooded thickets, and a picturesque lake. Likewise, Cazenovia's complex lake-and-island system swirled amidst Olmstedian stands of trees and grasslands. And Riverside's formal gardens, with a spectacular overlook on the Niagara River, were situated alongside a series of shallow undulating ponds, known as the Minnow Pools, and a natural wooded area laced with winding paths. Like the first three parks, each of the outer ring parks provided access to nature and recreation for local neighborhoods, while at the same time offering unique attractions that made it a must-see destination for residents across the city.

The picturesque historic South Park Lake.

The "Period of Significance"

To restore a historic landscape, one must first establish a framework for evaluating how past and future modifications to the site affect its historic integrity. Usually this involves identifying the site's period of significance, or the time period during which it attained historical prominence. Because Buffalo's Olmsted Park System was built over the course of several decades, it is difficult to identify a single period of significance for the entire system. The most straightforward marker for doing so is the time during which the Olmsted Firm (Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and his sons) was actively involved in the design and development of the park system. This period began with the initial construction of the six major parks—the 1870s for the three oldest parks, and the 1880s and 1890s for the three newer parks—and lasted until 1915, when the Olmsted Firm ended its consulting relationship with Buffalo city planners. In this case, the period of significance has been extended slightly into the 1920s to take advantage of the availability of photographs that accurately depict the park system.

The integrity of this system was highlighted by the stately parkways, or "linear parks," that Olmsted designed to connect the parks to each other and to the city overall. The result was an urban landscape embroidered with "green ribbons" that wove serene natural settings into a bustling industrial center. These parkways and green spaces allowed visitors to navigate from one park to the other while staying within a sylvan, park-like setting. These connections made visible the integrity of the system as a whole, and served the broader function of linking disparate parts of the city.

The system integrity is further tied to the fabric of the city because of its close relationship to the radial street plan of Buffalo. The radials laid out by Joseph Ellicott in 1804 connect each of the first three parks directly to downtown, and the corresponding grid actually connects each park to the waters of the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers as well as Lake Erie.

Importance of Buffalo's Olmsted Park System

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is unique in many ways. First, the system is well known because it was conceived of, and designed by, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., the "father of landscape architecture," who, in fact, named the profession. Olmsted's first major project was New York City's Central Park. This imaginative landscape not only launched his career but also sparked an entirely new movement for parks and recreation. His work highlighted the need for green space and outdoor activity in the country's rapidly industrializing cities.[2] Ultimately, Olmsted designed parks, estates, and neighborhoods throughout the United States and Canada.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. as a young man. (Source – Alex, William. (1994) *Calvert Vaux: Architect and Planner.* New York, NY: New York, Ink.)

The achievements of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. were many, including not only Central Park, but also Prospect Park in New York City, the Niagara Reservation (the country's oldest state park) in Niagara Falls, the Biltmore Estate in North Carolina, and the U.S. Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C. He is also well known for his campus designs of Cornell, Yale, and Stanford Universities, the Emerald Necklace of parks in Boston, and Mt. Royal in Montreal.

After early careers as a sailor, journalist, and anti-slavery activist, Olmsted turned his attention to landscape architecture in the 1850s after entering and winning a design competition for New York's Central Park with Calvert Vaux—a partnership that would last for another fifteen years. In the 1890s Olmsted, Sr. retired, leaving his sons to carry on the work of their firm, named simply the Olmsted Brothers. Following in the footsteps of their father, the Olmsted Brothers continued to be leaders of the newly emerging field of landscape architecture until the younger of the two, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., retired in 1949 when the firm closed its doors.

Olmstedian Principles of Design

The term 'Olmstedian Landscape' is often used to describe a certain style of open space, sometimes accurately but often times simplistically to describe a lawn with trees. Charles E. Beveridge, a noted Olmsted scholar, offers the following description of Olmsted's design principles in "The Seven S's."

Scenery: Designs that give a sense of movement through a series of spaces large and small that constantly open up to new views. This is achieved by indefinite boundaries and the play of light and shadow.

Suitability: Respect for the local site and its natural scenery, vegetation, and topography.

Style: Use of different styles with specific purposes: "pastoral" for soothing, "picturesque" for a sense of richness and bounteousness of nature and for a sense of mystery.

Subordination: The subordination of all elements, features and objects to the overall design.

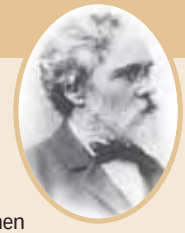
Separation: Separation of areas designed in different styles; separation of movement to ensure safety; separation of conflicting or incompatible uses.

Sanitation: Adequate drainage and engineering, not just surface arrangement; designs to promote physical and mental health of users.

Service: Design serves direct social and psychological needs.

(Source – Beveridge, Charles. (1986) *Toward a Definition of Olmstedian Principles of Design*. National Association for Olmsted Parks.)

Calvert Vaux, The Unsung Hero of Landscape Architecture



Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) was partner to Olmsted in the design and development of the Buffalo park system. He was born in England and trained as an architect. In 1850, he came to the United States to work with Andrew Jackson Downing. His work with Olmsted began in 1857 when the two of them won the competition for the design of Central Park with their "Greensward" plan. Vaux was responsible for the design of most of the early architecture in the Buffalo Olmsted parks including the Delaware Park boathouse, the Spirehead Gazebo, and the Parade House in The Parade. His creative designs contributed significantly to the Olmsted Park System.

(Source – Kowsky, Francis. (2002) *Calvert Vaux: The Unsung Hero of Landscape Architecture.*)

IMAGE

Calvert Vaux collaborated with Olmsted on the design of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. (Source – Alex, William. (1994) *Calvert Vaux: Architect and Planner.* New York, NY: New York, Ink.)

The City of Buffalo is built on the structure of the Olmsted parks, Ellicott's radial street plan, and its location on the water. (Source – *Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan*. (2006) Prepared for the City of Buffalo by the Office of Strategic Planning, Carter International, The Urban Design Project, and the Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth.)

The second important characteristic of Buffalo's park system is that it was a unique milestone in Olmsted's remarkable career. It was his first full system of interconnected parks and parkways, and represents one of his largest bodies of work. His designs for an extensive system of parks linked by wide, European-style parkways and elegant traffic circles was integrated into Buffalo's Joseph Ellicott radial street design. Indeed, Olmsted was inspired by Buffalo's design, famously declaring it to be the "best planned city…in the United States if not the world."[3] Today, Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is listed as a cultural landscape on the National Register of Historic Places, and is one of a very small number of Olmsted park and parkway systems in the U.S.

'Cultural Landscape' Designation

The National Park Service defines a cultural landscape as "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values." In short, it is a site that is historically significant because of both its cultural importance and its physical attributes. There are four types of cultural landscapes: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes. Buffalo's Olmsted Park System was named a cultural landscape, specifically a historic designed landscape, and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 by the National Park Service, United States Department of Interior. This relatively new designation is important, because it expands what it means to restore historic sites like Buffalo's Olmsted Park System. For instance, rather than only accounting for the physical landscape of the parks themselves, it also takes into account what the parks have meant—and continue to mean—to the community.

(Source – Beveridge, Charles. (1986) *Toward a Definition of Olmstedian Principles of Design*. National Association for Olmsted Parks.)

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Buffalo grew rapidly from 1866 (right) to 1902 (below). The Buffalo Olmsted Park System did not exist in 1866, but much of it, including elements that no longer exist, is highlighted on the 1902 map. (Source – University at Buffalo Online Library Mapping Collection.)

21st Century Park Issues

Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is recognized as a unique historic cultural landscape and is celebrated as one of America's greatest park systems. It was a model in the late 19th and early 20th century of how parks and cities could grow together to meet the needs of urban populations and booming urban centers. Work was still progressing on the parks at the turn of the century when Buffalo had become one of the leading commerce centers in the U.S. Located at the terminus of the Great Lakes shipping routes, the city had long dominated water transportation and trade, particularly since the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. Even as the country's economic focus turned from shipping to railroads, Buffalo continued to thrive. A network of railroads linked Buffalo to New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and other points east that had formerly been served by the Canal. In 1901 at the celebration of the Pan American Exposition, Buffalo was second only to Chicago in the number of railroads terminating in the city. It was within a day's journey for more than 40 million people across the country.

As the 20th century progressed, however, Buffalo, like many industrial cities, declined in population and wealth. In the last third of the 20th century, cities such as Buffalo were reeling from the effects of globalization and suburbanization—jobs went overseas, cities were emptied, resources for public amenities were non-existent. The once cherished parks came to be viewed as a burden on overstretched budgets instead of Olmsted's idea of essential elements of dynamic urban centers. The parks, underfunded, slipped into decline and no longer served the citizens as spaces for recreation and renewal. Cities began to question the viability of parks as a contributing urban form and considered Olmsted's vision as outdated and romantic.

At the dawn of the 21st century, how are urban parks faring? Do citizens have the same needs imagined by Olmsted and park planners over 100 years ago? Can a system of parks such as Buffalo's actually meet contemporary recreational needs? Do people really need contact with nature? What are park issues for the 21st century and is Olmsted's 19th century vision relevant today? And how do we justify the cost of open green spaces during an era of increasingly tight budgets? The following section explores some recent research on the role of parks in cities and offers a test of Olmsted's 19th century ideas against the knowledge we have today.

Parks Heal Urban Ills and Contribute to the Wealth of Cities

A growing body of literature has recently documented the importance of parks to the health and wealth of a city. Research shows, for example, that well-kept and high quality urban parks bring financial resources and economic revitalization to a city. More than that, access to parks encourages physical activity and improves a city's air and water quality.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, like the other Olmsted parks, provides places for children to be active.

Parks and Public Health: Olmsted and the city leaders who developed Buffalo's park system in the late 19th century believed that parks, as places of nature, would heal city residents from the stresses of urban life. In recent years, this belief has been borne out by a number of scientific studies. For instance, research has shown that access to nature reduces hospital stays, promotes feelings of good health, and even decreases the symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder in young children.[4]

Perhaps even more important, recent studies suggest that ready access to public parks reduces the incidence of obesity and its many associated health problems. Obesity has increased so dramatically in recent years that it has been termed an "epidemic" in both popular and medical literature. According to data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, nearly a third of all children and adolescents are either overweight or at risk for being overweight. And the number of adults with obesity has reached 66.3 percent.[5]

The Center for Disease Control reports that when people live near parks their physical activity increases by 25 percent, and their risk for obesity decreases correspondingly. Those without nearby parks, by contrast, are at greater risk for obesity and suffer significantly more health problems. "Living far from safe and well-equipped parks and public open spaces is more than an inconvenience." The CDC concludes that "it is a contributing factor to this serious public health threat facing the nation."[6]

Obesity and its related health problems incur substantial costs. Recent studies indicate that obesity and physical inactivity cost as much as $94 billion a year, or 9.4 percent of annual health expenses in the United States.[7] According to the Center for Disease Control, if inactive people became active, the U.S. would save $77 billion every year in medical costs alone.[8] Not surprisingly, public health researchers are increasingly advocating the development, restoration, and expansion of city parks.

A Physically Active Citizenry Saves Money

What does this mean for Buffalo and Erie County? Buffalo has 292,000 people, over 25 percent of whom live in poverty and receive medical assistance. Let's estimate that at least one-half do not live near parks. The Center for Disease Control's research has found that people living near parks actually exercise more. If we provided nearby parks to all communities, it would amount to a savings of $50 million/ year of public monies devoted to health care for Buffalo alone.

(Source – Breinlich, Angelika, Laura Quebral Fulton, Jonathan Hastings, Holly Lindstrom, Mark McGovern, Megha Pareka, and Jaclyn Patrignani. Under the Guidance of Professor Lynda Schneekloth and Professor Robert Shibley. (2005) *Green Infrastructure Report.* Buffalo, NY: University at Buffalo.)

Parks and the Environment: The trees and vegetation in parks are, as Olmsted said, the "lungs of the city," crucial for reducing air pollution. In New York City, for example, it is estimated that trees remove 1,821 metric tons of air pollution per year.[9] In addition to decreasing air pollution, parks benefit the environment by enhancing water quality and moderating temperatures. Parks, because they are spaces full of plants, absorb and filter rainfall, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, and control erosion. In this manner, parks are a major benefit to a city's environmental quality as well as its pocketbook.

Stormwater runoff is the biggest polluter of waterways in the U.S. In response to this problem, new federal regulations require cities to account for the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff from their impervious urban surfaces. In cities like Buffalo that have 'combined sewer systems' and treat stormwater with sewage, the problem is exacerbated. In heavy rains, raw sewage enters rivers and lakes because of the amount of stormwater discharged into the city's sewer system. Buffalo's Sewer Authority could support parks and green space to help eliminate overflows.

Indeed, parks and green spaces already save the city money by absorbing rainfall. A 2003 study of Buffalo and Lackawanna, for example, found that trees and green spaces provided 17.7 million cubic feet of water storage during an average storm—a cost savings of $35.5 million a year.[10] Renovation and expansion of Buffalo's park system could help eliminate the stormwater problem and save the city an enormous expense.

The Bog Garden in South Park, designed by the Olmsted Brothers, helps collect stormwater.

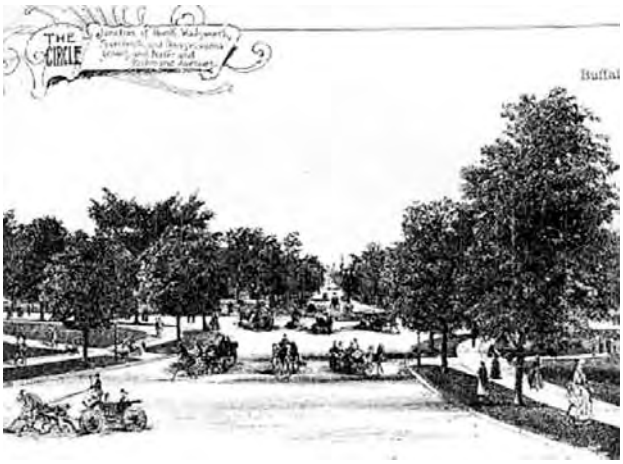
Buffalo Trees Provide Over $800,000 in Air Quality Value Each Year

The Forest Service estimates that over a 50-year life span, a single tree contributes:

- $31,250 worth of oxygen
- $62,900 worth of air pollution control
- $37,500 worth of water
- $31,250 worth of soil erosion control

(Source – *Urban Ecosystem Analysis Buffalo-Lackawanna Area Erie County, New York.* (2003) Prepared for the USDA Forest Service by American Forests.)

Moreover, trees and green spaces benefit the environment by moderating city temperatures. Astonishingly, the evaporation from a single tree can produce the cooling effect of 10 room-sized air conditioners operating 24 hours a day.[11] Using trees and green spaces to reduce Buffalo's "heat island effect" would not only decrease the energy and costs required for air conditioning and refrigeration, but would also improve public health by reducing mortality rates during summertime heat waves.



The areas around the Olmsted system, like the Symphony Circle neighborhood, quickly became fashionable places to live.

Parks and Wealth: Olmsted and his 19th century advocates believed that the Buffalo park system would promote the city's wealth. This belief has been confirmed by recent studies showing that cities with well maintained parks attract more businesses and workers, and bring in greater tax revenues.[12]

A recent study of Philadelphia is a case in point. Philadelphia is an older city that suffers from many of the same problems as Buffalo: its population is shrinking, aging, and losing economic strength. However, in areas of the city with easy access to parks, residents' educational attainment was higher, their median income increased, unemployment declined, and their housing values rose. Higher property values near parks, in turn, increased property taxes and the city's tax base; in fact, researchers estimate that urban parks increase tax revenues by as much as 30 percent.[13] In short, this study shows that the very people that cities like Philadelphia and Buffalo need to attract and retain—those who will increase the community's education and income levels, as well as boost the city's tax base—are attracted to cities with safe, well maintained parks.

Chicago's Millennium Park is a prime example of the capital gains that can result from investing in urban parks. Costing hundreds of millions of dollars to build, Millennium Park unsurprisingly sparked great controversy among the city's residents. Today, however, the benefits of the city's investment are undeniable. Chicago leaders report that the park has increased real estate values by as much as $1.4 billion, and generated millions of dollars in revenue for nearby businesses that cater to the 4 million tourists who visit the park each year.[14] Millennium Park is proof that what may initially appear to voters as a public "subsidy" can, in reality, be a lucrative "investment."

What we have learned through contemporary research is that Olmsted was right: parks do function as he originally conceived them, offering opportunities for relaxation, recreation and contact with natural processes—bringing health and wealth into our urban spaces.

Yet even if we assume parks to be a vital part of vibrant cities, many difficult issues can stymie the development and maintenance of city parks. This is particularly true when the parks are not only important to the day-to-day lives of city-dwellers, but are sites of historical significance as well.

Parks, Cultural History, and Politics

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System that we plan for, use, and value has a unique history worthy of national recognition. But like all places on the earth, the land occupied by the parks are not just static physical spaces but is the site of evolving uses, ownerships, remembrances, activities, meanings, and conflicts over many years. This section addresses this condition in two ways. First, the report offers a brief overview of the history of the places both before and after the conception and installation of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. The second part of this section discusses the conflicts and controversies built into park planning in general, and what insights we can glean from the manner in which Olmsted himself addressed them

Layers of Cultural History

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is a cultural landscape, designated as a historic designed landscape by the National Park Service (NPS) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). But the lands on which they rest had a history before Olmsted designed and built the parks, and other historic events have occurred in the parks since their inception.

Can Parks Reduce Crime?

One study shows a 26 percent decrease in youth offenses after the implementation of recreation programs

(Source – Witt, Peter and John Crompton. (1997) "The Protective Factors Framework: A Key to Programming for Benefits and Evaluating for Results." Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 15(3). p 1-18.)

What does this mean for Buffalo and Erie County? Erie County had about 2,000 youths in detention in 2002, costing almost $200/day each for housing, feeding and guarding. A reduction of 26 percent because of increased recreational programs would be a savings of nearly $3.6 million annually—easily enough to pay for these programs and green spaces.

For example, Delaware Park incorporates events that preceded Olmsted's design. When Olmsted visited Buffalo, the land on either side of the Scajaquada Creek was farmland, and the area was called Flint Hill. During the War of 1812, much of this land was owned by Erastus Granger, who was the first postmaster general in the United States.[15] In the middle of the meadow in Delaware Park lay the bodies of 300 soldiers who died in the War of 1812. Today, there is a marker at the site and golfers move over and around this sacred ground.

Even after the park was in place, the 1901 Pan American Exposition hugged the north shore of the Gala Water (Hoyt Lake), although most of it was held in areas just north of Delaware Park. We see remnants of this great celebration in the New York State Pavilion, now known as the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. These cultural landscapes are an underlay of the current park system, and could be used to enhance the richness of the already outstanding cultural history that Olmsted brought to the area.

There are two particular stories overlapping some of the park system that could be interpreted to enrich the visitor experience to the parks: the history of native people in this area and the story of the Underground Railroad and the civil rights movement in the U.S. This section will address some of the layers of cultural history. (See the *Layers of Cultural History Report* in the Supplemental Materials for more detailed information)

Native Americans and the Olmsted Park System

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and Native Americans of the Niagara Frontier held a common viewpoint: water is Buffalo's greatest resource. While early indigenous people relied upon the region's freshwater resources to fulfill their basic living and transportation needs, Olmsted saw these local waterways as a means to support a unique system of parks throughout a growing city. Due to this shared interest in water, one can find many unique and historically significant Native American sites that overlap the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.

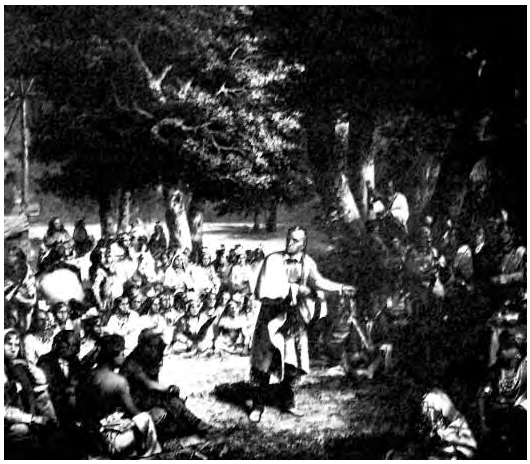
Prior to the 19th century, the Niagara Frontier was a vast wilderness full of pristine waterways along which Native Americans dwelled in small villages, grew their crops, fished and hunted, worshipped, and warred among tribes. During that time, there were more local creeks and streams in Buffalo than there are today. Archeological evidence shows that indigenous people dwelled throughout the Niagara Region since the receding Wisconsin ice sheets began unveiling the Great Lakes (about 10-15,000 years ago). The Kahkwa, also known as the Neutrals or Neutral Nation, was one of the earliest tribes known to early explorers. Their main village lay in what is today the Seneca Indian Park on Buffum Street near Cazenovia Park. It is widely believed that most Kahkwa were assimilated into the Seneca as they moved to the Niagara Region, and few traces of the Neutrals exist after the late 17th century.[16]

The Haudenosaunne, or the Iroquois Confederacy, was known as the most powerful Indian Nation in North America before and after the American Revolution.[17] Of the six nations, the Seneca were known as the "keepers of the western door" because of their location as the first line of defense against warring tribes from the west such as the Huron and Erie. The Seneca moved permanently into the Niagara region after the Scorched Campaign of General Sullivan in 1799 destroyed their villages and fields in the Finger Lakes Region. Like the Neutrals, the Seneca chose strategic inland locations for their villages along the many local creeks and streams, avoiding land directly along Lake Erie that was subject to swells and other harsh natural elements.

This entire area once belonged to native people and it is therefore not a surprise to find traces of their habitation throughout Buffalo. However, the most significant area of Native American heritage in the Buffalo Olmsted Park System is Cazenovia Park, and it is here that this underlay of history can be most fully interpreted.

Archeological evidence shows that *Tga'-non-da-ga'-yos-hah* (meaning "The old village") was the site of the original Kahkwa village and burial ground on Buffalo Creek. The Seneca established the center of the Buffalo Creek Reservation (1794-1826) near what is the main entrance of Red Jacket Parkway. The village itself was around Seneca Indian Park on Buffum Street, just beyond Cazenovia Park's northeast edge. The sacred Seneca burial ground was the original resting place of Mary Jamieson, a settler who was captured by the Seneca as a child but chose to remain living with them as an adult, and the great orator Chief Segoyawatha or Red Jacket, whose body was later relocated to Forest Lawn cemetery in Buffalo where it resides today.

The Seneca Mission House (or *Tga-is -da-ni-yont*—"the place of the suspended bell"), located in the center of *Tga'-non-da-ga'-yos-hah,* was the source of much debate among the traditional Seneca and the quickly growing factions of Christian Seneca upon the reservation. The mission was also looked upon with great disapproval by Red Jacket and Farmer's Brothers who spoke out vehemently against outside religious influences.[18]



Red Jacket, a great orator, spoke at his own trial for practicing "witchcraft." (Source – Eberle, Scott, and Joseph Grande. (1987) *A Pictorial History of Buffalo and Erie County: Second Looks.* Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company.)

This map shows important locations of Buffalo's Native American and African American history in relation to the Olmsted Park System.

The Seneca referred to Cazenovia Creek as *Ga-e-na-dah-daah,* which translates to *"slate rock bottom."* It was on the flats of this shallow waterway that some of the more prestigious Seneca constructed single-family cabins, rather than the traditional longhouse. The current location of Cazenovia Park was the home of two prominent Seneca leaders: Chief Pollard near the corner of Abbott and Cazenovia Street on the western side of the creek and Chief Silverheels across the creek at what is now the casino in Cazenovia Park.

The land occupied by the Buffalo Olmsted Park System shares a great deal of history with local Native American tribes, especially the Seneca of the Iroquois Confederacy. Olmsted may have been aware of this history, and the simple and descriptive names that he used for the parks—such as The Front and The Bank—are consistent with those used by Native Americans to describe the natural characteristics of the area such as Dyos-daah'-ga-eh or *"the rocky bank."* It would therefore seem appropriate to recognize this overlapping heritage within the Buffalo Olmsted Park System and to provide visitors with a basic interpretation of this historical relationship that the parks and parkways share with local Native Americans.

African Americans and the Olmsted Park System

Besides being the father of landscape architecture, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. was also a great writer and social commentator. Many of his forward-thinking views were expressed in a series of travel books such as *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (1852), in which Olmsted offered his keen observations and unique perspectives on the changing social and physical landscapes of the mid-1800s. In the years immediately preceding the American Civil War, Olmsted published two literary works on the southern United States—*A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, with Remarks on Their Economy* (1856) and *A Journey to the Back Country* (1860). Both were meant to give an impartial examination of the practice of slavery in the South. Olmsted's initial objective was to provide readers with sound arguments and to bring about possible resolutions for the brewing conflicts leading up to the Civil War. Instead, these works further exposed the conceptual flaws, socioeconomic failings, and moral atrocities of slavery. In *A Journey,* Olmsted wrote:

> Slavery…withholds all encouragement from the laborer to improve his faculties and his skill; destroys his self-respect; misdirects and debases his ambition, and withholds all the natural motives, which lead men to endeavor to increase their capacity of usefulness to their country and the world.[19]

By the time Olmsted came to Buffalo, the Civil War had resolved the issues of slavery. Buffalo/Niagara had played an important role through its participation in the Underground Railroad with famous people such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman moving through the region. Although much of Buffalo's African American history centers around the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church and Broderick Park on the Niagara River, it is said that Frederick Douglass spoke in what is now Front Park in 1843 at the National Negro Convention.

Frederick Douglass spent some of his life living near Buffalo in Rochester, NY. (Source – National Archives and Records Administration.)

The names of parts of the Olmsted Park System are also related to the history of slavery in the United States. Humboldt Park and Parkway were named for Alexander von Humboldt, who was a scientist who opposed slavery in the Americas. He once stated that "without doubt, slavery is the greatest of all the evils which have afflicted mankind."[20] Agassiz Circle, which connects the Humboldt Parkway to Delaware Park, was named after Louis Agassiz, a noted Swiss naturalist who studied under von Humboldt. Agassiz was a proponent of the polygenic theory, which suggests that different human races are created as different species and are unequal. This theory and his lectures were used to promote slavery.[21] Fillmore Avenue, which runs through the middle of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, was named after President Millard Fillmore, who was from Western New York. As a lawyer in the Buffalo area, Fillmore was once retained as counsel for an alleged fugitive slave. Fillmore served without accepting a fee, because he considered it "his duty to help the poor fugitive." As President of the United States, however, Fillmore later signed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.[22]

The most salient story of African Americans and the Olmsted system is the tragic history of the destruction of Olmsted's Humboldt Parkway to build an expressway. The area around The Parade, later called Humboldt Park, was a center of black settlement between 1910 and 1970. As Mark Goldman describes in his book, *City on the Edge,* the parkway was very important in the lives of the community:

> From their home on Humboldt Parkway, Dr. Lydia Wright and her husband, Dr. Frank Evans, watched the same sight. Frederick Law Olmsted had laid out the parkway as a woodsy link to join Humboldt Park to Delaware Park. The parkway, the African American couple from Baltimore knew, held the neighborhood together. It was the place where the children played together and the grownups walked and talked. Like everybody else in the neighborhood, Wright and Evans came to the park to sit, to walk, and to socialize with friends and neighbors. The couple had tried to stop the project by organizing their neighbors and lobbying officials in Buffalo and Albany about the plan to build a highway through the heart of their neighborhood; they received no response.[23]

Today, the most obvious connection of the black community and Olmsted is the 1977 rededication of Humboldt Park as Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. This park today lies in the center of an African American community in Buffalo and remains an ongoing focus of efforts to provide both active and passive recreational opportunities to the surrounding neighborhood while restoring the Humboldt Basin to its original prominence.

Like local Native American history, the significant African American history engrained in the Buffalo Olmsted Park System should be recognized. The injustices of slavery and racial discrimination, as well as the heroic stories of the Underground Railroad and the Civil Rights movement, add additional value and meaning to Olmsted's parks.

Frank Grant: African American Baseball Pioneer

At Olympic Park on Richmond Avenue (one of Olmsted's parkways) the Buffalo Bisons of the integrated International League played their baseball games between 1884 and 1888. The grandstand seated 4,000 fans and was considered an innovation of the time. During the 1886 season, the Bisons recruited Frank Grant—their first African American player—whose outstanding skills both at the plate (.340 batting average in 1878) and in the field quickly turned the team around. That same year, Jim Crow laws banned all African Americans from the game. Frank Grant helped pioneer the Negro League in baseball that continued until the 1940s. In 2006, Frank Grant was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame by the Negro League Committee.

(Source - Overfield, Joseph. (1955) "When Baseball Came to Richmond Avenue." *Niagara Frontier,* 2(2). Summer. p 3-10.)

Controversies Built into Parks

Investing in city parks is no simple matter. As with all urban places, parks are not simply physical landscapes; they are social spaces, invested over time with the changing hopes and conflicts of the community. Buffalo's Olmsted parks are no different. From the beginning, they were sites of political debate as well as civic pride. Controversy was built into the park system, and it will undoubtedly continue to be a part of the parks' legacy. But such controversy is the starting point for discussion, rather than the end point. And the vision and parks implemented in the last century offer us some ideas about how to manage the controversies.

City planners, policymakers, historic preservationists, and neighborhood activists each approach parks with a different set of ideas and priorities. This unavoidable fact leads to a number of important questions: who determines the fate of Buffalo's Olmsted parks, and how can parks be transformed to reflect modern-day uses and still be preserved to maintain the historical integrity of their original design?

Buffalo's Olmsted parks present a number of difficult issues for city policymakers, historic preservationists, and neighborhood activists to discuss. For instance, are they "neighborhood" parks designed to meet local needs, or do they "belong" to the city as a whole? Should they favor certain kinds of recreation—structured versus unstructured, for example? Who gets to decide? Should modern-day needs, such as the speedy flow of traffic, take precedence over the parks' original designs that favored leisurely parkways and elegant traffic circles? And how do the Olmsted parks fit into the larger park system in Buffalo and Erie County? Each of these issues has been, and will continue to be, discussed. Nevertheless, it is useful to see how these issues were historically resolved.

The apparent conflict between the parks' "neighborhood" needs and "citywide" needs is one addressed by Olmsted in the early park design. Each historic park was spacious enough and programmatically complex enough to adequately serve the needs of neighborhood residents, while also featuring unique elements that made it a citywide destination within the system. Olmsted thus struck a very workable balance: neighborhoods got their own fully functioning local park, along with easy access to the whole park system, and the city got a comprehensive park system that provided for both coherence and diversity.

Olmsted's legacy can also be insightful—although not definitive—for seemingly intractable quandaries such as the debate between structured and unstructured uses, i.e., how much space should be dedicated to a single sport and how much should be available for unstructured recreation. Buffalo's Olmsted parks had been designed and largely completed before the idea of using parks primarily for sports-type recreation emerged as a cultural expectation. Parks were still thought to be places for contact with nature and informal active recreation. But soon after the parks were in place, popular notions of recreation changed. Around the turn of the century, right about the time that Olmsted Sr. retired and handed over the reins to his sons, structured sports facilities became enormously popular. In the course of the 20th century, baseball diamonds were placed in the parks followed by tennis courts, golf courses, and hockey rinks.

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Many people use the parks for unstructured recreation.

On the one hand, the historical record is clear. Olmsted designed the parks as open, unstructured spaces that could accommodate a wide range of activities—leisurely strolls, jogging, children's games, polo, bicycle riding, sledding, ice skating, lawn tennis and croquet, music and circus shows, and so forth. But because some sports activities were brought in during the period of significance, the argument about 'appropriate' park uses cannot be resolved by reference to historical precedent—either for or against. Rather, the tension must be continually addressed and resolved in each situation.

The history of park controversies also offers insight into the immensely complicated issue of transportation. In Olmsted's time, water transport was Buffalo's economic lifeblood and the use of the waterfront was industrial. Nonetheless, Olmsted insisted that the park system reach the water's edge, even if it would dislocate industrial activity. As we know, he was not always successful, but there is no evidence that Olmsted or Buffalo's city planners saw this as an either/or choice between leisure and productivity. Front and Riverside Parks were located at the water's edge as envisioned, while South Park was moved inland away from the proposed waterfront site.

Today, roads rather than waterways are at the center of this debate. In our time, the economic life of the city demands smooth-moving automobile traffic as much as it historically depended on shipping and freight transportation. In recent decades, however, traffic concerns have overshadowed—and in some cases nearly devastated—the park system. Parks have been bisected by major expressways, former parkways have

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Above:

This trolley on Parkside Avenue took people to and from Delaware Park. (Source – The Buffalo History Works <www.buffalo.historyworks.com>)

Below:

This map shows the extensive system of parks in Erie County and Buffalo.

themselves become park-devouring highways, and parklands have been annexed by nearby roadways. Here, Olmsted's legacy is unambiguous: be respectful of, and even capitalize on, the importance of transportation. Yet, at the same time, retain ample space for recreation and nature that make the city a home for the people who live and work there.

The tension between the past, present, and future of Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is enormously complex; however, it is not an impossible problem to address. Indeed, working together on these issue offers us the once-in-a-lifetime chance to deliberate and transform the very shape of our community. Olmsted's legacy does suggest that we avoid rigid either/or formulations—local vs. citywide, structured vs. unstructured, expressways vs. parkways. This way of thinking underestimates and limits the rich possibilities of our legacy.

In the same way that Olmsted offered a vision of green spaces in the city to relieve the congestion of urban life in the 19th century, citizens at the dawn of the 21st century bring their knowledge, insight, and vision to the meaning and uses of parks for future generations. What will we leave for the health and enjoyment future generations?

From Parks to a Park System to 'Green Infrastructure'

When Olmsted and others started to design parks in the mid to late 19th century, parks were a new idea for an increasingly urban population. Prior to the Industrial Revolution most people lived in rural areas, and there was no need for parks as we conceive of them today. But the increasing density of cities and the squalor of many parts of them demanded some form of address. Parks, as patches of green within the grey, emerged as a way to give the city lungs and its residents a touch of the natural world.

The Olmsted Park System represented the first parks in Buffalo and Erie County. However, between 1900 and 1929, while the Olmsted parks were still being developed, more than thirteen other parks were added to the city's system.[24] Since that time, many other parks have been established for city and county residents. In fact, there are a variety of park types found throughout Erie County and the City of Buffalo; county forests with recreation trails; active recreation parks, including golf courses and other sports fields; state parks; nature preserves; small neighborhood parks; trails; and bike paths. In total there are 132 parks comprising 17,994 acres in Erie County (See Table 1). The six major Olmsted parks comprise a mere 4.7 percent of this acreage.

Table 1 | Parks within All of Erie County

	Number	Total Size (acres)	Average Size (acres)
County Parks	**28**	**10,239**	**366**
Parks	24	7,068	295
Forests	4	3,171	793
State Parks	**6**	**3,423**	**571**
Municipal Parks	**98**	**4,332**	**44**
Major Olmsted	6	846	141
Other	92	3,486	38
TOTAL PARKS	**132**	**17,994**	**136**

Source – 2006 Erie County GIS data and 2002 Erie County Parks System Master Plan

In Buffalo within the last ten years, eight parks and natural habitat areas have been added, mostly along the city's waterways, providing people access to areas that were formerly committed to manufacturing and industry. These include North Squaw Island Park, Towpath Park, Times Beach Nature Preserve, Gallagher Beach, Buffalo River at Ohio Street, Buffalo River at Smith Street, Buffalo River at Bailey Avenue, and Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Area along the Buffalo River. All of the state, county, and municipal parks within the City of Buffalo account for 1,459 acres of recreational space, with the six major Olmsted parks accounting for 846 acres, or close to 60 percent of that space.

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is a unique part of the park system in Buffalo and Erie County. They are the only historically designated cultural landscape, and the only parks designed by Olmsted. On the other hand, they are only a small portion (4.7 percent) of the park and recreation opportunities of the total countywide system, and cannot, and should not bear a disproportionate burden of park programming.

The park on the Buffalo River called Seneca Bluffs is one of the newest additions to the Buffalo park system.

Table 2 | Park Acreage within the City of Buffalo

	Total Size (acres)
County Parks	**137**
State Parks	**93**
Municipal Parks	**1,229**
Major Olmsted	846
Other	383
TOTAL PARKS	**1,459**

Source – 2006 Erie County GIS data and 2002 Erie County Parks System Master Plan

Erie County Parks System Master Plan

Erie County has prepared a master plan, released in 2002, for its park system designed to guide investment and protection of the park system over the next 20 years. The goal of the plan is to enhance not only the parks facilities but also recreational options and service delivery. The plan contains an inventory and assessment of existing facilities and a review and update of existing plans for individual parks, including new plans for several parks (This plan does not include the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, as the Conservancy is generating **The System Plan** separately). The *Erie County Parks System Master Plan* reflects a "rising interest and increased participation in self-directed, nature-based activities," and includes strategies for more sustainable management of vegetation and habitat, increased public awareness and education, an improved signage system, and revised rules and regulations. The plan can be downloaded from http://www.erie.gov/environment/planning_ecdev/parks/.

Greenways and Green Infrastructure: Olmsted brought a vision not just of parks, but of a park system. And what we have today is a municipal system of parks much larger than Olmsted envisioned, although few of these parks are connected. What is unique in the city is the Olmsted connected system of parks: a necklace of green where citizens can move throughout the city within green spaces. Long before greenways gained the popularity they experience today, Olmsted saw the need for connected open space to serve the entire population. A long term goal of many citizens is that all of the Olmsted parks, and city and county parks, be connected through greenways.

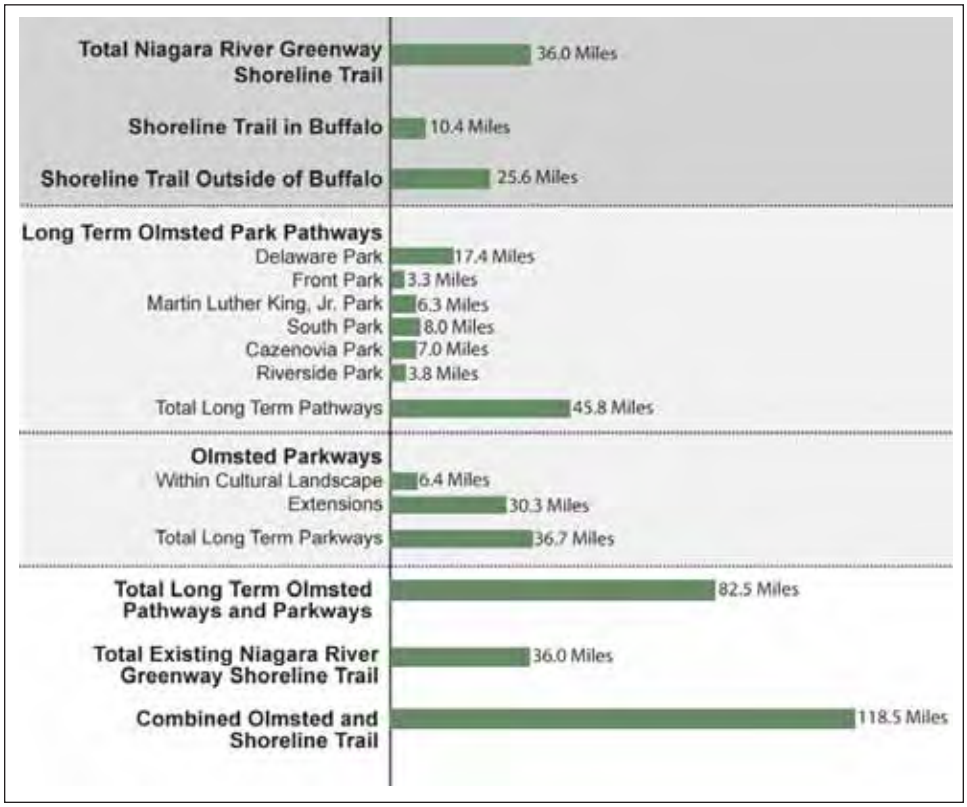
The Olmsted parkways represent one greenway trail system within Buffalo. Within the last ten years, two additional greenway and trail systems have emerged or have been proposed to connect the city to the region: The Shoreline Trail and the proposed Niagara River Greenway. The existing Shoreline Trail runs between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, and provides the U.S. side of the Niagara River with a continuous trail similar to the one offered by the Niagara Parks Commission on the Canadian side. The Niagara River Greenway will build on, and expand, the Shoreline bike trail.

> The Niagara River Greenway is a world-class corridor of places, parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic, and heritage resources and provides access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.[25]

The Niagara River Greenway stretches from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. (Source – *The Niagara River Greenway Plan.* (2007) Prepared for the Niagara River Greenway Commission by Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Engineers.)

The Niagara River Greenway, supported by a steady funding stream through the re-licensing of the Niagara Power Project, has been charged with oversight of this necklace of green. The newly enacted lake-to-lake greenway system includes the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. Together they will provide approximately 118 miles of continuous hiking/biking trails in Western New York after the implementation of **The System Plan.** (See the *Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy: Connecting Parks and People in the Niagara River Greenway* in the Supplemental Materials)

The idea of parks as public amenities was new in the 19th century. In a similar way, 'green infrastructure' is a new idea as we move into the 21st century, an idea that incorporates parks but extends them as networks of green to include all open spaces, recreational opportunities, conservation areas, and their connections. Rather than seeing parks inside cities, it depicts cities and settlements inside of green spaces. To call green spaces infrastructure is to speak to its fundamental importance as a part of cities and regions, and to suggest that the services it offers—in terms of quality of life, wealth generation, health, and recreation—are as important and deserving of public support as transportation and water supply. Parks, parkways, and trails are part of a larger green infrastructure that provides not only recreation, but ecological services such as carbon sequestration, stormwater management, biological diversity, and urban heat island reduction—all critical issues as we come to understand the impact of global warming. This 21st century conception of parks as a part of a larger system expands the possibilities and opportunities of an historic landscape such as the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.



Taking Care of the Parks

From Friends of Olmsted Parks to the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

The grassroots community organization Friends of the Olmsted Parks was founded in 1978 to preserve and promote Buffalo's Olmsted Park System. Nearly two decades later, that organization became the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, a groundbreaking non-profit organization that has a number of remarkable achievements. First, the Conservancy has had considerable success in raising funds to maintain and restore the city's Olmsted parks. Second, the organization has established a mutually beneficial partnership with New York City's Central Park Conservancy, which has provided invaluable assistance and, no less important, a much needed role model for successfully restoring and expanding the city's parks. Finally, the Conservancy has developed an innovative and efficient style of zone park management that has improved the appearance and functioning of Buffalo's Olmsted parks. Because of these achievements, Erie County and the City of Buffalo contracted with the Conservancy in 2004 to become the official steward of Buffalo's Olmsted Park System. As a result, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy became the first non-profit organization in the nation to manage a park system.

The Rose Garden in Delaware Park is maintained by Conservancy staff and volunteers.

BUFFALO'S OLMSTED PARK SYSTEM

Restoring the Olmsted Park System

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., following the success of Central Park in New York City, conceived of a broader democratic experiment for Buffalo—an expansive system of parks and parkways that would span the city and offer all residents an escape from urban life by providing easy access to the serenity of the natural world. This vision was particularly appropriate for turn-of-the-century Buffalo. As one of the country's fastest growing and most powerful economic centers, urban land was rapidly being swallowed up by expanding development and, as a result, the quality of life had diminished for many city residents.

Olmsted's original design placed South Park on Lake Erie. (Source – National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline Massachusetts.)

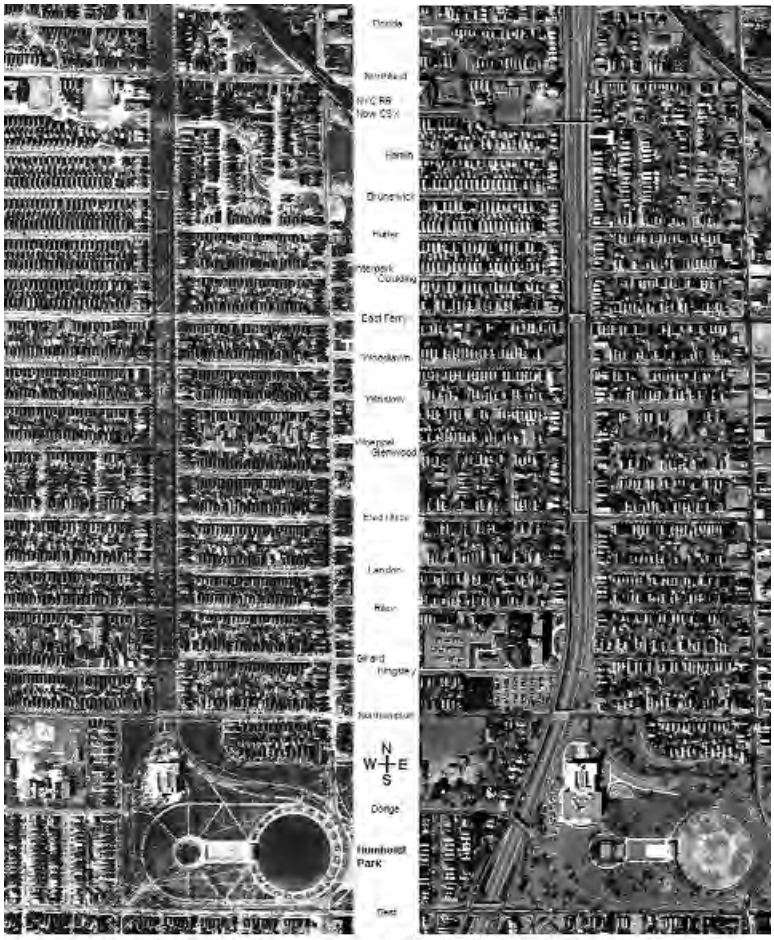
The concept of a series of parks connected by a network of "linear parks" was not only new to Buffalo, it was new to America. The Buffalo Olmsted Park System was Olmsted's first such attempt in the country, and it was arguably his greatest contribution to the city. From the beginning, residents of Buffalo welcomed Olmsted's innovation with open arms as huge crowds flocked to the new parks. In 1880, for example, more than 5,000 people a day (7,000 on weekends) visited Front Park alone.

In truth, Olmsted envisioned an even more elaborate park system for Buffalo than he was able to implement. For instance, his design entailed a connection between the inner ring and outer ring parks—a route through numerous rail lines and industrial sites that proved too difficult to realize. In addition, Olmsted designed a grand canal and parkway along the lakeshore between the originally conceived lake front location of South Park and downtown Buffalo—a route that never materialized. And finally, Olmsted planned a more direct connection between Riverside and Delaware Parks, but this, too, was never implemented.

The task before the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the Buffalo region is to preserve and restore the park system. The planning for this work should take into account not only the parks and parkways that were successfully built, but also those that were never realized but that might make significant contributions to the well-being of the city. It is time that we, as a community,

fulfill our obligation to past and future generations by deciding how best to fulfill Olmsted's vision for Buffalo in the 21st century.

This chapter of **The System Plan** briefly outlines some of the challenges facing park restoration and reports on how people are using the parks. It also provides the guiding principles for restoration and management—the blueprint that framed the recommendations and plan visualization that follow. A brief history precedes the recommendations for each park and parkway system element to place the proposals in context. All recommendations are designated on the accompanying plans.



1927 Humboldt Parkway is Transformed into the Kensington Expressway 1995

This image shows the Humboldt Parkway before and after it was destroyed to make way for the Kensington Expressway. (Source – Copyright J. Henry Priebe Jr. <www.buffalonet.org>)

Challenges and Restoration Opportunities

Within the last century, a wide variety of changes have occurred in the parks. New ideas of what parks are supposed to be, disinvestment following suburbanization, shifts in priorities toward large transportation projects, and more, have all had an impact. In the 20th century, highways have annexed parklands and swallowed parkways; single-use facilities such as baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and golf courses have come to monopolize once open grassy meadows; and the construction of numerous buildings inside the parks has disrupted the natural landscapes that Olmsted designed.

Some of the most damaging changes to the park system include the following:

- The Humboldt Parkway was demolished to make room for the Kensington Expressway.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park lost valuable parkland with the construction of the Kensington Expressway.
- Delaware Park was split in two with the construction of the Scajaquada Expressway.
- A large portion of Gala Water (now called Hoyt Lake) in Delaware Park was lost with the construction of access roads to the Scajaquada Expressway.
- Both Riverside and Front Parks were separated from the water—their *raison d'être*—with the construction of the New York State Thruway.
- Front Park lost parkland and the "borrowed" green space from Fort Porter, and was cut off from the city with the construction of the Peace Bridge and its access roads.
- Cazenovia Park lake was abandoned and eventually eliminated.
- All of the six major parks have been altered from "natural landscapes" with the profusion of single-use facilities such as baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and golf courses.

Although the parks have been damaged, the "bones" of the park system are in good shape. Despite more than a hundred years of growth and change, Buffalo's Olmsted Park System has retained a high degree of historic integrity. The original six major parks still exist close to their original form, and of the connecting parkways, only Humboldt Parkway has been totally lost.

Contemporary Use of the Olmsted Park System

Restoring Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is not simply a matter of reconstructing Olmsted's 19th century designs. Indeed, as social spaces, parks cannot simply be restored like a painting or sculpture. Restoration of parks must not only take into consideration their historical significance, but also their use by the community today.

In 2004 the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy set out to do just that, launching a major study to find out how Buffalo's Olmsted parks are used by modern park goers. Over the course of eight weeks, the study sampled more than 28,000 people that visited Buffalo's Olmsted Parks. Park goers overwhelmingly favored the kinds of activities Olmsted envisioned when he designed the parks over 100 years ago. "Walking, strolling, or running," for example, were by far the most popular activity; "relaxing, socializing, and picnicking" were the second favorite. These two categories combined represented fully 56 percent of park goers' activities. When you include other unstructured activities such as biking, rollerblading, and special events and programs, about 71 percent of park users were engaging in unstructured activities.

The Conservancy's 2004 park-user study did not include people using the three golf courses in the parks. Conservancy data for 2007 golf course usage shows that the golf course in Cazenovia Park was the most heavily used with 24,968 rounds played. The two golf courses in the historic sections of Olmsted parks had fewer rounds played. Delaware Park had 15,049, while South Park had 14,035.

IMAGES

Below left:

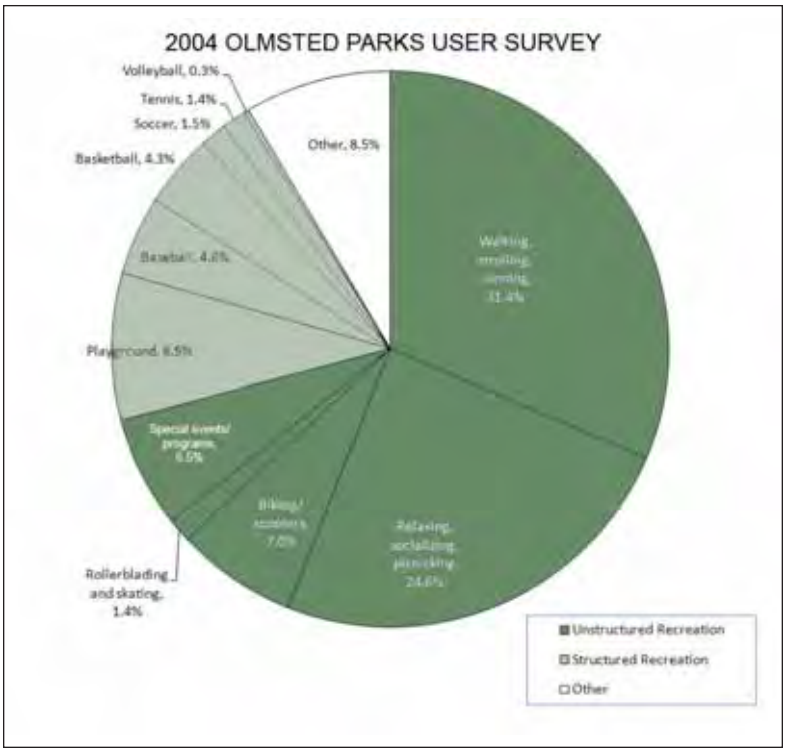
This 2002 aerial photograph shows Front Park surrounded by the Peace Bridge Plaza and the thruway. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse)

Right:

People relax in Riverside Park on nice summer days and go sledding in Delaware Park during the winter.

National and statewide trends reflect the popularity of unstructured recreation. The 2003 National Sporting Goods Association Participation Survey found that exercise walking was the most popular recreation activity, with an estimated 79.2 million participants.[26] The 2000 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment suggests that the highest participation in recreational activities comes in the form of unstructured activities such as walking for exercise or pleasure, attending gatherings in an outdoor area away from home, and picnicking.[27] The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), notes that 75 percent of New York State residents participate in some form of outdoor activity. The top activities were relaxing in the park, walking, swimming, and biking.[28]

The data from the 2004 Conservancy study support Olmsted's original vision of how urban parks might be used by citizens. And yet, over the years, space within the Olmsted parks has been transformed to support structured recreation facilities. These include golf courses, baseball and softball diamonds, soccer and football fields, tennis and basketball courts, ice rinks and swimming pools. While these facilities are an important part of a community, the location of structured recreation facilities in the Olmsted parks makes it difficult for visitors to engage in the unstructured activities for which the parks, in their original form, were so well suited. This is one of the issues that will be addressed in the following recommendations for the parks.



Olmsted Park System: A Regional Asset

In January 2004, the Conservancy commissioned a survey to measure the use of Olmsted parks. A total of 614 randomly selected adults from Erie and Niagara Counties were surveyed: 25 percent were from Buffalo, 55 percent were from the rest of Erie County, and the rest (20 percent) were from Niagara County. They were asked if they had used any of the Olmsted parks in 2003. The results showed that 75 percent of people from Buffalo had used the parks, and 46 percent of people from Erie County had used the parks. Using the total population of Buffalo and Erie County, it is estimated that approximately 505,000 people from all of Erie County used the Olmsted parks in 2003.

Guiding Principles for Restoration and Management of Buffalo's Olmsted Park System

All plans need goals or principles to guide their development, just as all landscapes need a vision to aid in determining what to preserve and what to change. The Trustees and Long Range Planning Committee of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy developed the following principles through ongoing discussion and review to aid in the development and implementation of **The System Plan.** They have attempted to incorporate interests and concerns of the community and other stakeholders in the process. These principles have guided the development of recommendations for the park system and each of the individual parks.

Children learn how to walk, play, and enjoy nature in the parks. **The System Plan** will help ensure that future generations of children have the same opportunities.

Principle One

Protect and rehabilitate the Buffalo Olmsted Park System to preserve and restore the historic integrity of Olmsted's vision. "Brand" the system as a unique and historic landscape. (See the *Historic Preservation Guidelines* Appendix)

- Follow the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) guidelines for the preservation of historic landscapes, including specifications for:
  - Topography
  - Vegetation
  - Circulation
  - Buildings and Structures
  - Site Furnishings and Objects
  - Spatial Organization and Land Patterns
- Follow the National Park Service's (NPS) guidelines for the preservation of cultural landscapes, including specifications for:
  - Organizational Elements of the Landscape
    - Spatial Organization and Land Patterns
  - Character Defining Features of the Landscape
    - Topography
    - Vegetation
    - Circulation
    - Water Features
    - Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects
- Differentiate historic resources from any contemporary interventions.
- Provide informational and directional signage that differentiates between the cultural landscape and other systems.
- Ensure that entrances/exits to the Olmsted parks are identifiable gateways.

- Evaluate buildings and facilities.
  - Rehabilitate and/or adaptively reuse historic structures.
  - Reconstruct historic structures where appropriate.
  - Use 'green' sustainable practices when rehabilitating/reconstructing structures.
  - Decommission/demolish derelict or underutilized non-historic structures.
  - Relocate non-historic activities/structures outside of the parks when appropriate.
  - Do not build new non-historic structures in the Olmsted parks.

Principle Two

Promote safe, secure, diverse, and equitable use of the park system

- Repair/rehabilitate paths and pedestrian circulation.
  - Separate pedestrians and cars where possible.
  - Create a hierarchy of pathway systems according to the park's historic integrity and use.
  - Follow the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for circulation systems.
  - Provide good drainage on pathways.
  - Provide for pedestrian and bike safety and accessibility.
- Rationalize traffic circulation.
  - Limit the impact of automobiles on the parks.
  - Separate pedestrian and automobile circulation.
  - Employ traffic calming measures on park roads.
  - Redirect through-traffic away from the parks where possible.
  - Actively support alternative modes of transportation to parks including walking, bikes, public transit, etc.
  - Use historic street widths and road alignments.
  - Provide good drainage and curbing on roads where appropriate.
- Minimize the impact from parking.
  - No new parking areas; no large parking areas; no parking on the grass; eliminate parking where possible.
  - Reduce the need for permanent parking lots by using alternatives for event overflow parking (i.e., cordoned off areas of sod over structural soils).
  - Provide parking along roadways where possible.
  - Use alternative and porous paving systems.
  - Treat stormwater in biorention areas before entering water systems.
- Ensure park comfort for park users.
  - Provide restrooms that are supervised, safe, and clean.
    - Available during park events.
    - Available during permitted uses or public gatherings.
    - Always open in occupied buildings.
- Provide drinking fountains in high use areas.
- Provide lighting in the parks in areas that are heavily used at night.
  - Retain existing lighting where needed.
  - Maintain lights near used facilities.
  - Maintain lights on city streets, parkways, and circles.
  - Turn park lights off when parks close (10pm) except in locations that need lights for security purposes.
- Support park use.
  - Make parks ADA accessible for diverse populations.
  - Provide easy and safe access to surrounding neighborhoods.
  - Balance unstructured/passive recreation opportunities as provided by Olmsted with structured/active single use allocation of space for recreation.
  - Use moveable equipment components.
  - Improve existing playgrounds but add no new playgrounds.
  - Work with city/county on a recreational plan that includes all city parks, not just Olmsted parks.

Principle Three

Involve partners and ensure meaningful participation by the community.

- Work with partners to implement the plan and to connect the parks to the community.
- Work with community constituencies in identifying park and parkway system restoration and management strategies.
- Negotiate each project with the public.
- Review project development concepts derived from the plan with the public to assure projects are consistent with both the preservation of historic integrity and local community values.
- Non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

Principle Four

Promote sustainable strategies: ecological diversity, green design, and best management practices.

- Protect and restore soils.
  - Compacted soils should be aerated and enriched.
  - Compost organic wastes and reuse the end product.
  - Steeper slopes should be protected through vegetation and/or other means.
- Protect, enhance and diversify vegetation within Olmsted's landscape types (meadows, bogs, arboretum, woodlands, parkland, perimeter wooded areas and so on).
  - Use native species and hardy cultivars.
  - Diversify tree / shrub selections.
  - Restore woodlands by planting in layers.
  - Avoid using pesticides through integrated pest management (IPM) techniques to protect water bodies and natural organisms.
  - Control invasive species.
  - Develop a hierarchy of areas according to level of maintenance.
- Protect and enhance bodies of water.
  - Rehabilitate/reconstruct Olmsted's water systems where appropriate.
  - Interpret Olmsted's water elements where inappropriate to reconstruct.
  - Develop water systems to be as self sustaining as possible.
  - Use native submergent and edging vegetation.
  - Provide public access points and appropriate recreational opportunities on water elements.
  - Prevent pollution (stormwater, combined sewer overflow, animals).
- Provide effective drainage and stormwater control.
  - Infiltrate as much water as quickly as possible through vegetation, good soil, permeable surfaces, rain gardens, biorention areas, and so on.
  - Improve drainage in areas like pathways where standing water is hazardous.
  - Use engineering solutions where necessary to manage the waters.

Principle Five

Expand the system to connect to parks throughout the city and to connect to the Niagara River Greenway.

- Complete the Buffalo Olmsted Park System by constructing and/or interpreting Olmsted's vision.
- Develop new connections between the parks so that there is a green parkway system through the entire city.
- Add new connections between the Olmsted parks and the central city and county, and between the Olmsted parks and the Niagara River Greenway and other trail systems.

IMAGES

Above (top to bottom):

The Gala Water shoreline has been altered, and several of its small inlets have been filled.

The Ivy Bridge in the Rumsey Woods is a symbol of Delaware Park today.

Principle Six

Use the parks and parkways as a community and economic development strategy for adjacent neighborhoods. (Although the Conservancy is not responsible for development outside of the park, the restoration of the park and the management/operations can greatly influence the character and vitality of the adjacent areas.)

- Implement perimeter plantings and parkway landscapes to differentiate the parks from the surrounding neighborhoods while at the same time creating an attractive edge to residential and commercial life.
- Make the entrances and neighborhood connections to the parks clear and articulated so that the parks are clearly an amenity to the surrounding area.

Principle Seven

Manage and maintain the system through daily best practices to achieve the goals of historic integrity, public use, and sustainable practice.

- Develop management and operations guidelines for the Conservancy and outside agencies that maintain elements of the park system according to the plan with consultant support, staff involvement and community participation.
- Reconsider storage, maintenance, and other park operation structures by identifying current and future needs in order to locate and rationalize these structures.

Individual Parks: History and Recommendations

This part of **The System Plan** contains the specific recommendations for each of the six major Olmsted parks. It includes a description and history of each park describing Olmsted's intent, and the restoration challenges. After each overview, there is a list of goals and recommended projects specific to each park linked to the guiding principles for restoration and management. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

To illustrate the restoration plans, there are a series of graphics:

- A map of the restoration plan with projects identified.
- A partial restoration map that overlays the final plan with major obstacles to the realization of that plan.
- A section drawing showing significant features.
- An aerial view of the proposed final park.
- Sketches of restored areas within the parks.

The recommendations start with the inner ring of parks (Delaware, Front and Martin Luther King, Jr.) followed by the outer ring (South, Cazenovia and Riverside). Two final report sections offer recommendations for restoring the parkways, circles and small spaces, and connecting and extending the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.

"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Park Systems"

1. A clear expression of purpose
2. An ongoing planning and community involvement process
3. Sufficient assets in land, staffing and equipment to meet the system's goals
4. Equitable park access
5. User satisfaction
6. Safety from crime and physical hazards
7. Benefits for the city beyond the boundaries of parks

(Source – Harnik, Peter. (2003) *The Excellent City Park System*. Trust for Public Land.)

DELAWARE PARK

Delaware Park, originally called simply The Park, is the centerpiece of the Buffalo park system—the city's own Central Park. In its original state, it was one of the purest expressions of Olmsted's vision in the United States. He hand-picked the site, and, because he conceived of it as one element of a larger park system, he made no compromises as to its character. Other parks could hold stages, parade grounds, formal gardens, and other amenities. The Park would be entirely devoted to a natural landscape of wide rolling meadows, wooded thickets penetrated by winding paths, and a large lake full of islands and inlets—perfect for leisurely boat rides.

Delaware Park is one of the few Olmsted "greenswards" in America today, but its historic character has been compromised over time in both large and small ways. Unfortunately, the park is no longer an island of nature shielded from its urban surroundings. Major roadways now cut through the greenery. The wooded thickets that once fully enveloped the park have thinned or been removed altogether. The grand entrances that once marked it as a world removed from the city's hustle and bustle have all but disappeared. The once wide open meadow is now monopolized by athletic grounds (including golf, tennis, and baseball) and a motley collection of buildings. And yet, the rolling landscape and the stately lake remain—and are still capable of being rescued and restored. (See Table 3)

The historic Gala Water, now called Hoyt Lake, is a defining Olmstedian park feature. (Source – Copyright Chris Andrle <www.andrle.com>)

Table 3 | Delaware Park (368 Acres)

Period of Significance 1870–1920

Timeline		
	1870	Design completed for The Park
	1876	Construction completed for The Park
	1901	Pan American Exposition
	1915	18-hole golf course established
	1919	Rose Garden completed
	1960	Construction completed on Scajaquada Expressway

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
Parkside Lodge	Scajaquada Parkway (destroyed)
Delaware Park Casino	Humboldt Parkway (destroyed)
Hoyt Lake (Gala Water)	Jewett Parkway (never fully realized)
Rumsey Woods	Lincoln Parkway
Rose Garden	Agassiz Circle
The Ivy Bridge	
Japanese Garden	

Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities**
Buffalo Zoological Gardens	18-Hole Golf Course (1)
Dr. Charles R. Drew Science Magnet School	Baseball/Softball diamonds (3)
Forest Lawn Cemetery	Football/Soccer/Rugby fields (6)
The Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society	Lawn Bowling courts (2)
Albright-Knox Art Gallery	Tennis courts (17)
Shakespeare in the Park	Basketball courts (4)
	Playgrounds (3)
	Picnic tables (17)
	Picnic shelters (1)

Delaware Park History

Planning for The Park began in August 1868, when Olmsted toured the countryside north of Buffalo looking for large park sites. He ultimately chose an undeveloped, sloping landscape traversed by the peacefully meandering Scajaquada Creek. This mixture of elements—wide, sloping, grassy areas with water and stands of mature trees—seemed the perfect place for Olmsted to realize his dream of creating a natural oasis within the city. In 1870, he and partner Calvert Vaux submitted a plan for a park in two vast sections. The first was the Gala Water, featuring a 46.5-acre lake created by damming the Scajaquada. The other was the Meadow, highlighting a 234-acre greensward enclosed by a dense grove of trees. The two were linked by a thin spine, along which would run an elegant parkway offering a way to experience the park by traveling through it slowly (Olmsted's preferred method), and connecting the park to the rest of the Buffalo park system.

Every element of The Park was designed to serve a single purpose: allowing city residents, even large numbers of them, to experience the feeling of being enveloped in nature. The lakeshore, for example, was tree-lined and irregularly shaped with many bays and inlets, and the lake was dotted with small islands. Likewise, the Meadow's rolling topography was scattered with strategically placed stands of trees and winding pedestrian pathways. All of these combined elements imitated the randomness of nature within a highly organized park design—allowing for seclusion even amidst crowds and surprises even in a relatively small and well-known landscape. The Park's deliberate placement next to Soldier's Cemetery (now Forest Lawn Cemetery), with its expansive grassy slopes, further fostered the feeling of separation from the city. There were no fuzzy, seeping edges of interpenetration between city and park. When you entered The Park, you passed through the grand Agassiz Circle or down the majestic Lincoln Parkway and suddenly you were surrounded by nature.

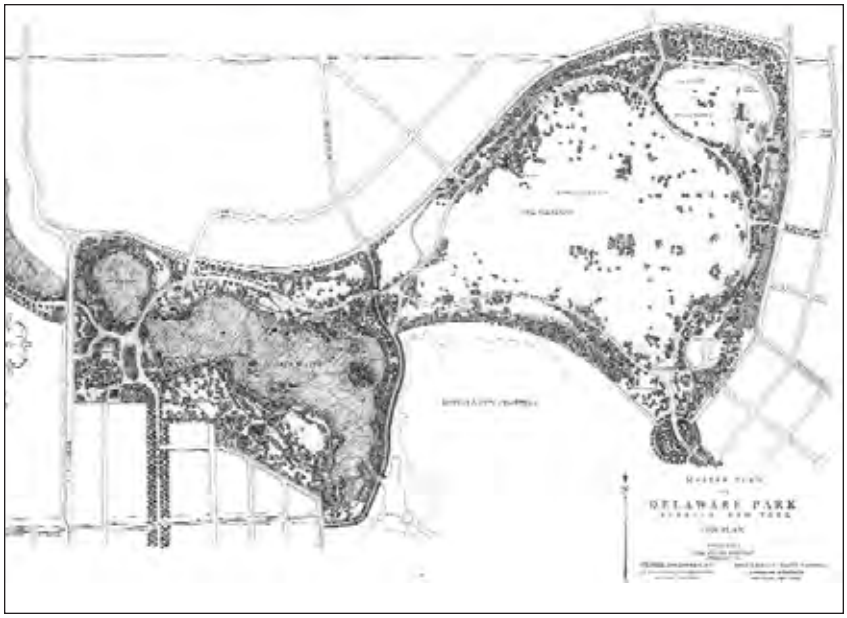
IMAGES

Clockwise from the left:

The 1899 map of The Park did not include the casino area and the Parkside Lodge area although they are part of the period of significance.

Sheep once grazed in the Meadow, maintaining the grass lawn. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

The parkway through Delaware Park once connected the Meadow to Gala Water. (Source – City of Buffalo. (1900) *Buffalo Park Commissioner Report: 1893-1900.* Buffalo, NY: Haas & Klein Printers.)



The park's few buildings and structures—including the Spirehead Gazebo and roofed-bench settees—were designed by Calvert Vaux. Their design seemed to play off Buffalo's stately mansions with their rounded turrets and ornate woodwork, standing in marked contrast to the functional styles of industrial urbanism.

None of this is to say that Olmsted tried to preserve nature. Rather, he sought to create a place where people could have the feeling of being in nature. His landscape was in every way constructed. This helps explain why plans for the park called for a major building, Calvert Vaux's boathouse, right at the edge of the lake. Rowboats could be rented from the dazzling structure, and open-air concerts were held at the nearby bandstand.

By 1876 The Park was substantially complete and already a striking success. Four to five hundred carriages visited the park on an average day, one thousand on a summer Sunday. Pictures from the era show how popular the park was—a lake filled with rowboats in the summer and ice skaters in the winter. Once public transportation reached The Park in the mid-1880s, it saw vibrant use, as city dwellers came for nature walks and picnics, and to visit the growing collection of animals in the deer paddock, which by 1893 included grazing buffaloes.

IMAGES

Above:

Lincoln Parkway extends Delaware Park into the surrounding neighborhoods." (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedin buffalo.org/>)

Left:

The Spirehead Gazebo, designed by Vaux, sat atop a hill overlooking the Gala Water. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County historical Society.)

Right:

The Vaux-designed settees gave park users ornate places to sit. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County historical Society.)

Bottom:

The original boathouse in The Park was designed by Vaux. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

At Olmsted's request, new land was added to the park in 1875, 1887, and 1907, and a Quarry Garden was created to take advantage of the area where stone had been taken for roadbeds and buildings.

Other changes, however, were not so welcome. As early as 1878, reports mentioned sewage being discharged into the lake through the Scajaquada Creek. And over the next decades the informal deer paddock became a zoological garden, despite Olmsted's protests. Moreover, the lake suffered permanent damage when several hundred mature trees were cut down to make room for two buildings ardently opposed by Olmsted's sons: the Albright Knox Art Gallery and the New York State Building (now the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society). As beautiful and culturally significant as these buildings are, their commanding classical styles contrasted sharply with the quiet, curvilinear natural landscape of the park. And, finally, Vaux's unique boathouse was replaced by a larger casino.

These incursions into the park were soon accompanied by an explosion of single-use facilities that had become common in American parks after the turn of the century. In the newly renamed Delaware Park, golf, football, and baseball had all secured a foothold in the Meadow as early as 1899. By 1913, sixteen hundred golfers had permits, and two years later the course was enlarged to 18 holes. Formal baseball diamonds appeared in 1914, and the same year the Parkside Lodge was built to accommodate sports players. Near the casino a lovely but incongruously formal Rose Garden and pergola were erected in 1919.

IMAGES

Left:

Until recently, ice skaters flocked to the lake in Delaware Park every winter. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

Right:

The historic Quarry Garden stone bridges were beautiful in winter. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

Bottom:

Today, most of Delaware Park's Meadow is an 18-hole golf course.

Delaware Park Today

With nearly 350 acres, Delaware Park is by far the largest and most complex of Buffalo's Olmsted parks, and continues to play a central role in the Buffalo Olmsted Park System and in the city itself. It is the most utilized of all of the parks, and is located in the very heart of Buffalo in the Olmsted Crescent Cultural District, along with the Albright Knox and Burchfield Penny's Art Galleries, the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, the Zoo, and the soon to be fully restored Darwin Martin House.

Although the park retains its sense of open space and natural beauty, it has suffered substantial damage over the years. Mature trees no longer shield the park from of the city. Athletic fields now dominate the Meadow, warding off walkers and picnickers. A scattering of buildings—many abandoned—mar the natural landscape, and the unnatural quiet of abandonment has enveloped the once busiest part of the park, the former boathouse. Grand points of entry like Agassiz Circle no longer serve as a gateway between two worlds but as a busy intersection for hurrying motorists. The lakeshore's nooks and crannies have been ironed away and the Quarry Garden has been filled in.

Far worse, Delaware Park was split in two when the Scajaquada Expressway, a busy four-lane highway, was built on top of the Humboldt Parkway. Now the Meadow and lake are cut off so decisively from each other that even longtime city residents have a hard time navigating between the two without a car and a good deal of trouble. This has not only meant the loss of an essential element of the park, but also its primary connection to the city's park system.

IMAGES

Top of page:

Delaware Park has numerous hideouts where people can be secluded from the busy city.

Above:

Once a relaxing parkway connecting the two halves of The Park, the Scajaquada Expressway is now a dangerous and intrusive barrier separating Delaware Park into two segments.

Below:

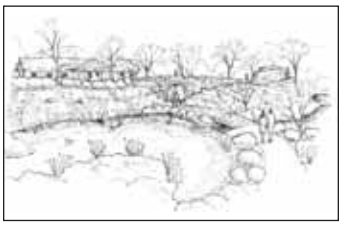
This aerial image of Delaware Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

Delaware Park Recommendations

The restoration of Delaware Park has seven major goals, each requiring a series of projects. These projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and reconnect its fragmented halves. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

Delaware Park: Goals for Restoration

- Reconnect the fragments of the park.
- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Restore Gala Water and other water features.
- Improve or rationalize recreation and services by balancing unstructured recreation with structured recreation.
- Improve access and circulation within the park for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.



Reconnect the Fragments of the Park

Project #1: Support and participate in the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway to a parkway

- Use traffic calming measures to slow traffic as conceptualized in the Expanded Project Proposal dated June, 2005, NYSDOT# 5470.14.
- Install pedestrian-safe at-grade crossings.
- Redesign Agassiz Circle to restore a formal entrance to the park.
- Redesign Delaware Avenue intersection to eliminate the "cloverleaf" and unconventional ramps.
- Redesign Lincoln Parkway bridge over the Scajaquada Creek to allow for a more pedestrian friendly bridge crossing.
- Redesign the expressway bridge over the Scajaquada Creek to improve its aesthetics as a parkway.
- Redesign Elmwood Avenue intersection to regain lost parkland.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #2: Restore the Meadow

- Reconsider the golf course—maintain, downgrade to a 9-hole course, or remove.
- Restore pathway system.
- Recreate the Lily Pond.
- Restore perimeter plantings.
- Remove non-historic structures including transformer boxes, the caddy shack, and the police radio tower.
- Rehabilitate the Point of the Meadow Building.

Project #3: Reconstruct the Ring Road considering its historic alignment

IMAGES

From the top down:

The historic Lily Pond was a feature of the Meadow that will be restored. (Source – The Buffalo Free-Net. <freenet.buffalo.edu/bah/>)

The ring road encircles the Meadow and is popular with walkers, joggers, bikers, and rollerbladers.

The tops of the stone bridges above the Quarry Garden are still used as pathways in front of the Parkside Lodge, although the Quarry Garden has been filled-in beneath them.

The restored Quarry Garden will include excavations that return the function of the stone bridges, pools of water, and plantings.

The restored Meadow and restored lake will be better connected with the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway into a parkway.

Project #4: Restore the Lodge area

- Restore the Parkside Lodge facility and determine a long term use for it. (See 1997 Parkside Lodge Historic Structures Report)
- Remove the storage/maintenance structure (if no longer in use).
- Interpret or recreate the Quarry Garden.
- Reconstruct the bridal path near the lodge along Parkside Avenue towards Jewett Parkway.

Project #5: Restore the Casino area

- Renovate the casino building and the plaza and rationalize service facilities.
- Enhance the Rose Garden and add a buffer between it and the playground.
- Renovate the Rose Garden pergola.
- Recreate the historic settees as designed by Vaux.
- Recreate the historic Spirehead Gazebo as designed by Vaux. (See 1993 Spirehead Reconstruction Feasibility Study)
- Redesign the Shakespeare stage so that it better fits the context of its location.

Project #6: Restore the Rumsey Woods area

- Restore the Rumsey Woods Shelter House.

Restore Gala Water and other Water Features

Project #7: Restore or interpret the original shoreline configuration and redesign the path around Gala Water (Hoyt Lake) to reflect the new shape

Project #8: Construct a wetland to improve water quality at the junction of Hoyt Lake and Scajaquada Creek

- Work with the local municipalities to restore water quality and ensure water quantity in Hoyt Lake and Scajaquada Creek.
- Support the ongoing study and long term cleanup of these water bodies. (See 2004 Scajaquada Creek Watershed Management Plan)

Improve or Rationalize Recreation and Services by Balancing Unstructured Recreation with Structured Recreation

Project #9: Enhance the playgrounds

Project #10: Reposition the baseball diamonds and rotate athletic fields

Project #11: Provide water based recreation opportunities on Hoyt Lake

Project #12: Remove the tennis courts along the Scajaquada Expressway (in the southern part of the Meadow) and improve other tennis courts in the park

IMAGES

Below (left to right from the top):

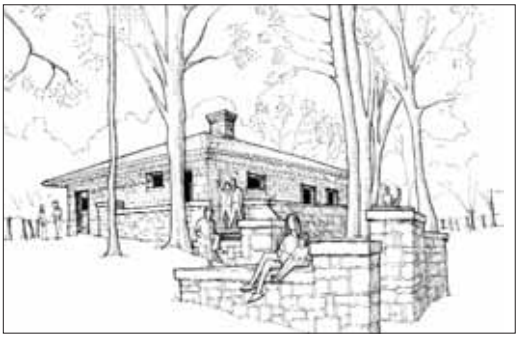
The restored Rumsey Woods Shelter House will provide needed amenities to park users such as restrooms and drinking fountains.

Large crowds of people once flocked to Gala Water.

Many children use the three playgrounds in Delaware Park.

The basketball courts near Parkside Avenue are used for pick-up games during the summer.

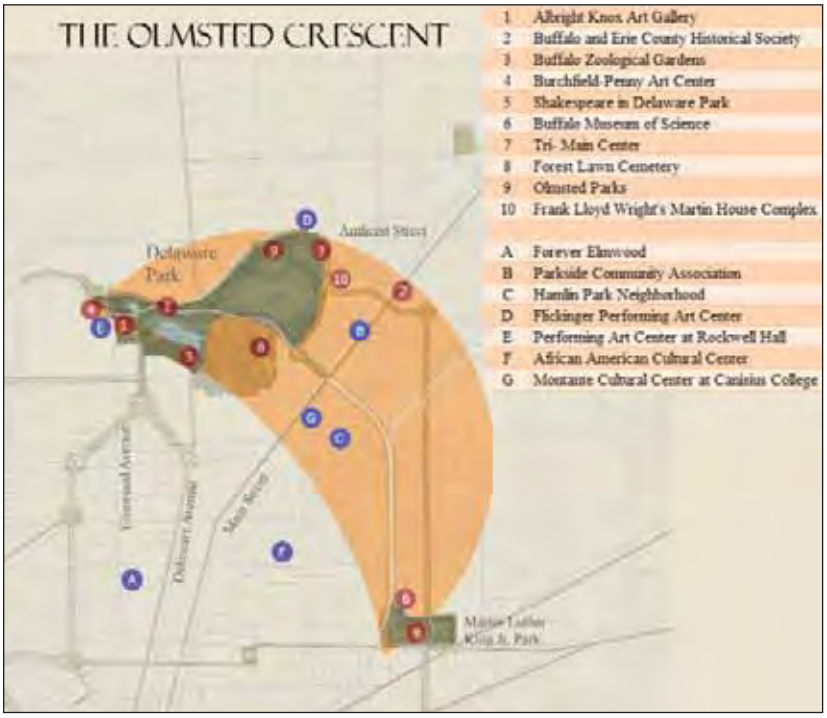
The baseball diamonds in the Meadow are used by local schools in the spring and fall, and by little leagues throughout the summer



Improve Access and Circulation within the Park for Vehicles and Pedestrians

Project #13: Improve connections to cultural activities within the park

- Create a pedestrian connection between the zoo and the park.
- Create a pedestrian friendly walkway on Lincoln Parkway between the park and the Albright Knox Art Gallery.
- Improve the connection between the park and the Historical Society and the Japanese Garden.



The Olmsted Crescent includes museums, art galleries, theaters, community groups, and neighborhoods within and surrounding Delaware Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. (Source – Recreated from an original map at <www.olmsted crescent.org>)

Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

Project #14: Connect the park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood

Project #15: Highlight the park's connections to the "Olmsted Crescent" of cultural activities

- Articulate connection between the park and the Darwin Martin House.

Project #16: Explore opportunities to connect Delaware Park to Forest Lawn Cemetery

Project #17: Connect the park to the Niagara River Greenway

- Connect to the Greenway by way of the Scajaquada Creek and bike path.
- Identify the entrance to the park by the Historical Society building and the stone arch bridge over Delaware Avenue as locations connecting to the Greenway.

Project #18: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #19: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #20: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #21: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

Project #22: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #23: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

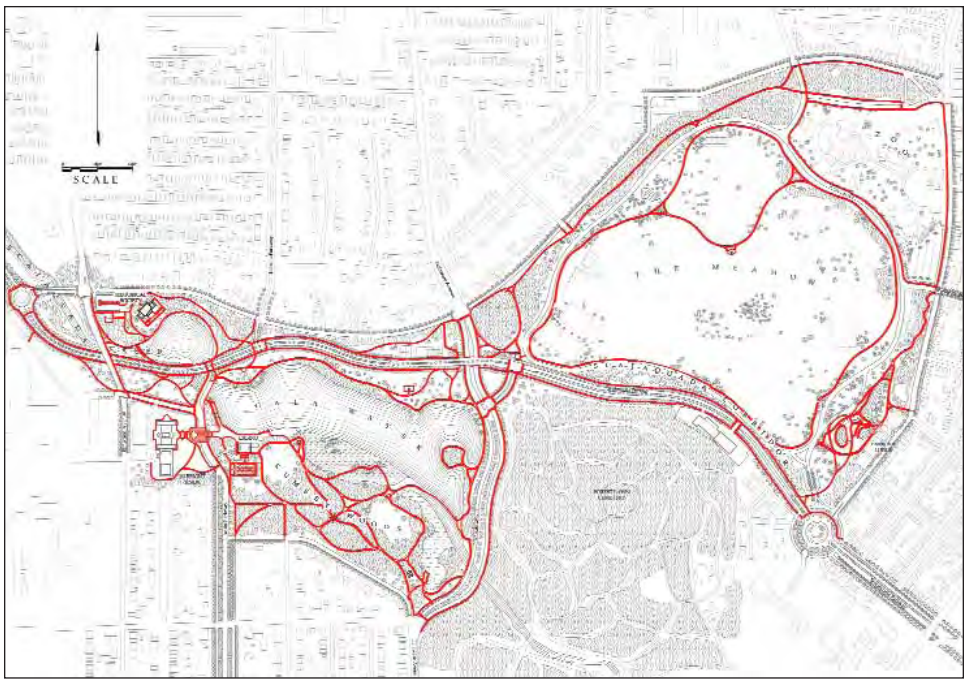
Project #24: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #25: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #26: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #27: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

Project #28: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

Delaware Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring Delaware Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of Delaware Park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored while the 18-hole golf course remains in the historic Meadow.

—RESTORATION PLAN—

DELAWARE PARK

RECONNECT THE FRAGMENTS OF THE PARK

Project #1: Support and participate in the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway to a parkway

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #2: Restore the Meadow

Project #3: Reconstruct the Ring Road considering its historic alignment

Project #4: Restore the Lodge area

Project #5: Restore the Casino area

Project #6: Restore the Rumsey Woods area

RESTORE GALA WATER AND OTHER WATER FEATURES

Project #7: Restore or interpret the original shoreline configuration and redesign the path around Gala Water (Hoyt Lake) to reflect the new shape

Project #8: Construct a wetland to improve water quality at the junction of Hoyt Lake and Scajaquada Creek

IMPROVE OR RATIONALIZE RECREATION AND SERVICES

Project #9: Enhance the playgrounds

Project #10: Reposition the baseball diamonds and rotate athletic fields

Project #11: Provide water based recreation opportunities on Hoyt Lake

Project #12: Remove the tennis courts along the Scajaquada Expressway (in the southern part of the Meadow) and improve other tennis courts in the park

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION WITHIN THE PARK FOR VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Project #13: Improve connections to cultural activities within the park

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

*Project #14: Connect the park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood

*Project #15: Highlight the park's connections to the "Olmsted Crescent" of cultural activities

*Project #16: Explore opportunities to connect Delaware Park to Forest Lawn Cemetery

*Project #17: Connect the park to the Niagara River Greenway

*Project #18: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #19: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #20: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

*Project #21: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

*Project #22: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

*Project #23: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

*Project #24: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

*Project #25: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

*Project #26: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

*Project #27: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

*Project #28: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

BUFFALO, NY

ERIE COUNTY

Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—
DELAWARE PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the casino, across the Gala Water (Hoyt Lake), to the restored Scajaquada Parkway.

FRONT PARK

It may be hard to imagine today, but Front Park, originally called The Front, was once the most popular recreational destination in the city and a prominent Buffalo icon. As with Delaware Park, Olmsted himself chose the location, but with a different vision in mind. While Delaware Park was to conjure up the sights and sounds of nature, Front Park was to emphasize the natural elements that were unique to Buffalo: the Niagara River and Lake Erie. The park's spectacular view of the waterways from its commanding bluffs, Olmsted wrote, "would be peculiar to Buffalo and would have a character of magnificence."[29] Grand, regal, and more formal than many other Olmsted landscapes, The Front was designed for "stately ceremonies," "civic display," and other public events.

In the past century Front Park has seen radical changes. A multi-lane highway now hurtles over the old Erie Canal, severing the park's connection with the water. The sprawling Peace Bridge Plaza has paved over the former Fort Porter lawns adjacent to the park. And yet the basic building blocks of this truly magnificent emblem of Buffalo remain. The city is no longer a shipping hub, but the busy Peace Bridge, adjacent to Front Park, is evidence of its continuing significance as an international gateway. The current plans for restructuring the Peace Bridge and its plaza provide the perfect opportunity to recreate The Front. (See Table 4)

The Front was built to overlook the confluence of Lake Erie and the Niagara River. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

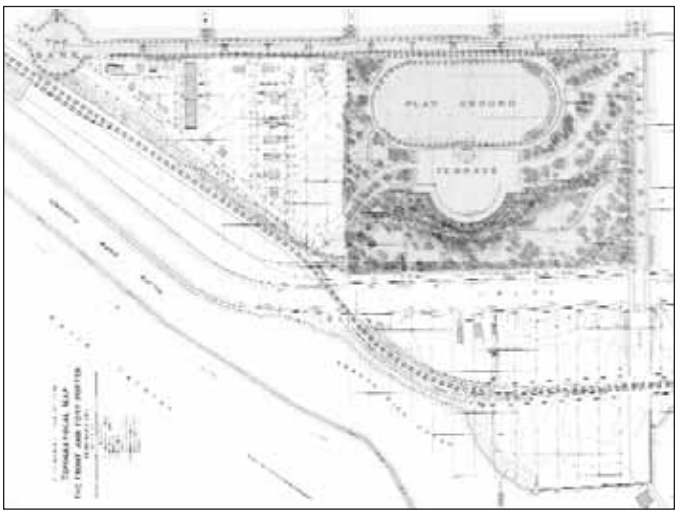
Table 4 | Front Park (26 Acres)

Period of Significance 1870–1925

Timeline	1870	Design completed for The Front
	1875	Construction completed for The Front
	1927	Peace Bridge completed over Fort Porter
	1951	Major Peace Bridge expansion into the park

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
The Terrace	Porter Avenue
Perry Monument	The Bank (destroyed)

Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities**
NA	Baseball/Softball diamonds (2)
	Tennis courts (2)
	Football/Soccer fields (1)
	Playgrounds (1)
	Picnic tables (9)
	Picnic shelters (2)



The period of significance plan for The Front shows its adjacency to the Erie Canal. This map is an 1870 design for The Front overlaid on an 1898 topographical survey map of the same area. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

Front Park History

The Niagara River has been many things to Buffalo: an international border, a generator of hydropower, and part of the waterway system that put the city on the map. In selecting a bluff at the mouth of the river for The Front, Olmsted viewed the water differently, not as a practical source of wealth but as an opportunity for recreation and civic pride. It was an innovative step in a business-minded city.

As with Delaware Park, Olmsted's 1870 plan for The Front was for a park that both took advantage of the existing landscape and created a distinctive recreation ground. The key to the park's identity was the water, its *raison d'être.* The 35-acre grounds inclined gently toward a bluff overlooking the Niagara River so that the whole park had a view of the water. At the edge overlooking the Erie Canal—the best place for scenic viewing—were formal gardens laced with pedestrian pathways. Beyond the formal garden was a

3.5 acre terrace concourse for carriages, and the Vaux-designed Lakeview House to provide comfort facilities and panoramic views of the water. The Lakeview House was demolished in the 1890s, but an ornate bandstand gazebo was built in its place, and in 1900 a new stone picnic shelter was added.

On the park's northern side, The Front was connected to Fort Porter, a military reservation situated at the head of the Niagara River. Fort Porter was named after General Peter B. Porter, who fought in the War of 1812 and served as Secretary of War in 1828. The Fort was used as staging grounds and military barracks' until the late 19th century.

The 1880s witnessed a push to expand The Front into the land between the Erie Canal and the Niagara River. This land had not been included in the original plan, and by 1883 a number of businesses had located there. In 1891, after years of wrangling, the city finally secured the land and commissioned plans from Olmsted to extend The Front to the water's edge. Olmsted's plans included two playgrounds (one for boys, one for girls), a lawn, a bathing beach, a long pier, and a boardwalk overlooking the water. In addition, because the new waterfront land was separated from the original park by the Erie Canal and railroad tracks, Olmsted's plan called for a carriage bridge at the north end of the park and a pedestrian overpass at Porter Avenue.

To make the park widely accessible to city residents, Olmsted integrated it into the city's carriage, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic circulation. The park's many winding footpaths and its scenic parkway (Sheridan Drive) were connected to external traffic flow. A dramatic entrance at Sixth Street (now Busti Avenue) and York Street (now Porter Avenue) brought carriages through the Terrace and then along the edge of Fort Porter on Sheridan Drive.

The largest discrete section of the park was the 7.5-acre Playground/Hippodrome, an oval green bordered by a tree-lined path. The Playground was perfect for team sports and other large group activities, yet no formal sports fields were inscribed on the Playground and every effort was made to limit the impact of sports on the lawn.

IMAGES

Clockwise from top left:

The view from The Front along the Terrace and Sheridan Drive was one of the best in the city. (Source – Copyright Chris Andrle <www.andrle.com>)

Olmsted planned for The Front to reach across the Erie Canal to Lake Erie. This was never realized. (Source – City of Buffalo. (1892) *Buffalo Park Commissioner Report: 1883-1892.* Buffalo, NY: Haas & Klein Printers.)

The military barracks at Fort Porter were surrounded by green space that added to The Front's parkland. (Source – The Buffalo Free-Net <freenet.buffalo.edu/bah/>)

In the years to come, however, The Front, like many urban parks, faced an onslaught of single-use sports facilities. By 1915 these included two grass and two clay tennis courts and five baseball diamonds, and by 1931 their numbers had ballooned to eight baseball fields, four tennis courts, two football fields, a cricket field, a toboggan slide, and an ice skating rink.

IMAGES

Top:

Sheridan Drive was the northern entrance to The Front, connecting the park to The Bank circle. (Source – Vintage Views of New York <www.vintageviews.org>)

Middle:

This aerial image of Front Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

Bottom:

The Peace Bridge was built to connect Buffalo to Fort Erie, Canada. The Peace Bridge landed on Fort Porter, eliminating that part of The Front.

Front Park Today

Today Front Park retains much of its historic form, but, like Delaware Park, it has suffered many blows in the past half-century. First, and perhaps most importantly, in the 1950s the New York State Thruway was built over the old corridor of the Erie Canal. An immensely busy expressway with multiple traffic lanes, the highway effectively cut off The Front from water. The traffic noise alone was enough to ward visitors off from the formal gardens, hastening the gardens' demise and eventual disappearance. To make matters worse, an access ramp to the thruway was built straight through the park. Although that access ramp has since been moved to the park's southwestern corner, the highway still roars where a peaceful water view once commanded park goers' attention.

The second major blow to the park was the construction of the Peace Bridge and its landing plaza, first built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1950s. Two access roads were built through the park to accommodate the plaza's increased traffic, and access ramps between the thruway and the Peace Bridge took further bites out of the park, cutting it off not only from the water but from the surrounding urban fabric as well. By mid-century the Peace Bridge Plaza had swallowed up Sheridan Drive and encompassed nearly all of the former Fort Porter area, eliminating the greenspace next to the park. Today, drivers are more likely to enter the park by accident while trying to access the Peace Bridge than to enter on purpose.

All other changes to the park can be predicted from those two major blows to Olmsted's original design. Without a connection to the water and without a connection to the surrounding urban fabric, the park has lost its identity. As a result, much of the park has fallen into disrepair: comfort facilities are no longer available, the park's tree-lined paths have faded away and the historic Playground is no longer well defined.

More than any other Olmsted park in Buffalo, The Front—with all its beauty, uniqueness, and importance for the city and the park

system—has simply been abandoned. Yet, in terms of restoration, being abandoned is far preferable to being destroyed. In fact, this "ghost park" still has good bones. And with changes coming to the Peace Bridge Plaza and creative thinking about connecting the park to the waterfront, The Front could once again be a major destination in Buffalo. Moreover, a revitalized Front Park could augment a new urban "greenway," beginning with Prospect Park, and continuing through The Front to LaSalle Park.

Recent work on Front Park, including significant restoration of the Terrace, pathways, plantings, and its historic landscape, has improved the park's character. With continued work, Front Park could once again be what Olmsted imagined it to be: a proud emblem of the city, a recreational destination, and a key link in Buffalo's Olmsted Park System.

Front Park: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Restore the park's connection to the water.
- Improve or rationalize recreation and services by balancing unstructured recreation with structured recreation.
- Restore and enhance the park's gateways and edges.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.

Front Park Recommendations

The restoration of Front Park has six major goals, each requiring a series of projects. These projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and visual connection to the water, as well as return the park's popularity. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

The restoration of Front Park is complicated by its proximity to the Peace Bridge. While decisions are being made about the nature of the bridge, a series of interim projects have been implemented to improve the condition of the park in the short term. The two access roads to the Peace Bridge through the park have been redesigned and merged into one road. The Terrace has been repaved and gardens have been planted around it. Two tennis courts have been removed from the park. The former ice rink has also been removed, and the landscape has been repaired.

Many of the following long-term recommendations will depend on the plans eventually adopted by the Peace Bridge Commission. For example, the original park boundaries may be expanded to include parts of the former Fort Porter. There is also a need to deal with the unsightly thruway that separates the park from Lake Erie. Decking the thruway by the park is a recommendation that is outside of the cultural landscape, but would improve the character of the park a great deal. This recommendation should be considered when the thruway undergoes major maintenance and improvements in the future.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #1: Restore the Terrace

- Restore the Terrace using cobblestones as surface treatment.
- Restore the formal gardens at the edge of the Terrace.
- In the short term, resurface the Terrace and plant gardens around it.
- Replace the cannons that were once located on the Terrace.

Project #2: Rebuild Lakeview House

- Provide views and services to park users.

Project #3: Restore the Playground/ Hippodrome

- Replant the perimeter of trees that once defined the oval lawn.

Project #4: Restore the Picnic Shelter

Restore the Park's Connection to the Water

Project #5: Construct an earthen berm or other barrier between the park and the thruway

Project #6: Construct site walls to reclaim views

Improve or Rationalize Recreation and Services by Balancing Unstructured Recreation with Structured Recreation

Project #7: Remove ice rink and restore original grading

Project #8: Relocate the tennis courts to locations outside of the park

Project #9: Relocate the children's playground to the northern edge of the park, closer to the residential neighborhoods

IMAGES

Above:

These images show the Commodore Perry statue on the Terrace. The statue was recently renovated.

At right (clockwise from top left):

The Lakeview House was constructed on the Terrace.

The Lakeview House, if reconstructed, could help regain the views of Lake Erie.

The restored picnic shelter will be a beneficial park user amenity.

The historic Busti entrance was a grand gateway into The Front. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedin buffalo.org/>

Restore and Enhance the Park's Gateways and Edges

Project #10: Restore historic park entrance at Porter and Busti Avenues

Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

Project #11: Restore connections between Front Park and the rest of the park system

- Reinforce these connections via Porter Avenue to LaSalle Park and Cotter Point, and to Columbus and Perla Parks (Prospect Park).
- Establish bike trails that connect to surrounding trail systems that are part of the Niagara River Greenway.
- Identify the park entrance at Porter Avenue and Busti as an entrance into the Niagara River Greenway.

Project #12: Reinterpret Fort Porter

- Restore or reinterpret Fort Porter, the former greenspace adjacent to Front Park, depending on the final plans for the Peace Bridge Plaza.

Project #13: Recreate Sheridan Drive along the southwest border of the park

Project #14: Restore or interpret "The Bank" designed by Olmsted, depending on the final design of the Peace Bridge Plaza

Project #15: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #16: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #17: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #18: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

Project #19: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #20: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

A rebuilt entrance at Busti and Porter Avenues could provide the distinguished gateway into the park that is lacking.

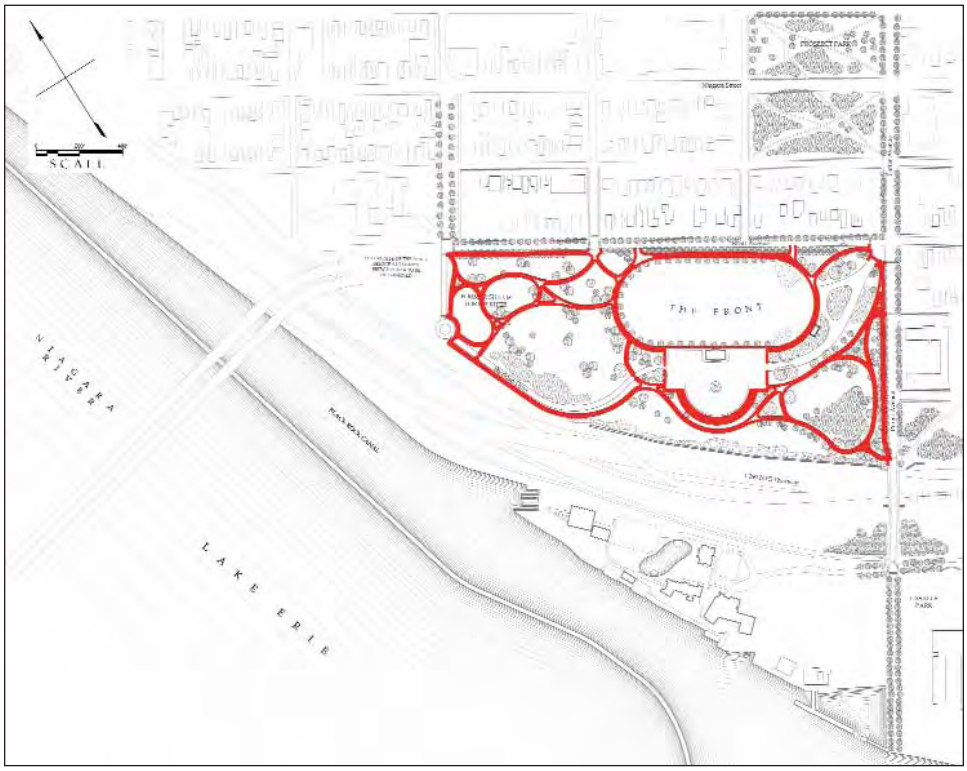
Project #21: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #22: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #23: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #24: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

Project #25: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

Front Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring Front Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of Front Park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored while the Peace Bridge Plaza and access road, as well as the access road to the thruway, remain in place.

—RESTORATION PLAN—

FRONT PARK

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #1: Restore the Terrace

Project #2: Rebuild Lakeview House

Project #3: Restore the Playground/ Hippodrome

Project #4: Restore the Picnic Shelter

RESTORE THE PARK'S CONNECTION TO THE WATER

Project #5: Construct an earthen berm or other barrier between the park and the thruway

Project #6: Construct site walls to reclaim views

IMPROVE OR RATIONALIZE RECREATION AND SERVICES

Project #7: Remove ice rink and restore original grading

Project #8: Relocate the tennis courts to locations outside of the park

Project #9: Relocate the children's playground to the northern edge of the park, closer to the residential neighborhoods

RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE PARK'S GATEWAYS AND EDGES

Project #10: Restore historic park entrance at Porter and Busti Avenues

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

*Project #11: Restore connections between Front Park and the rest of the park system

Project #12: Reinterpret Fort Porter

Project #13: Recreate Sheridan Drive along the southwest border of the park

Project #14: Restore or interpret "The Bank" designed by Olmsted, depending on the final design of the Peace Bridge Plaza

*Project #15: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #16: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #17: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

*Project #18: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

*Project #19: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

*Project #20: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

*Project #21: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

*Project #22: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

*Project #23: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

*Project #24: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

*Project #25: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

As of 1-28-08 there has been no determination of the Peace Bridge Plaza location or design.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

BUFFALO, NY

ERIE COUNTY

Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—
FRONT PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the Lakeview House, across the Terrace, towards Lake Erie and the Niagara River.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK

Originally known as The Parade and later as Humboldt Park, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park was the most urban of the first three Olmsted parks and the park most devoted to structured recreation. In fact, soon after Olmsted's retirement in 1895, his sons thoroughly redesigned the park to maximize such recreational possibilities, adding in three water elements—the Humboldt Basin wading pool, the Lily Pool, and the fountain. The Parade thus combined elements of Delaware Park (with its wide open meadow, curvilinear paths, and wooded thickets) with the recreational facilities of Front Park. If the other two parks made grand statements—one about the healing power of nature, the other about the unique character of Buffalo—The Parade was designed to perform civic functions and completed the set by being devoted to the simpler pleasures of urban recreation: splashing, picnicking, athletics, and so forth.

Like the other parks, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park has suffered significant decline. The Kensington Expressway swallowed an entire edge of the park. Fillmore Avenue, once interrupted by the park, now brings busy traffic right through it. And public health regulations forced the closure of the Humboldt Basin wading pool. But the original purpose of the park remains alive and well. It still offers neighborhood residents recreational opportunities within a lively urban area. (See Table 5)

The historic Humboldt Basin is the defining feature of the park. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

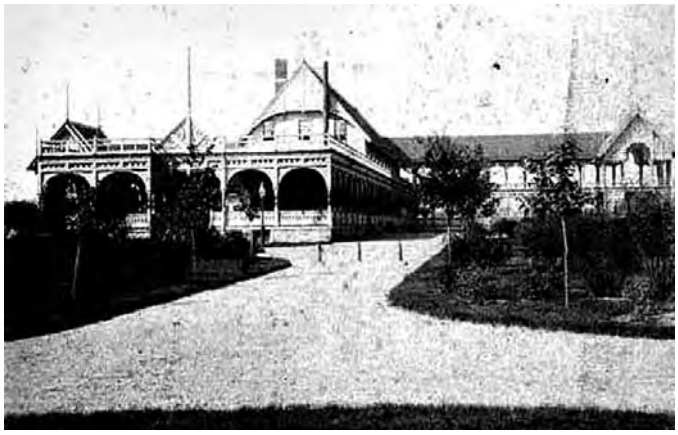
Table 5 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (51 Acres)

Period of Significance 1896–1925

Timeline		
	1871	Design completed for The Parade
	1895	Revised design for The Parade completed
	1910	Construction completed for the renamed Humboldt Park
	1929	Natural Science Museum constructed
	1960	Construction completed on Scajaquada and Kensington Expressways
	1977	Renamed Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
	1983	Martin Luther King, Jr. statue was dedicated
	1990	Science Magnet School opened

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
The Humboldt Basin	Humboldt Parkway (destroyed)
Rose Garden	Fillmore Avenue south (never fully realized)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Plaza	
The Casino	

Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities:**
Buffalo Museum of Science	Tennis courts (4)
Dr. Charles R. Drew Science Magnet School	Basketball courts (2)
Community Center	Playgrounds (3)
	Spray Pool (1)
	Wading Pool (1)
	Picnic tables (29)
	Picnic shelters (6)
	Grills

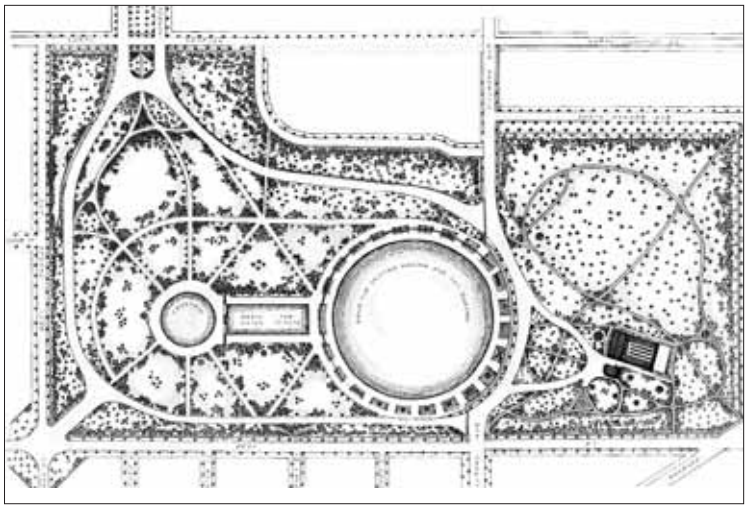


The Parade House, designed by Vaux, was located where the greenhouses are today.
(Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park History

The Parade began its life as a grand military parade ground set within a classic Olmstedian natural landscape. Olmsted chose the site in 1868 because of its "distinctive natural advantages," including its elevation and proximity to densely populated areas. On the western side of the park was a grassy meadow surrounded by a carriage concourse, which he intended for military displays. The eastern side of the park featured an ornate, Vaux-designed refectory building (the Parade House) facing a large concourse and, to the north, a recreation area equipped with gymnastics structures (trapeze and parallel bars), picnic tables, swings, seesaws, and an aviary.

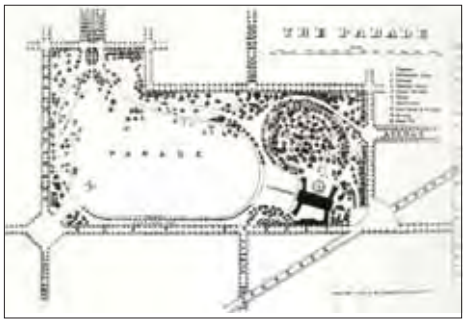
Although the park did see a military parade in 1874, it was inconveniently located for such events and, in any case, the demand for recreation almost immediately overwhelmed its formal uses. Indeed, the park was so successful as a pleasure grounds that it was nearly "loved to death" in its first two decades. Overuse damaged the park's turf and vegetation, pathways, and structures. As early as the 1880s a fence was built around the park, and in 1896 it was replaced by a more imposing wrought iron enclosure.



This 1906 map of the park includes the Humboldt Basin and is the period of significance design for the park. (Source – *Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Preliminary Master Plan*. (2002) Prepared for the City of Buffalo by Wendel Duchscherer Architects and Engineers.)

Planners soon recognized the contradiction in a recreational park that needed to be protected from park goers. In 1895, the city responded by inviting the Olmsted firm to redesign the park. After touring The Parade, John Charles Olmsted drew up new plans that emphasized what he saw as its central purpose: urban recreation in a natural setting. The new design replaced the military parade grounds with three water features on an east-to-west axis, including a circular fountain, the large rectangular Lily Pool, and the 500-foot wide Humboldt Basin wading pool for bathing, toy boating, and ice skating.

Footpaths would connect the water features with the eastern part of the park, and the Parade House would become a public bathhouse and greenhouse. Fillmore Avenue, which had been interrupted by the parade grounds, would be reconnected through the park in an Olmsted-style traffic-calming curve. In the newly named Humboldt Park, one could drive through the parkway and circle around the water features, or one could stroll through on the park's extensive system of footpaths. One could play in the water, exercise on the gymnastics equipment, go to concerts at the bandstand, or, starting in the early 1900s, enjoy the gardens and greenhouses where local gardeners grew



IMAGES

Clockwise from left:

This 1870 Olmsted plan for The Parade was created before the Humboldt Basin was proposed. (Source – National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline Massachusetts.)

Formal floral designs were displayed in the park.

The Humboldt Basin was historically used as a wading pool. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

The fountain was located where the basketball courts are today. (Source – Copyright Chris Andrle <www.andrle.com>)

flowers for other city parks. In its new formation, Humboldt Park was still one of the most frequently used recreational spaces in Buffalo. But this activity no longer threatened to wear out the park and, indeed, it has survived largely intact for over half a century.

Despite its devotion to urban recreation, Humboldt Park retained many of the classic Olmsted elements. Straight city streets that entered the park became curvy, tree-lined country lanes. Winding footpaths invited walkers to amble through open meadows and masses of trees, and the wooded thickets that enveloped the park provided a feeling of distance from the city. However crowded the park might be, one could never mistake it for the surrounding city. The entranceways and perimeter plantings made sure park goers knew immediately that they had entered an Olmstedian landscape.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Today

Like the other Olmsted parks in Buffalo, The Parade has suffered its share of encroachments, but it has weathered them surprisingly well. Indeed, the park has a tradition of using changes as new opportunities, dating back to the first redesign in the 1890s. In 1925, a new park casino was constructed to the west of the Humboldt Basin. The Science Museum was built in the northwest corner of the park near the Humboldt Parkway entrance in 1929. By the end of the decade, the park was home to four tennis courts, ice carnivals on the Humboldt Basin in winter, and other amenities. Although the park had changed, it remained true to its spirit.

IMAGES

Top:

The Science Museum was added to the park at the terminus of the Humboldt Parkway. (Source – The Buffalo Museum of Science.)

Bottom:

This aerial image of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

In 1977 the park was again renamed, this time after Martin Luther King, Jr. An eight-foot bronze bust of Martin Luther King, Jr. was dedicated six years later in 1983 and placed in a newly designed plaza in the park on the eastern side of Fillmore south of the greenhouse and shelter house. This statue was sculpted by John Wilson. It remains in this location today.

Other changes have increased the use of the park beyond its limits. Reconnecting Fillmore Avenue through the park brought heavy traffic. Overuse and under-maintenance left the park's plants and trees in precarious condition. And when the Science Magnet School was added to the Science Museum in 1990, its growing traffic and parking needs required more of the park's western edge, leaving the southwest entrance undefined. As seen in previous years, so many people wanted to use the park for so many purposes, that its capacities were strained beyond its capacious limits.

Some of the changes to the park were entirely detrimental. First and foremost, like several other of Buffalo's Olmsted parks, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park lost ground to a highway, in this case the Kensington Expressway, that was built on the old Humboldt Parkway in the 1950s. The highway and its entrance ramps ate up more of the park's northwest corner and virtually eliminated the most significant gateway entrance at the Humboldt Parkway. Two of the main entrances were now confusing masses of pavement with no clear indication of where drivers were going. The combination of the expressway, buildings, and large parking lots entirely obscured any sense of the western edge as a gateway into the park. Those entering were more likely to feel that they had taken a wrong turn, rather than having entered an idyllic natural landscape.

A second major change to the park was the disappearance of the three water features. Although skeletons of the water features still exist today, their largely abandoned state completed the dissolution of the western portion of the park. Indeed, with the heavy

IMAGES

Above:

The existing Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial pays homage to the park's namesake.

Right:

The beautiful Humboldt Parkway was destroyed and replaced with the below-grade Kensington Expressway.

traffic on Fillmore Aveune separating the western section from the rest of the park, and with its major features largely abandoned, it almost seems as if this side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park has been taken out of commission. The eastern portion of the park has been better preserved, but it is in need of extensive work. In particular, the paths and tree plantings need attention to maintain the park's unique Olmsted character.

Fortunately, restoration efforts have already begun. A portion of the wading pool, for example, has been rehabilitated into a modern splash pad, and the casino was partially refurbished in the early 1990s. This momentum need only be maintained to turn Martin Luther King, Jr. Park once again into a popular destination for Buffalo's residents.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Recommendations

The restoration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park has seven major goals, each requiring a series of projects. These projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and return the parks elegant and formal design. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Establish the Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument as a focal point for the park.
- Improve access and circulation within the park for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Improve or rationalize recreation and services by balancing unstructured recreation with structured recreation.
- Reestablish park elements surrounding the Science Museum and school.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #1: Renovate and enhance the Casino building

Project #2: Restore the Humboldt Basin

(See the 2000 *Feasibility Study for Reconstruction the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Pool as a Wading Pool*)

Project #3: Restore the original Fountain as a splash pad

Project #4: Restore the Lily Pool

Project #5: Improve the historic Greenhouse area

- Restore the greenhouse and its additions.
- Renovate the growing house.
- Remove the south and rear houses if no longer in use.
- Restore the loop drive by the shelter house and greenhouse.
- Rehabilitate the shelter house.
- Restore the floral displays.
- Consolidate park maintenance project adjacent to the greenhouse.

Project #6: Restore Picnic Grove

- Relocate tennis courts to a nearby site.
- Restore historic plantings.
- Remove non-historic structures when their useful life comes to an end.

IMAGES

Above:

The casino building is adjacent to the western edge of the Humboldt Basin.

A very popular splash pad was recently constructed in the center of the Humboldt Basin.

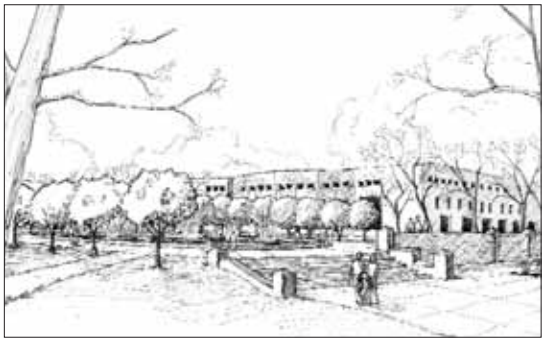
Clockwise from left:

The restored fountain will be located in front of the Science Museum.

An improved playground can better serve the needs of park users and school children.

The restored greenhouse, shelter house, and surrounding floral displays will improve the quality of this prominent area of the park.

The shelter house area was once a very active place in the park. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY <www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)



Establish The Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument as a Focal Point for the Park

Project #7: Redesign the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial within the loop area

Improve Access and Circulation within the Park for Vehicles and Pedestrians

Project #8: Redesign the south Ring Road as a pedestrian pathway and relocate parking to Best Street

Project #9: Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue

- Consider narrowing the roadway through the park and adding pedestrian crosswalks.

Project #10: Redesign the southwest entrance of the park

Project #11: Redesign the southeast entrance of the park

Improve or Rationalize Recreation and Services by Balancing Unstructured Recreation with Structured Recreation

Project #12: Consolidate and improve the playground on the south side of the park near the Humboldt Basin

Project #13: Relocate the basketball courts and arena outside of the park

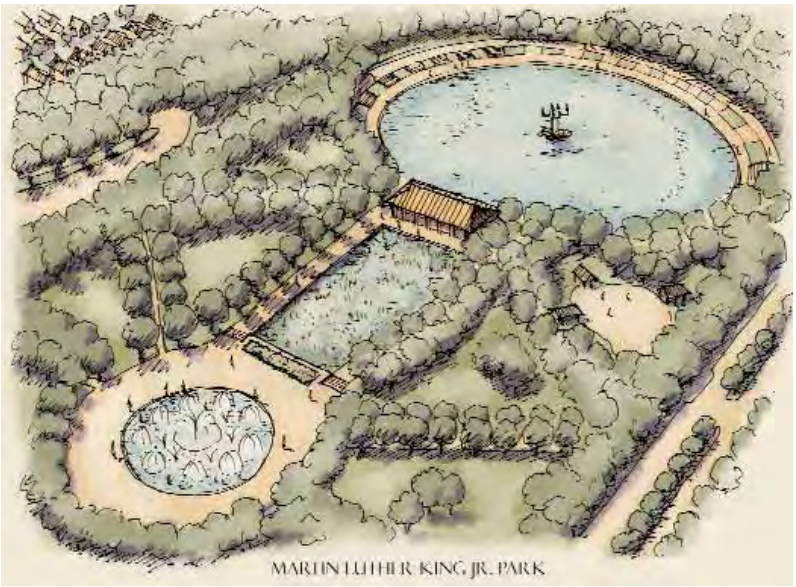
Project #14: Relocate the tennis courts outside of the park

Reestablish Park Elements Surrounding the Science Museum and School

Project #15: Interpret the remnant of the historical Humboldt Parkway at the former north entrance of the park

Project #16: Rationalize and expand parking for the Museum and park users within and outside of the park

- Reconfigure the parking lot to maximize parking spaces within the smallest area on the decked portion of the expressway.
- Reconfigure the roadway through the parking lot to reclaim the southwest corner of the park.
- Design and build a parking lot across Northampton Street in the former Deaconess Hospital parking area that can be shared by park users and the school.



The three restored central water features will define the park.

Project #17: Redesign the school bus drop-off area to articulate the park road

Project #18: Redesign the Rose Garden near the Science Museum

Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

Project #19: Design a circle at Best Street near the Kensington Expressway

- Articulate this circle as an entrance into the Niagara River Greenway.

Project #20: Redesign the Best Street/Genesee Street intersection

- Articulate the park's edges and its radial plan connection at this intersection.

Project #21: Open West Parade to two-way traffic

Project #22: Widen the sidewalks and add a vegetative buffer to the bridges that cross the Kensington Expressway

Project #23: Deck over the section of the expressway by the park

- This deck can help unify the adjacent neighborhoods and expand the park.
- In addition to creating a park extension, the program for this space should consider opportunities for basketball, tennis, or other court based athletic opportunities as defined by close collaboration with the immediate neighborhood residents.

Project #24: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #25: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #26: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #27: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

The Rose Garden is well suited for quiet reflection and getting away from city life.

Project #28: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #29: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

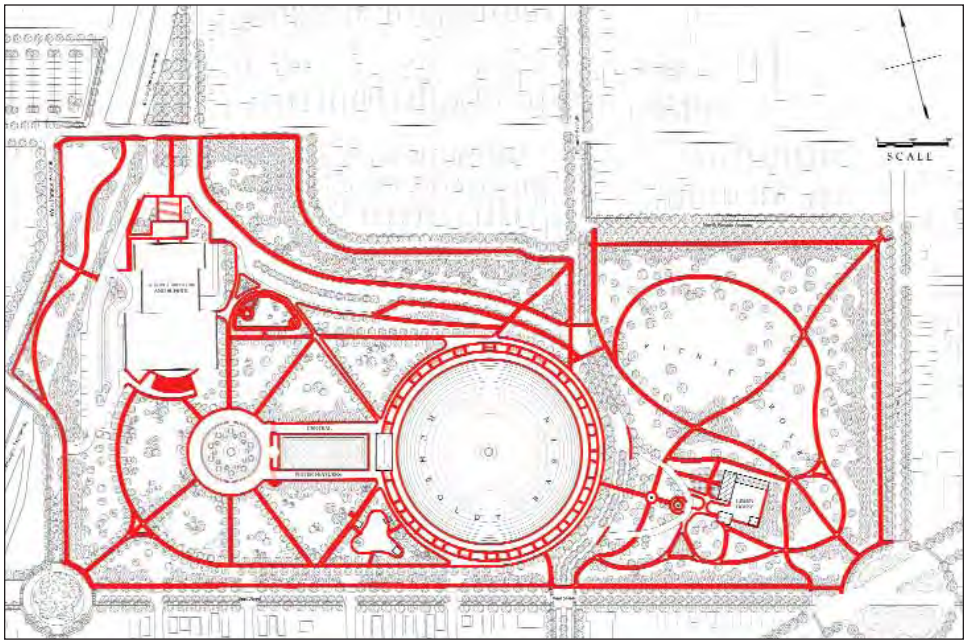
Project #30: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #31: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #32: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #33: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

Project #34: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of the park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored until a more suitable location in the community can be found for the basketball courts and arena. The existing Kensington Expressway is also in the way of the full restoration of the park

—RESTORATION PLAN—

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #1: Renovate and enhance the Casino building

Project #2: Restore the Humboldt Basin

Project #3: Restore the original Fountain as a splash pad

Project #4: Restore the Lily Pool

Project #5: Improve the historic Greenhouse area

Project #6: Restore Picnic Grove

ESTABLISH THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MONUMENT AS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE PARK

Project #7: Redesign the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial within the loop area

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION WITHIN THE PARK FOR VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Project #8: Redesign the south Ring Road as a pedestrian pathway and relocate parking to Best Street

Project #9: Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue

Project #10: Redesign the southwest entrance of the park

Project #11: Redesign the southeast entrance of the park

IMPROVE OR RATIONALIZE RECREATION AND SERVICES

Project #12: Consolidate and improve the playground on the south side of the park near the Humboldt Basin

Project #13: Relocate the basketball courts and arena outside of the park

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REESTABLISH PARK ELEMENTS SURROUNDING THE SCIENCE MUSEUM AND SCHOOL

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ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

Project #19: Design a circle at Best Street near the Kensington Expressway

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Project #23: Deck over the section of the expressway by the park

*Project #24: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #25: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #26: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

*Project #27: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

*Project #28: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

*Project #29: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

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*Project #33: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

*Project #34: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

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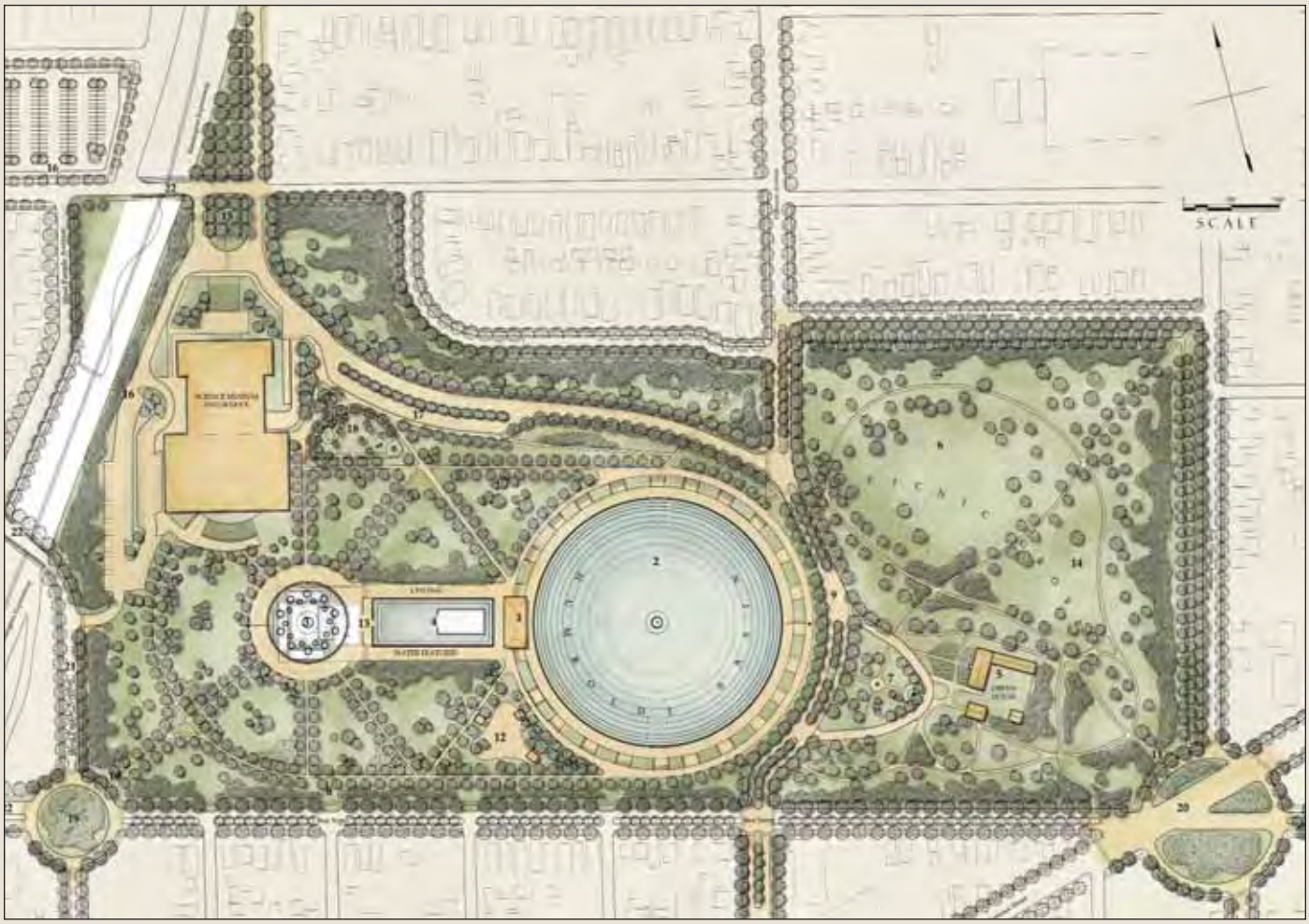


Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the fountain, across the Lily Pool and casino, and over the Humboldt Basin.

SOUTH PARK

The three outer ring parks retained the basic structure of the Olmsted system. Each new park became part of an organic whole by enriching system-wide themes, while at the same time expanding the system by adding a new and distinct destination. For South Park, this was the botanical gardens. Set amidst a classic Olmstedian landscape with undulating grasslands, a scenic lake, and pedestrian paths, South Park's botanical gardens boasted a majestic Lord & Burnham Conservatory for tropical plants and a world-class arboretum. The only park situated next to a downtown center, South Park gave residents on Buffalo's south side easy access to a pastoral landscape while adding an integral new feature to the city's park system.

Although South Park has suffered some injuries in the century since it was built, it is unusually well preserved; in fact, Olmsted scholars estimate it to be approximately 90 percent intact. But the strengths of this park further highlight the work that still needs to be done. For example, its pastoral meadow has become a 9-hole golf course. The lake has become shallow and tangled with aquatic plants. As in the rest of the park system, South Park's wooded groves—particularly in the golf course and around the park's edges—are in dire need of restoration. Poor traffic management on the ring road has brought heavy automobile use while pedestrian entrances have languished. And, finally, despite renovations to the Lord & Burnham Conservatory, the surrounding botanical gardens—once the park's most popular attraction—have not been maintained. Instead, growing houses for the conservatory have taken their place.

South Park offers Buffalo the rare chance to halt the decline of a classic Olmstedian landscape before it has progressed too far. The well preserved conservatory and lake retain excellent foundations for rebuilding, while its proximity to downtown Lackawanna only increases the park's importance to the surrounding urban fabric. (See Table 6)

The Lord and Burnham Conservatory houses an array of exotic botanical collections.

Table 6 | South Park (168 Acres)

Period of Significance 1894–1915

Timeline		
	1889	Initial design for lake-front park completed
	1894	Design completed for South Park in its current location
	1894	Initial construction of the park began
	1900	Conservatory structure completed
	1915	9-Hole Golf Course added

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
Bog Garden	McKinley Parkway
The Conservatory, Botanical Gardens, and Arboretum	
South Park Lake	

Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities**
The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens	9-Hole Golf Course (1)

Sunset on the South Park Lake inspires park visitors even today.

South Park History

By the 1880s, Buffalo's growing population had begun to strain the capacities of the three inner ring parks. Residents of Buffalo's south side, eager to have their share of the city's celebrated amenities, petitioned the city to extend the park and parkway system into their neighborhoods. In response, the city's park commissioners contacted Olmsted's firm to discuss a new set of parks in southern Buffalo.

Olmsted, Sr.'s first design for South Park showcased a bold new concept for the system. His 1889 plan called for a 240-acre water park that, unlike The Front, would integrate Lake Erie recreationally rather than use it as a bucolic backdrop. The new park would sit against the lake (slightly west of the current South Park's location) and be accessible by boat. Smaller boats from the lake would even be able to navigate an internal set of water channels—an aquatic version of Olmsted's winding pedestrian paths. The resulting park would take existing themes of the city's park system in new directions, using Buffalo's iconic water resources as opportunities for natural recreation within the city.

Buffalo park commissioners, however, deemed Olmsted's design—which called for excavating more than half a million cubic yards of land to build islands, canals, and a shoreline—too expensive, and the original plan for South Park was rejected. The disappointed senior Olmsted turned his attentions away from Buffalo at that point, leaving the future of Buffalo's park system to younger generations in the Olmsted firm.

In designing new parks, the younger Olmsteds faced the many constraints of working in an expanding industrial metropolis. Buffalo was no longer a small city on the make; it had become a significant center of trade and industry, with much of its space taken up by railroads and industrial sites. No longer could park planners stroll through vast natural landscapes and pick exactly where new parks ought to be. Instead, they had to choose from a rapidly narrowing set of still-existing natural areas and adapt the Olmsted vision to new conditions.

Reflecting these realities, their new plan for South Park in 1892 outlined a smaller (155-acre) inland park with virtually no water features. Instead, it was to be what one historian described as an "English deer park," enveloped by dense wooden thickets. The sylvan landscape would include a greenhouse and ornamental flower gardens, a picnic grove and concert space, a children's playground, a running track with athletic equipment, a baseball field, and two picturesque pools made out of a small swampy area.

The inland period of significance plan for South Park shows that the park is still largely intact. (Source – National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline Massachusetts.)

Buffalo's park commissioners had a different vision, however, and insisted on adding a large (21-acre) water feature and expanding the greenhouse and gardens into a true botanical garden. Despite his reservations, John Olmsted accepted the challenge of adding the gardens without disrupting the park's design. The resulting 1894 plan featured a "specimen garden" of hardy trees and shrubs strategically distributed throughout the pastoral landscape. The arboretum showcased smaller specialty gardens—rare plants in the southwestern edge, wetland varieties in the bogs—and was anchored by a large conservatory.

The addition of the Lord & Burnham Conservatory in 1898 further emphasized the gardens, and served as a grand entrance to the park. Ironically, the park's new form was in some ways even more "traditional" than the Olmsted firm's 1892 plan. For instance, all structured athletic spaces (baseball field, running track, etc.) had been left out, leaving the natural scenery undisturbed.

By the turn of the century, with the conservatory complete and the botanical gardens flourishing, the park had become a popular city destination. In the warm months of 1899, some 150,000 Buffalo residents visited the park. With its collection of hardy and tropical flowers in the greenhouses, and with its native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants in the arboretum, the park had become an "invaluable adjunct" to the city's educational system.[30] By 1908, even after air pollution required abandoning and replacing some of the less-hardy species, there were approximately 7,000 different species represented in the gardens and well over

50,000 hard-wooded plants in the arboretum. Over the next few years both the plant collections and their visitors continued to grow. Crowds of 2,000 people an hour passed through the conservatory during special exhibits and a widely popular "chrysanthemum show" topped even those numbers. Despite the daunting obstacles of climate and air quality, South Park had become a successful, world-class botanical showcase fully integrated into a natural Olmsted landscape—one of the few arboretums and botanical gardens that the firm ever designed.

IMAGES

Top:

South Park was designed to include flowering botanical collections. (Source – Penny Postcards from New York <www.rootsweb.com>)

Bottom:

This aerial image of South Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

South Park Today

Even though it remains largely intact, South Park still shows signs of wear and tear and, like the other parks, has suffered some major setbacks. In 1915, South Park's meadow was converted to a golf course, undermining the arboretum and disrupting Olmsted's network of curving footpaths and contoured plantings. As a result, as in Delaware Park, the wide grassy meadow that once welcomed city residents has been placed off-limits to everyone but recreational golfers.

South Park has also suffered from ill-designed changes in traffic patterns. For example, in 1940 a new car-accessible entrance was built at Hopkins Road, which made portions of South Park's ring road a good way to bypass the busy streets of Lackawanna. The result was predictable: heavy automobile traffic, reduced pedestrian flow, and a park road in serious need of repair. Meanwhile, the construction of a turnaround loop for public buses annexed a significant portion of the park's southeast corner near the conservatory. This was an especially poor location for a vast cement plain, since the southeast corner linked the conservatory with another prominent Lackawanna cultural heritage site, the Our Lady of Victory Basilica. The lake has become so shallow and tangled with vegetation that boating is nearly impossible.

Fortunately, portions of the botanical gardens have been rescued recently. The conservatory building is in excellent shape, for example, and its indoor collections of various plant and flower species have received new attention and life. But there is still a long way to go. Parts of the arboretum have been deeply marred by the golf course, and others have fallen into disrepair. Even the signature wooded thickets that once enclosed the park need strengthening, and several of the "highlight" gardens—the rose and other the formal gardens as well as the bogs—barely remain, if at all.

The conservatory is now managed by Erie County. Parts of it have recently been restored.

Like each park in the system, South Park offers a unique opportunity. Located within a thriving downtown and boasting one of the best-preserved Olmsted water parks in the country, South Park could easily be a model for the restoration of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System and a signature destination in Buffalo.

South Park Recommendations

The restoration of South Park has six major goals, each requiring a series of projects. Ultimately, these projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and make the park more accessible for park users. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

South Park: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Improve access and circulation within the park for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Restore and enhance the park's gateways and edges.
- Rationalize park facilities and structures.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #1: Enhance the Arboretum and botanical collection around the Conservatory

- Re-establish the arboretum and botanical collections including the trees, shrubs, and perennials.
- Re-establish formal botanical gardens behind the conservatory.

(See the 2001 Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens Master Plan)

Project #2: Repair the lake and improve water quality

- Repair lake functioning by dredging, ensuring sufficient water circulation, and eliminating sources of pollution.
- Restore missing section of the lake northeast of the ring road.
- Replant the lake edges with appropriate vegetation (both edge and submergent) while leaving space for recreation and contact with the water.
- Provide water-based recreation opportunities on the lake, including boating and fishing.
- Restore the extent and functioning of the Bog Garden.

Project #3: Restore the Meadow

- Restore the full expanse of the historic meadow and arboretum to obtain the original spatial organization as well as historic plant diversity and density. (See the 1986 Master Plan for the Restoration of Frederick Law Olmsted's South Park Arboretum)
- Reconsider the golf course—maintain or remove.

IMAGES

Clockwise from left:

The historic gardens around the conservatory can only be restored if the rear growing houses are removed. (Source – City of Buffalo. (1910) *Buffalo Park Commissioner Report: 1901-1910.* Buffalo, NY: Haas & Klein Printers.)

The lake in South Park has suffered from a lack of maintenance and needs dredging.

The restored South Park Lake will be a popular destination for boaters and other park users.

Much of the arboretum is still intact. The park comes to life every spring with fragrant, colorful, flower blossoms.

IMAGES

Top:

The boathouse on the lake, although never built, can provide opportunities for recreation on the lake.

Bottom:

South Park is adjacent to Lackawanna's world class Father Baker Basilica.

Improve Access and Circulation within the Park for Vehicles and Pedestrians

Project #4: Repair the Ring Road

Project #5: Replace the bridge

Project #6: Discourage local traffic from using the park as a thoroughfare

- Install traffic calming features on roads throughout the park.
- Possibly close Hopkins Road to vehicular traffic.

Restore and Enhance the Park's Gateways and Edges

Project #7: Articulate the park's main entrance as a major gateway

Project #8: Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians

Project #9: Create a 'Father Baker Garden' where the unused bus loop is located

Rationalize Park Facilities and Structures

Project #10: Construct the Boathouse

Project #11: Enhance the appearance and utility of the concession structure

Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

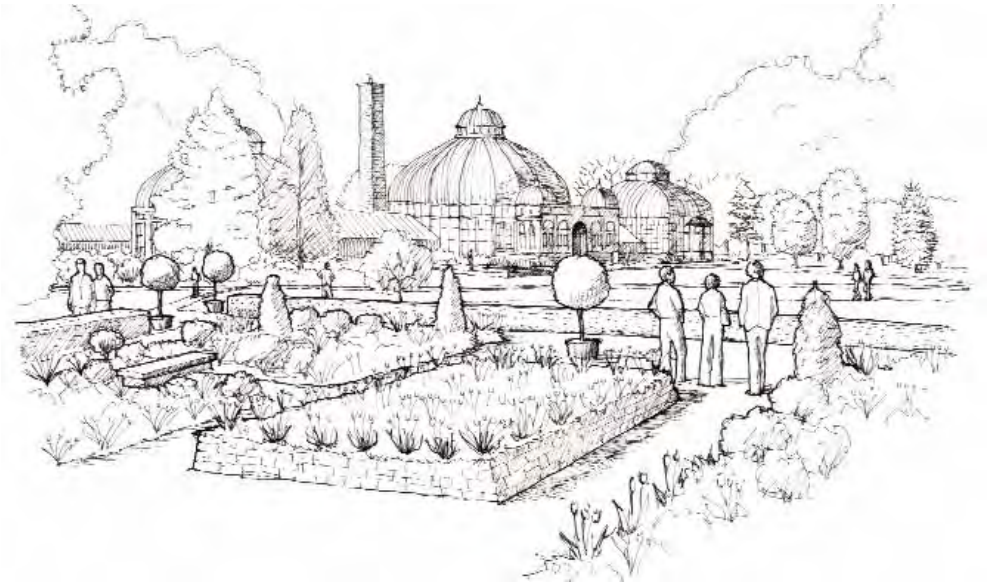
Project #12: Integrate South Park with surrounding urban Lackawanna neighborhood

- Design a direct link between South Park, the Basilica and downtown Lackawanna.

Project #13: Connect South Park to the Greenway through trails along Ridge Road

Project #14: Connect South Park to Tifft Street and the Tifft Nature Preserve

Project #15: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods



The Father Baker Garden will replace the unused bus loop at the southeast corner of the park.

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #16: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #17: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #18: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

Project #19: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #20: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

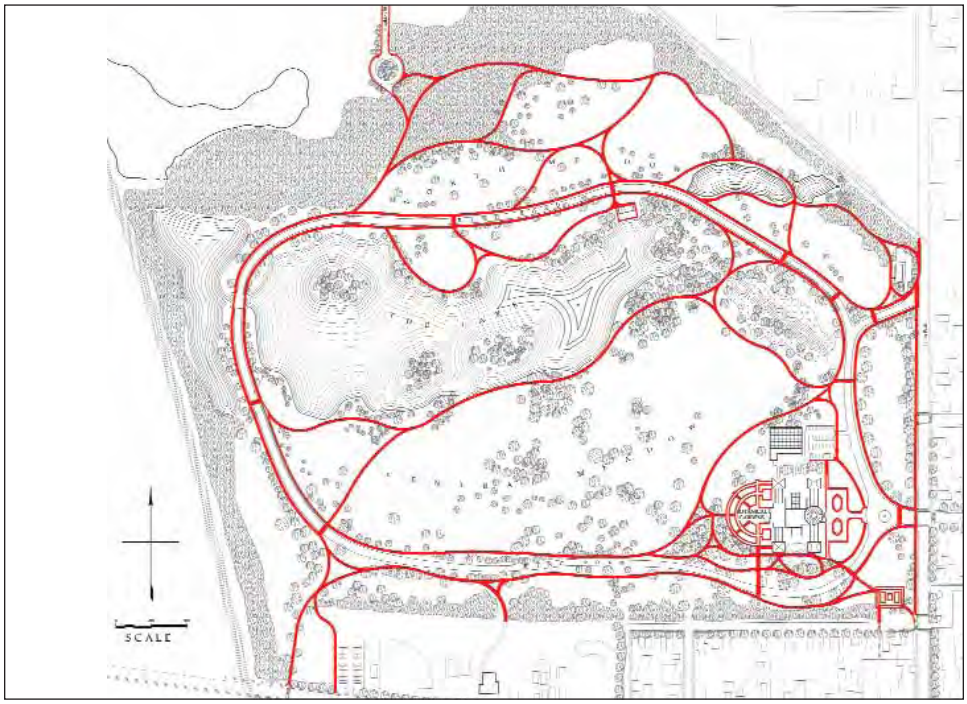
Project #21: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #22: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #23: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #24: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

Project #25: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

South Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring South Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of the park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored while the 9-hole golf course remains within the park.

—RESTORATION PLAN—

SOUTH PARK

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #1: Enhance the Arboretum and botanical collection around the Conservatory

Project #2: Repair the lake and improve water quality

Project #3: Restore the Meadow

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION WITHIN THE PARK FOR VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Project #4: Repair the Ring Road

Project #5: Replace the bridge

Project #6: Discourage local traffic from using the park as a thoroughfare

RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE PARK'S GATEWAYS AND EDGES

Project #7: Articulate the park's main entrance as a major gateway

Project #8: Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians

Project #9: Create a 'Father Baker Garden' where the unused bus loop is located

RATIONALIZE PARK FACILITIES AND STRUCTURES

Project #10: Construct the Boathouse

Project #11: Enhance the appearance and utility of the concession structure

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

*Project #12: Integrate South Park with surrounding urban Lackawanna neighborhood

*Project #13: Connect South Park to the Greenway through trails along Ridge Road

*Project #14: Connect South Park to Tifft Street and the Tifft Nature Preserve

*Project #15: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #16: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #17: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

*Project #18: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

*Project #19: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

*Project #20: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

*Project #21: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

*Project #22: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

*Project #23: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

*Project #24: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

*Project #25: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

BUFFALO, NY

ERIE COUNTY

Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—
SOUTH PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the ring road on the north side of the park across the lake to the ring road on the south side of the park.

CAZENOVIA PARK

Cazenovia Park demonstrates again how central water was to Olmsted's' vision for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. From the beginning, a constructed lake on Cazenovia Creek was the focus of designs for this park. The park's open and wooded spaces unfolded across the rolling landscape in such a way that visitors could see the lake from nearly any vantage point. For a small water-focused park, however, Cazenovia offered remarkably varied fare. For example, a grand entrance leading to a carriage concourse and boathouse was used for civic functions; a grassy athletic field provided areas for sports play; and a picnic grove, concert bandstand, and formal gardens at Seneca Street accommodated visitors on quiet summer outings. The complex design of the park allowed for all of these uses to coexist in a relatively small space without disrupting the overall feeling of being enveloped by nature.

Today Cazenovia Park presents a puzzle, but one well worth solving. Part of this puzzle is engineering. From the beginning, siltation and episodic flooding made the lake troublesome. Dams came and went, as did strategies for stabilizing the lake's banks, and finally a levee was built that divided the park in two. But despite all efforts the lake ultimately proved unsustainable: too shallow for skating in the winter and too unpredictable in wet seasons. Now all that remains is the creek, and the former lake has become a low-lying grassland. The casino and waterfront concourse have suffered significant decline, and are no longer at the water's edge. Meanwhile, other structures have been added to the once pastoral landscape: an ice skating rink, a community/ senior citizen center, golf course amenities, parking lots, and more. (See Table 7)

The moonlit lake in Cazenovia Park was once the main feature of the park.

Table 7 | Cazenovia Park (196 Acres)

Period of Significance 1888–1920

Timeline		
	1892	Design completed for Cazenovia Park
	1896	Construction of the lake completed
	1915	Baseball diamond and tennis courts laid out
	1925	80-acre addition (Golf Course)
	1965	Lake is drained
	1971	Thomas Tosh Collins Community Center built

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
The Casino	Red Jacket Parkway
Shelter House	
Cazenovia Creek	

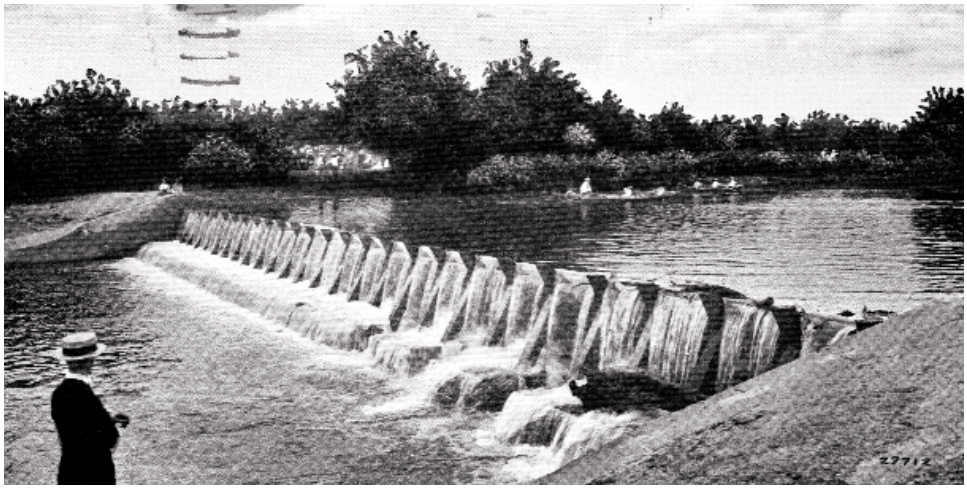
Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities**
Tosh Collins Community Center	Baseball/Softball diamonds (4)
Cazenovia Branch Library	Soccer fields (3)
	Tennis courts (4)
	Basketball courts (2)
	9-Hole Golf Course (1)
	Playgrounds (1)
	Spray Pool (1)
	Swimming Pool (1)
	Ice Rink (1)

This 1896 map of Cazenovia Park highlights the lake with its many inlets and islands. The casino area is not included in this plan, although it is part of the period of significance. (Source – City of Buffalo. (1900) *Buffalo Park Commissioner Report: 1893-1900*. Buffalo, NY: Haas & Klein Printers.)

Cazenovia Park History

The Olmsted sons' plan for Cazenovia Park, developed alongside the plan for South Park, was one of the most complex of the Buffalo system. The centerpiece was Cazenovia Creek, expanded into a complex lake divided in two parts by a carriage bridge for the park drive. The largest section of the lake circled two islands to create an uneven, knotty-bordered figure eight. And on the other side of the bridge, the smaller section of the lake swirled around a single large island in an irregular donut shape. The islands, along with the curving inlets and small promontories throughout the lake's banks, allowed park goers more access to the water than in other, much larger parks. A dam helped keep the intricate water system deep enough for boating and ice skating, both of which drew many visitors early in the 20th century.

At the park's northeast corner was a grand entrance, lined by rows of trees and over 15,000 varieties of plants. From there, carriages could go to the concourse, the casino, and the boathouse on the lake. Cazenovia's charms did not end with the water and the concourse, however. As with the other parks, the Olmsted firm strove to create great diversity within the park's relatively small boundaries. A large sports field edged the lake on the park's northern corner; dense groves of trees dotted the classic (if tiny) Olmsted greensward; and pedestrian paths meandered through the park within the figure-eight shaped parkway. In 1915 a formal bandstand was built for outdoor musical concerts that had been popular from the park's earliest days. Cazenovia was small but offered nearly the full breadth of classic Olmstedian landscapes and amusements found in other parks. Its seamless blend of recreation and natural beauty makes Cazenovia Park an attractive park. An additional eighty acres was added to the southeastern part of the park in 1925. Cazenovia Creek, which bisects this addition, was straightened in order to make room for a 9-hole golf course on this park addition, which is still in use today.



IMAGES

Clockwise from the top:

The lake was created by damning the Cazenovia Creek at the western side of the park.

The casino in the park was built to be adjacent to a lake that no longer exists. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

The shelter house at the end of the concourse provided park user amenities such as restrooms and drinking fountains. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

Cazenovia Park Today

Cazenovia Park still has a charming, off-the-beaten-path feel to it, and many of its basic elements remain. But, unfortunately, they have been overshadowed by the loss of the lake; a radical deterioration of Cazenovia Creek; a marked decline in the paths, vegetation, and shelters; and the disruptive addition of buildings and other structures. The most striking change has been the water, the heart of the park. From the outset, park engineers had difficulty maintaining the purposefully convoluted lake system. The ongoing need to stabilize the lake's banks became apparent during early construction, when heavy rains and flooding cut away a portion of the shoreline near the park's upper border. By the mid-1890s, the lake's edges were bolstered with riprap and its depth was maintained by a timber dam. But less than a decade later, the lake was already causing more problems, as silt from the river created deposits that rose above the lake's surface. Meanwhile, periodic flooding damaged both the bridge and the dam. As a result, the lake alternated unpredictably between being either too shallow or too deep. In 1965, several strategies and dams later, the dam was removed and the lake was all but abandoned. A levee, large enough to divide the park in two, was placed at the south edge of the creek to mitigate continued flooding. And the lagoons, including the one next to the casino and boathouse, became grassy expanses leading up to the creek's edge.

With the lake gone, other aspects of the park also suffered, none more than the concourse and the boat launch area that is now some four hundred feet from the water's edge. The casino and shelter house remain, but these structures as well as their respective gardens and pathways are in need of repair.

This aerial image of Cazenovia Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

The park's central attractions have not deteriorated in isolation. As in the other parks, pedestrian paths have disappeared and the classic Olmstedian wooded thickets have thinned both within and at the edges of the park. The circular parkway is worn, especially at the curbs, from years of excessive and high-speed traffic. The entrances, once grand gateways to the park, have become parking lots. And, finally, the once pastoral landscape is now home to a number of buildings and a variety of sports facilities such as an ice rink, a community/senior center, and a maintenance garage.

During the 1910s, tennis courts and baseball fields were added to the park. Later, the golf house and parking lot occupied park land. But, like many of the other Olmsted parks in Buffalo, Cazenovia's "bones" are in good shape and are ready to be restored.

Cazenovia Park Recommendations

The restoration of Cazenovia Park has seven major goals, each requiring a series of projects. These projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and reinterpret or restore parts of the lost lake. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings.

Cazenovia Park: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Improve access and circulation in the park for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Restore and enhance the park's gateways and edges.
- Protect and enhance Cazenovia Creek and develop ecological and sustainable systems for managing floods and stormwater.
- Improve or rationalize recreation and services by balancing unstructured recreation with structured recreation.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #1: Renovate the Casino and the central Concourse

- Renovate the casino building and develop a programmed use for it.
- Reestablish the adjoining gardens and restore historic planting plan.
- Restore the shelter house, including its surrounding gardens and pathways.
- Interpret the concourse and improve parking.
- Remove maintenance garage and find an alternative location for park maintenance needs.

Improve Access and Circulation within the Park for Vehicles and Pedestrians

Project #2: Remove parking and access road along the creek on south side of the park and provide new residential access from Potters Road

Project #3: Construct a pedestrian bridge over Cazenovia Creek

- Construct a new pedestrian bridge along the historic pathway on the outer loop near the golf course.

Project #4: Improve the pedestrian connection between the original park and its newer section

Restore and Enhance the Park's Gateways and Edges

Project #5: Restore the park's south entrance connecting to Red Jacket Parkway

Project #6: Create an enhanced 'parking garden' at the entrance at Seneca Street

IMAGES

Clockwise from the top:

The casino building today is surrounded by flowering grass lawns.

The restored shelter house can provide needed park user amenities.

Cazenovia Creek was straightened and its shoreline built up with rock walls to prevent erosion, resulting in a loss of natural habitat.

The Cazenovia Creek shoreline can be stabilized with natural vegetation that will increase the aquatic habitat needed to sustain flora and fauna in the creek.

Protect and Enhance Cazenovia Creek and Develop Ecological and Sustainable Systems for Managing Floods and Stormwater

Project #7: Stabilize the creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access

(See the 1997 Study of Flood Damage Mitigation Along Cazenovia Creek City of Buffalo)

Project #8: Develop overflow areas along the creek to absorb more flood waters

- Use wetlands and water controls to help control flooding and to diversify habitat and plantings in the park.

Project #9: Reinterpret the former lake edge behind the Casino

Improve or Rationalize Recreation and Services by Balancing Unstructured Recreation with Structured Recreation

Project #10: Improve sports fields as required

Project #11: Relocate non-historic facilities out of the historic section of the park

- When the ice rink, swimming pool and community/senior center reach the end of their useful life, relocate to alternative sites nearby.
- Relocate golf house to Seneca Street within the golf course and reorder golf course holes.

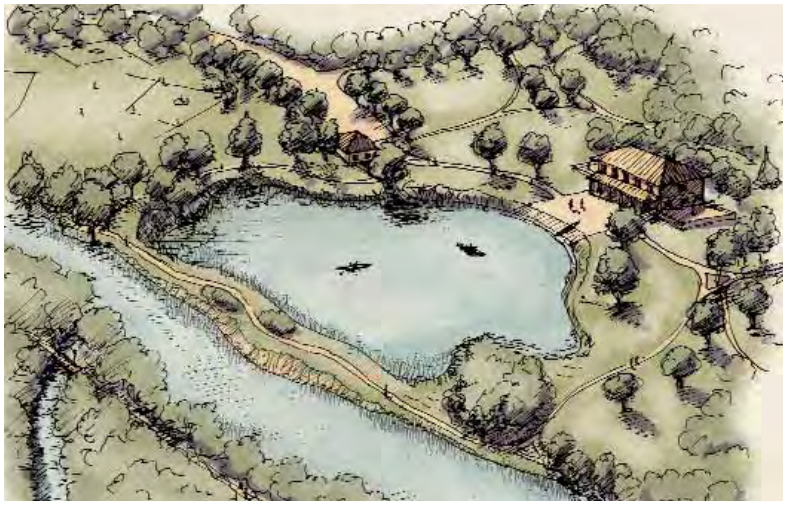
Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

Project #12: Connect Cazenovia Park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood

Project #13: Connect Cazenovia Park to the Niagara River Greenway system

- The Red Jacket Parkway entrance to the park and the Cazenovia Street bridge are good connecting locations.

Project #14: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods



IMAGES

Clockwise from the top:

Currently, there are locations along Cazenovia Creek within the park that provide wetland habitat.

The historic function of the casino can be restored by recreating the lake on which it was once built.

The creek floods into the park nearly every spring.

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #15: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #16: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #17: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

Project #18: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #19: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

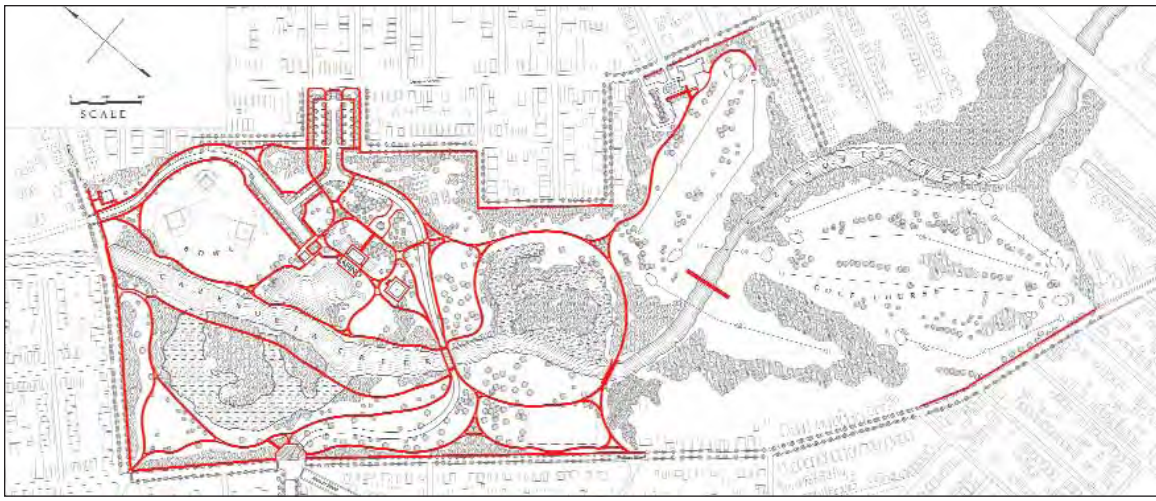
Project #20: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #21: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #22: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #23: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

Project #24: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

Cazenovia Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring Cazenovia Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of the park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored while the pool, ice rink, community center, and golf house, remain in the historic section of the park.

—RESTORATION PLAN—

CAZENOVIA PARK

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #1: Renovate the Casino and the central Concourse

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION IN THE PARK FOR VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Project #2: Remove parking and access road along the creek on south side of the park and provide new residential access from Potters Road

Project #3: Construct a pedestrian bridge over Cazenovia Creek

Project #4: Improve the pedestrian connection between the original park and its newer section

RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE PARK'S GATEWAYS AND EDGES

Project #5: Restore the park's south entrance connecting to Red Jacket Parkway

Project #6: Create an enhanced 'parking garden' at the entrance at Seneca Street

PROTECT AND ENHANCE CAZENOVIA CREEK AND DEVELOP ECOLOGICAL AND SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING FLOODS AND STORMWATER

Project #7: Stabilize the creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access

Project #8: Develop overflow areas along the creek to absorb more flood waters

Project #9: Reinterpret the former lake edge behind the Casino

IMPROVE OR RATIONALIZE RECREATION AND SERVICES

Project #10: Improve sports fields as required

Project #11: Relocate non-historic facilities out of the historic section of the park

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

*Project #12: Connect Cazenovia Park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood

*Project #13: Connect Cazenovia Park to the Niagara River Greenway system

*Project #14: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #15: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #16: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

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*Project #24: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

BUFFALO, NY

ERIE COUNTY

Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—
CAZENOVIA PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the casino, across the restored lake and Cazenovia Creek, to the wooded wetland area west of the creek.

RIVERSIDE PARK

Riverside Park was the last addition to the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, and in some ways fittingly so. With Riverside Park, the younger Olmsteds finally accomplished something that Olmsted Sr. had unsuccessfully sought after: a genuine waterfront park. Like The Front, Riverside Park was situated on a bluff, which gave park goers beautiful views of the Niagara River. Unlike The Front, however, a foot bridge over the Erie Canal gave visitors a direct link to the water's edge. This much sought after connection to the water formed the centerpiece of the park, and radiating from this focal point were Riverside's classic Olmstedian features: the grassy meadow, wooded thickets, ponds, footpaths, and a concourse.

Today, however, Riverside is the least well preserved of all of Buffalo's Olmsted parks, with few of its central features still existing. The New York State Thruway has cut off the park from the water; a generic swimming pool has replaced the historic central concourse; and the Minnow Pools have been removed altogether. A senior citizen center and ice skating rink mar the once natural landscape, and the footpaths and woods have declined dramatically. Restoring Riverside is a tall order, but not impossible. Doing so is crucial to a revitalized park system in Buffalo—a system that reaches for the Niagara in so many places, but only truly touches it here. (See Table 8)

Riverside Park was designed to take advantage of the views associated with its connection to the Niagara River.
(Source – Western New York Heritage Press <wnyheritagepress.org>)

Table 8 | Riverside Park (37 Acres)

Period of Significance 1898–1912

Timeline		
	1899	Design completed for Riverside Park
	1900	Major construction completed for Riverside Park
	1912	Southern Park addition
	1930	Large pool completed
	1931	Erie Canal filled in, adding 26 acres to the park
	1960s	Construction of the thruway and the loss of the Erie Canal section of the park

Notable Features	**Olmsted System Connections**
Lighthouse Monument	None
Petofi Monument	
World War I Memorial	
Niagara River overlook	

Cultural Amenities	**Park Facilities**
Senior Citizens' Center	Baseball/ Softball diamonds (4)
	Football/Soccer field (1)
	Tennis courts (2)
	Basketball courts (2)
	Ice Rink (1)
	Swimming Pool (1)
	Wading Pool (1)
	Playgrounds (1)
	Picnic tables (4)
	Picnic shelters (2)
	Grills

This 1898 map of Riverside Park is the period of significance design and includes only the northern portion of what we now know as the park. (Source – National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline Massachusetts.)

Riverside Park History

In 1898, Buffalo park commissioners asked the Olmsted firm (now Olmsted Brothers) to design a park for a recently-acquired 22-acre riverfront plot at the northern edge of the city. What was normal in other cities—choosing the site and then asking for a plan—was, in fact, unusual for Buffalo where the Olmsted firm had helped pick the location of previous parks. Nonetheless, they must have been pleased at the long-awaited opportunity to design a park directly on the waterfront.

Not surprisingly, the water was central to the Olmsteds' design for Riverside Park. The park's meandering footpaths, for example, led visitors to a pedestrian bridge over the Erie Canal and a raised platform roofed by an elegant pergola, giving park goers a full view of both the Niagara River and the park. The park road was not the traditional encompassing circle, as seen in the other parks, but a Y shape with both forks ending at Niagara Street next to the Erie Canal.

The park had three distinct areas that were defined by the Y-shaped parkway. To the north, along the Buffalo city line, was a natural wooded area with winding paths and the Minnow Pools, a series of shallow undulating pools that stretched the full width of the park. To the south was a classic Olmstedian meadow and playing field. The center of the park, the area defined by the top of the Y, showcased a formal concourse, music court, pavilions, shelter house, fountain, gardens, and pathways to the river. Each distinct area represented a familiar Olmstedian trope, knit together by the park's focal point—the water. Though its distant location at the city's northern border made the park more of a "hidden gem" than a signature destination, Riverside Park soon became a popular site for music, picnicking, wading, and ball sports.

In 1912, Riverside Park received a gift: a 17-acre addition to its southern end. In retrospect, however, it is unclear whether this was an improvement or the beginning of the park's downfall. On the one hand, the new addition expanded the park's riverfront and recreational areas. On the other hand, however, because the land had not been part of the Olmsteds' design, little was done in the way of planning and integrating it into the park. As a result, the land was used to accommodate numerous sports facilities, including a tennis court, three baseball diamonds, six quoit courts and, by 1930, a large public swimming pool and bathhouse. In the years to come, this trend only continued with the inclusion of at least 5 tennis courts and a football field. The Erie Canal bed was filled in, adding another 26 acres to the park's waterfront edge. But by then it seemed that preserving the park's original design was no longer a priority. This was most clearly seen in the unceremonious filling of the Minnow Pools, only briefly mentioned in the annual reports as "the old duck pond."

IMAGES

Left:

The northern portion of the park was heavily wooded, creating a canopy of foliage. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

Right:

The Minnow Pools gave park users a place to feed ducks and fish. (Source – Western New York Heritage Press <wnyheritagepress.org>)

Riverside Park Today

Being overrun by an excess of playing fields in the 1930s, however, turned out to be the least of Riversides Park's worries. After becoming a true waterfront park once the Erie Canal was filled in, Riverside was subsequently severed from the water's edge when the New York State Thruway was built along the old canal bed in the 1960s. Today, although park pedestrians can reach the river on the Irene Gardner Bridge that spans the thruway, the walk is noisy and can even be frightening. And for those who brave the crossing, there is limited space and few amenities available on the other side to support waterfront activities.

This aerial image of Riverside Park is from 2005. (Source – New York State GIS Clearinghouse.)

Along with the diminished connection to the river has come a decline in the park's centerpiece, the grand concourse and plaza that led to the historic canal bridge. Today, this area is dominated by a swimming pool, senior citizen center, and ice rink. Add this to the diminished pedestrian pathways, and the plaza's orientation towards the river has essentially disappeared. In a terrible irony for an Olmsted park, today Riverside Park seems to have almost no design at all.

Like the other parks, Riverside Park also suffers from the typical effects of wear and tear combined with decades of urban growth. The park's groves of trees have faded, along with the footpaths, and the Minnow Pools have disappeared altogether. The former Y-shaped parkway has become a single road that cuts through the park, accentuating the loss of entrances and the increase in through-traffic. The park's best surviving element might well be the athletic fields, but even these have deteriorated. Overall there are significant challenges to restoring Riverside Park, but none are insurmountable.

Today, the Irene Gardener pedestrian bridge is the park's only connection to the Niagara River.

Riverside Park Recommendations

The restoration of Riverside Park has seven major goals, each requiring a series of projects. These projects will both restore the park's historic integrity and help regain its connection to the Niagara River. (The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings)

Like Front Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, there is a need to deal with the unsightly thruway that separates the park from its defining surrounding feature, the Niagara River. Decking the thruway by the park is outside of the cultural landscape restoration recommendations because Riverside Park was always disconnected from the Niagara River except for a brief period of time when the Erie Canal had been filled. That said, nothing should be done in the park that makes cantilevering over the thruway impossible. This should be considered when the thruway undergoes major maintenance and improvements in the future.

Riverside Park: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the park from the period of significance.
- Reestablish the visual and physical connection between Riverside Park and the Niagara River.
- Improve access and circulation in the park for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Improve or rationalize recreation and services by balancing unstructured recreation with structured recreation.
- Integrate the original Olmsted park with the south portion of park.
- Establish connections to areas surrounding the park.
- Restore the basic park elements.

The Minnow Pools can be reinterpreted as a rain garden.

Restore the Historic Integrity of the Park from the Period of Significance

Project #1: Reestablish the central Concourse

- Relocate swimming pool to a better location off the concourse.
- Reinterpret the historic central concourse.
- Reinterpret gazebo / bandstand according to restoration period.
- Relocate the Petofi Monument and War Memorial to the concourse.
- Create a picnic grove at the concourse with vegetation and site furnishings.
- Expand and interpret the central concourse vegetative plantings and gardens according to the historic pattern.

Project #2: Reinterpret the Minnow Pools

Reestablish the Visual and Physical Connection between Riverside Park and the Niagara River

Project #3: Relocate and redesign the pedestrian bridge on its historic alignment

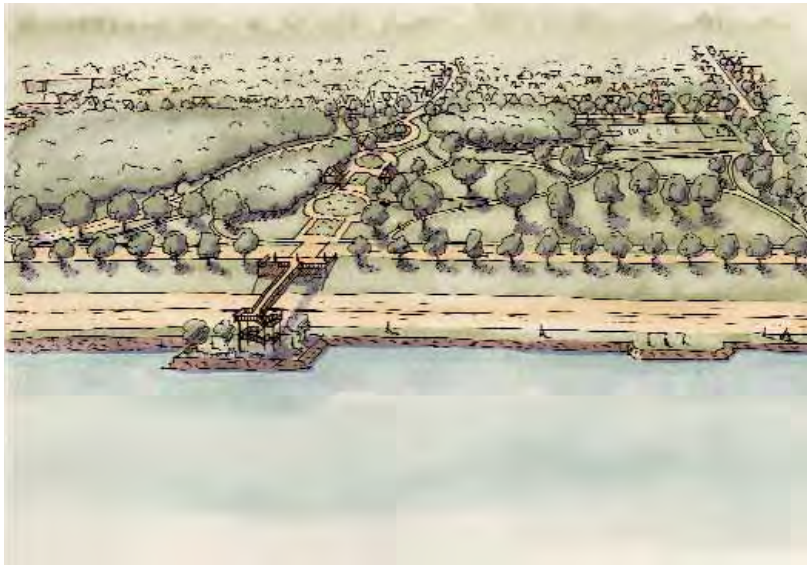
- Use signage to mark this location as a gateway to Buffalo.

Project #4: Establish a pier on the Niagara River where the new pedestrian bridge lands

Improve Access and Circulation within the Park for Vehicles and Pedestrians

Project #5: Reconstruct Hotaling Drive

Project #6: Improve parking along Crowley Avenue



The reconstructed concourse will connect to a newly constructed pedestrian bridge and a landing on the Niagara River.

Improve or Rationalize Recreation and Services by Balancing Unstructured Recreation with Structured Recreation

Project #7: Improve existing playground

Project #8: Rationalize and improve existing sports fields

- Rebuild the existing baseball fields.
- Enhance opportunities for unstructured recreation such as frisbee, walking, biking, and other games.

Project #9: Relocate senior center, swimming pool, and ice rink facilities

- Reinterpret original Y vehicular circulation pattern.
- Buffer cemetery with fencing and plantings that recreates vegetation and visual barriers from the restoration period.

Integrate the Original Olmsted Park with the South Portion of Park

Project #10: Enhance connections between the original Olmsted park and the newer section of the park

Establish Connections to Areas Surrounding the Park

Project #11: Develop safe connections between Riverside Park and the adjacent neighborhoods

- Establish cross walks and traffic signals where appropriate and other traffic-calming measures. These connections would eventually include the relocated facilities.

Project #12: Extend the park connections to the Niagara River Greenway and Washington and Towpath Parks

Project #13: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

Restore the Basic Park Elements

Project #14: Restore the park's historic furnishings

Project #15: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

Project #16: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

Project #17: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

Project #18: Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system

Project #19: Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system

Project #20: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

Project #21: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

Project #22: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

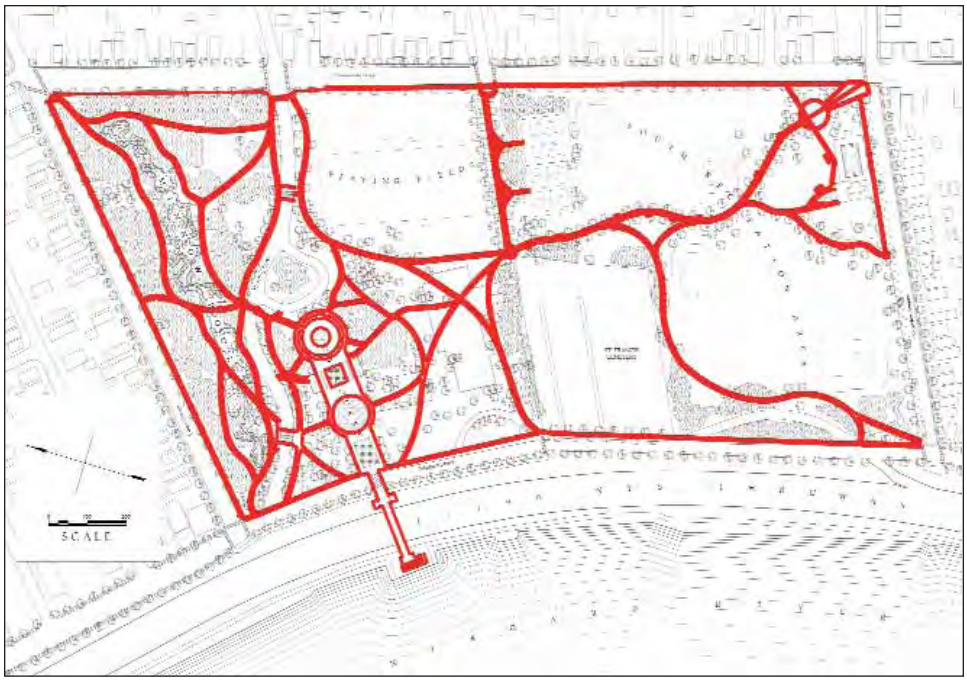
- Re-establish historic planting plan in woodland areas that bounds the north end of the park.

Project #23: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

IMAGES

Below:

Afternoon baseball games by the Niagara River are an important part of summer in the Riverside community.



This image shows the fully restored park pathways.

Riverside Park Restoration Plan

The restoration plan shows the long term vision for restoring Riverside Park based upon the goals and corresponding recommendations. The partial restoration image of the park shows the parts of the park that cannot be restored while the pool, ice rink, and senior center remain in the historic section of the park and more suitable locations in the surrounding community are not found for these facilities.

—RESTORATION PLAN—

RIVERSIDE PARK

RESTORE THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE PARK FROM THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Project #1: Reestablish the central Concourse

Project #2: Reinterpret the Minnow Pools

REESTABLISH THE VISUAL AND PHYSICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN RIVERSIDE PARK AND THE NIAGARA RIVER

Project #3: Relocate and redesign the pedestrian bridge on its historic alignment

Project #4: Establish a pier on the Niagara River where the new pedestrian bridge lands

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION IN THE PARK FOR VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Project #5: Reconstruct Hotaling Drive

Project #6: Improve parking along Crowley Avenue

IMPROVE OR RATIONALIZE RECREATION AND SERVICES

Project #7: Improve existing playground

Project #8: Rationalize and improve existing sports fields

Project #9: Relocate senior center, swimming pool, and ice rink facilities

INTEGRATE THE ORIGINAL OLMSTED PARK WITH THE SOUTH PORTION OF PARK

Project #10: Enhance connections between the original Olmsted park and the newer section of the park

ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS TO AREAS SURROUNDING THE PARK

*Project #11: Develop safe connections between Riverside Park and the adjacent neighborhoods

*Project #12: Extend the park connections to the Niagara River Greenway and Washington and Towpath Parks

*Project #13: Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods

RESTORE THE BASIC PARK ELEMENTS

*Project #14: Restore the park's historic furnishings

*Project #15: Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting

*Project #16: Restore and maintain public restroom facilities

*Project #17: Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains

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*Project #20: Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads

*Project #21: Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage

*Project #22: Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation

*Project #23: Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park

*These projects are not numbered on the map.

BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

BUFFALO, NY

ERIE COUNTY

Partial Restoration

Section Drawing

—RESTORATION PLAN—
RIVERSIDE PARK

Note: The areas in white are major obstacles to the realization of the full restoration plan. Without their removal, the park can only be partially restored. However, non-historic structures and uses in any park will not be removed without community input, and if removed will be replaced outside of the park as community needs dictate.

The section drawing of the park shows the landscape elevation change from the Niagara River, across the restored pedestrian bridge, and over to the concourse.

THE PARKWAYS, CIRCLES, AND SMALL SPACES

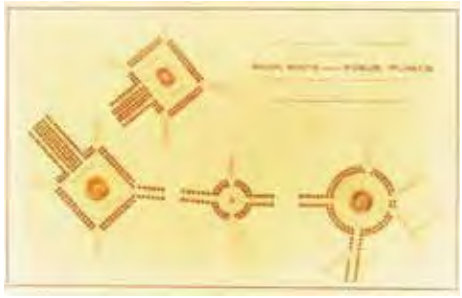
For many residents today, Buffalo seems to suffer from an excess of divisions: between city and suburbs; between areas segregated by racial divides; along lines of urban expressways; across the invisible edges of school districts; and, psychologically, between a boom-town past and a "city of no illusions" present. The Buffalo Olmsted Park System offers a very different vision of Buffalo, one connected as an organic whole. The parks were distributed throughout the city not only to meet local neighborhoods' needs for recreation, but also to knit together the entire city. The stitching for this vision is the system of parkways and smaller green spaces that link the parks and the city to one another. Although Olmsted planned other park-and-parkway systems in the U.S., Buffalo was his first and, by one historian's estimation, the most "impressive and coherent" of his career.[31]

Today the parkway system has been wonderfully preserved in some places, and completely destroyed in others. The positive community impacts of the parkway system can be seen in the neighborhoods where elements of it remain intact. These neighborhoods are prized areas where people want to live. The negative impacts of losing an element of the parkway system can also be seen in surrounding neighborhoods, such as along the former Humboldt Parkway. These neighborhoods have generally experienced decades of disinvestment and are in a state of deterioration.

The homes along Lincoln Parkway are reminders that Buffalo was once a city of millionaires.

Parkway System History

With a few exceptions, Buffalo's parkway system was built according to Olmsted's plan. For the first three parks, the green connections were quite extensive: Humboldt Parkway stretched the three miles from The Park to The Parade; Lincoln, Bidwell, and Chapin Parkways connected The Park to the city via Soldier's Place (now Soldiers Circle); Delaware Avenue was lengthened to link Chapin Parkway with Niagara Square downtown; Genesee Street connected Niagara Square to The Parade; and Porter Avenue linked The Front to Bidwell Parkway via The Avenue (now Richmond Avenue).



As early as the 1870s, the parkway system had been expanded to include the new additions to the park system. Fillmore Avenue was extended to Abbott Road, which led to Heacock Park, a small greenspace that linked parkways to both Cazenovia and South Parks. Later, a parkway along Niagara Street stretched towards Riverside Park, though it never reached the entire length.

The parkway system was more than just a road map between the parks, however. It was a park in itself. Many of the parkways featured majestic, tree-lined avenues with a ribbon of green down the middle. At major intersections were smaller greenspaces, many of them elegant traffic circles, reminding parkway travelers that they were in a park, not the city. What's more, the parkways linked Buffalo's Olmsted parks with the city's other existing parks, like Day's Park (partially redesigned by Olmsted) and Prospect Park near The Front.

Parkway System Today

Today, much of the parkway system still exists, particularly the grand core surrounding Soldiers' Circle—Lincoln, Bidwell, and Chapin Parkways—as well as the southern system around Heacock Place and McClellan Circle. Many of the smaller green spaces, especially the traffic circles, have even been restored in recent years. Ferry and Symphony Circles have been reconstructed. Plantings and gardens have been restored in McClellan and McKinley Circles. And some new gardens have been added to Gates Circle.

IMAGES

Top right:

Lincoln Parkway is said to be the grandest of all Olmsted designed parkways in Buffalo. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

Left side (top to bottom):

This map shows the inner ring system of parks and parkways.

Olmsted's designs for circles ranged in shape, size, and function. (Source – National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline Massachusetts.)

Symphony Circle was recently restored to reflect its historic design.

However, like many of the parks, the parkway system has sustained substantial damage over the years. Humboldt Parkway, for example, was demolished to make way for the Kensington and Scajaquada Expressways, and the grand entranceways into Delaware and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parks were destroyed in the process. As a result, once-whole neighborhoods have been carved up into pieces and easy navigation of the park system has become nearly impossible.

The erasing of a major element of the parkway system pointed to a lack of recognition of the importance of the parkway system to Buffalo. Although some of the traffic circles have been restored, many of the smaller green spaces that link the Olmsted parks are in need of repair. Perhaps more importantly, the parkway system was never fully completed according to Olmsted's design. For instance, according to Olmsted's plans, parkways should have connected every park to the water. In addition, Olmsted's designs called for the parkway system to be grounded downtown at Niagara Square. And finally, Olmsted's vision for Buffalo was a system of parks not limited to his six parks, but one that included many different kinds of natural and recreation spaces. Thus, the parkway system should not only knit together Buffalo's Olmsted parks, but also incorporate the city's other parks as well.

Parkway System Recommendations

Cultural Landscape

The first set of recommendations is for system elements that are within the historically designated cultural landscape. There are common elements to all parkways, circles, and small spaces that should be restored. These include plantings, pathways, roadways, lighting, and signage. There are also recommendations that are unique to each individual system element. These recommendations are guided by the historic character of the system element, as well as its current needs. Some system elements have no specified projects listed. In these cases, the overall goals should be applied whenever and wherever possible. The numbers associated with each system element do not represent priority rankings.

Connections and Extensions

The subsequent section of this report describes recommendations for connections and extensions that are not within the cultural landscape. These are opportunities to connect and extend the Olmsted Park System.

Parkways System: Goals for Restoration

- Restore the historic integrity of the parkway element from the period of significance.
- Transition towards historic planting types and restore historic tree plantings.
- Improve safety, access, and circulation for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Install historically appropriate light standards.
- Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage.

Cultural Landscape

Parkways

Project #1: Porter Avenue

- Redesign the bridge over the thruway with plantings and enlarged pedestrian walkways.
- Connect to shoreline trail along The Bank, an Olmsted designed circle adjacent to Front Park, and Busti Avenue.
- Use Porter Avenue to connect Symphony Circle, Front Park and LaSalle Park.

Project #2: Richmond Avenue (The Avenue)

Project #3: Bidwell Parkway

- Restore bridal path as a pedestrian walkway.
- Mill the parkway road.

Project #4: Chapin Parkway

- Restore bridal path as a pedestrian walkway.
- Mill the parkway road.

Project #5: Lincoln Parkway

- Reduce vehicular impact and increase pedestrian safety on Hoyt Lake bridge.
- Restore bridal path as a pedestrian walkway.
- Mill the parkway road.

Project #6: McKinley Parkway

- Enhance safety for recreational users within the parkway.

Project #7: Red Jacket Parkway

- Redesign entryway and intersection at Cazenovia Park.

IMAGES

Left to right (from the top):

Porter Avenue connects Front Park to Symphony Circle and the Olmsted system.

There was once a swimming pool at the Foot of Porter Avenue on the Black Rock Canal.

Richmond Avenue, like other Olmsted parkways, was hit hard by Dutch Elm Disease that wiped out its majestic American Elms.

A historic photo of Bidwell Parkway showing the central greenway. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

Chapin Parkway connects Soldiers Circle and Gates Circle.

Lincoln Parkway connects Delaware Park to Soldiers Circle, Chapin Parkway, and Bidwell Parkway.

Circles

Project #8: West Ferry Circle

- Illuminate the central light standard better to improve vehicular safety.

Project #9: Colonial Circle (Bidwell Place)

- Design road to structure traffic moving around the circle and attend to pedestrian safety.

Project #10: Soldiers Circle (Soldiers Place)

- Explore opportunities to return historic cannons.

Project #11: Gates Circle (Chapin Place)

- Restore the fountain and reflecting pool system.
- Repair the granite benches and walls within the circle.

Project #12: Agassiz Circle

- Restore Agassiz Circle as a grand gateway to Delaware Park.
- Construct a roundabout consistent with the expressway downgrade plan.
- Improve pedestrian safety between the park and Medaille College.

Project #13: McClellan Circle

Project #14: McKinley Circle

Project #15: Symphony Circle

- Illuminate the central light standard better to improve vehicular safety.

IMAGES

Left to right (from the top):

West Ferry Circle was recently restored based upon its historic design as a traffic circle.

Colonial Circle, once called Bidwell Place, connects Richmond Avenue with Bidwell Parkway.

Soldiers Circle, once called Soldiers Place, was lined with iron cannons. These may be replaced in the future.

Gates Circle, once called Chapin Place, is the terminus of the Olmsted parkway system at Chapin Parkway and Delaware Avenue.

Agassiz Circle connects the former Humboldt Parkway to Delaware Park. Agassiz Circle was once a grand gateway into Delaware Park, but has been degraded by the Scajaquada Expressway. (Source – NYS Route 198 Scajaquada Expressway Corridor Stakeholders Group. (2007))

McClellan Circle is one of two Olmsted circles in South Buffalo. It connects Red Jacket Parkway to McKinley Parkway.

McKinley Circle, an Olmsted circle in South Buffalo, is part of the border between Buffalo and Lackawanna.

Symphony Circle gets its name from the nearby Kleinhans Music Hall, the home of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. (Source – Copyright Chris Andrle <www.andrle.com>)

Small Spaces

Project #16: Heacock Place

- Restore the Y layout of the historic park.
- Avoid placing additional monuments in the park.
- Consider relocating existing monuments to better locations outside of the park.
- Place a garden or historically appropriate gateway at the terminus of McKinley Parkway.

Project #17: Days Park

Project #18: Columbus and Perla Park (Prospect Park)

- Consider renaming both sections of the park with the historic "Prospect Park" name.
- Restore the X pathway pattern.
- Phase out the Niagara Branch Library according to Erie County's library consolidation plan.
- Restore the park shelter building as a functioning park building.
- Provide traffic-calming measures along Niagara Street to reconnect the two sides of the park.

IMAGES

Left to right (from the top):

Heacock Place is located at the northern terminus of McKinley Parkway. It has lost its historic Y-shaped circulation pattern.

Originally called Prospect Park, Columbus and Perla Parks are located along Porter Avenue and are divided by Niagara Street.

Days Park, located in Allentown, was not originally planned by Olmsted but was redesigned by Olmsted. (Source – Olmsted Parks in Buffalo, NY < www.olmstedinbuffalo.org/>)

This photo shows the existing condition of the fountain in Days Park.

Connecting and Extending the Olmsted Park System

The needs of the city and the region have expanded outside of what the existing Olmsted system alone can provide. An extended system of parks, parkways, circles, small spaces, and pathways may serve as a greenway that connects people to parks and the water. This extended system will include the existing Olmsted system, historic pieces of the Olmsted system, and new connections between the Olmsted parks as well as connections between other significant features of the city and the Niagara River Greenway. A fully connected system can best serve the existing needs of the city and the region, while responding to new and growing concerns about the environment, people's health, new modes of transportation, and opportunities for recreation.

IMAGES

Above:

This map highlights the combined Olmsted system and the Shoreline Trail in Buffalo.

Right:

This overlook on Niagara Street is one example of how the Olmsted Park System can be connected to the water.

Olmsted-Greenway History

The Olmsted Park System was planned to connect people in the City of Buffalo with parks and the water. These plans were not always fully implemented. For example, the north and south parks were never joined together by a proposed parkway connector. This connector was conceptually planned to follow the existing route of Fillmore Avenue south from Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, to Smith Street, along South Park Avenue, connecting to McKinley Parkway. Jewett Parkway in North Buffalo was never fully designed as an Olmsted parkway as was intended. Riverside Park was never connected to the rest of the system.

Other Olmsted system elements have been degraded to such a point that what remains is no longer considered part of the cultural landscape. The Humboldt Parkway, once the grand connection between Delaware Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, was replaced with the below-grade Kensington Expressway. The Bank, an Olmsted designed circle adjacent to Front Park, was almost entirely removed when the Peace Bridge Plaza was constructed over it.

Olmsted-Greenway Today

The Olmsted system exists in a different context than it did when it was originally designed. While the City of Buffalo has experienced significant development in the last 100 years, it has also experienced significant decline. Populations have shifted between neighborhoods and have spread throughout the region. The Olmsted system has become fragmented and disconnected from the water. Segments of the system have been lost, just as portions of the parks have been taken for other uses.

The Olmsted system now exists within the boundaries of the Niagara River Greenway, a system of green spaces and pathways that line the Niagara River. A series of proposals have been made to fully link the Olmsted system with the Niagara River Greenway system.

Olmsted-Greenway Recommendations

These recommendations are for system elements that are outside of the historically designated cultural landscape. The numbers associated with each project recommendation do not represent priority rankings. The categories of these connections and extensions include:

- Extensions originally proposed or designed by Olmsted but never realized or subsequently destroyed.
- Extensions designed to connect to existing Olmsted Park System.
- Extensions to connect the Olmsted Park System to significant features of the City of Buffalo or the Niagara River Greenway.

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The goals listed below are common to all connections and extensions. Some connections and extensions have no specified projects. In these cases, the overall objectives should be applied whenever and wherever possible. It will be necessary to distinguish these connections and extensions from the Olmsted parks and parkways that are within the historically designated cultural landscape. This should be taken into consideration when selecting lights, signage, and other street-scaping elements for these connections and extensions. Signage should be used to direct people towards the Olmsted system on these connections and extensions. Other critical junctions, including a small number of locations along the New York State Thruway, should also be considered for signage directing people to the parks.

The restored and extended Olmsted Park System will expand the trail system of the Niagara River Greenway throughout the City of Buffalo.

Olmsted-Greenway: Goals for Connections and Extensions

- Distinguish new connections from historic Olmsted parks and parkways.
- Plant trees along new connecting roadways where possible
- Improve safety, access, and circulation for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Install appropriate light standards.
- Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage.

Humboldt Parkway was destroyed by the construction of the Kensington Expressway. Once a magnificent, connecting Olmsted parkway, it is now a scar that divides neighborhoods. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

Category 1: Extensions Originally Proposed or Designed by Olmsted but Never Realized or Subsequently Destroyed

Project #E1: Humboldt Parkway

- Deck over depressed sections of the expressway.
- Plant trees between the sidewalk and the street.
- Buffer neighborhoods from the expressway by removing the inner lane of both sides of the existing parkway, narrowing it to one travel lane.
- Plant trees on the removed inner lane.
- Install bike lanes on the parkway.
- Install new fence rail between the parkway and the expressway.
- Install green walls along expressway.
- Redesign the pedestrian bridge just south of the Kensington/Scajaquada Expressway separation.

Project #E2: Jewett Parkway

Project #E3: Fillmore Avenue South

- Retain parallel parking lanes on both sides, and keep two-way traffic in the center.

Project #E4: South System Connector 1

Project #E5: Bailey Avenue

- Redesign bridges to be more pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing.

Project #E6: The Bank

- Recreate a new modified "Bank" circle in proposed restoration plans for Front Park and Fort Porter.

Category 2: Extensions Designed to Connect to Existing Olmsted Park System

Project #E7: Best-North Street

Project #E8: South System Connector 2

Project #E9: Days Park Spur

Project #E10: Fillmore Avenue North

Project #E11: Jewett Parkway Extension

Project #E12: Smith Street

Project #E13: Larkin Circle

Project #E14: Fillmore/Jewett Circle

Category 3: Extensions to Connect the Olmsted Park System to Significant Features of the City of Buffalo or the Niagara River Greenway

Project #E15: South Park Avenue

Project #E16: Central Terminal Spur

Project #E17: Scajaquada Shoreline Trail

Project #E18: Niagara Street

Project #E19: Niagara Street Upper

Project #E20: Niagara Street Lower

Project #E21: Forest Avenue

Project #E22: Fuhrman Boulevard

Project #E23: Fuhrman Boulevard Connector (Ridge Road)

Project #E24: Tifft Street

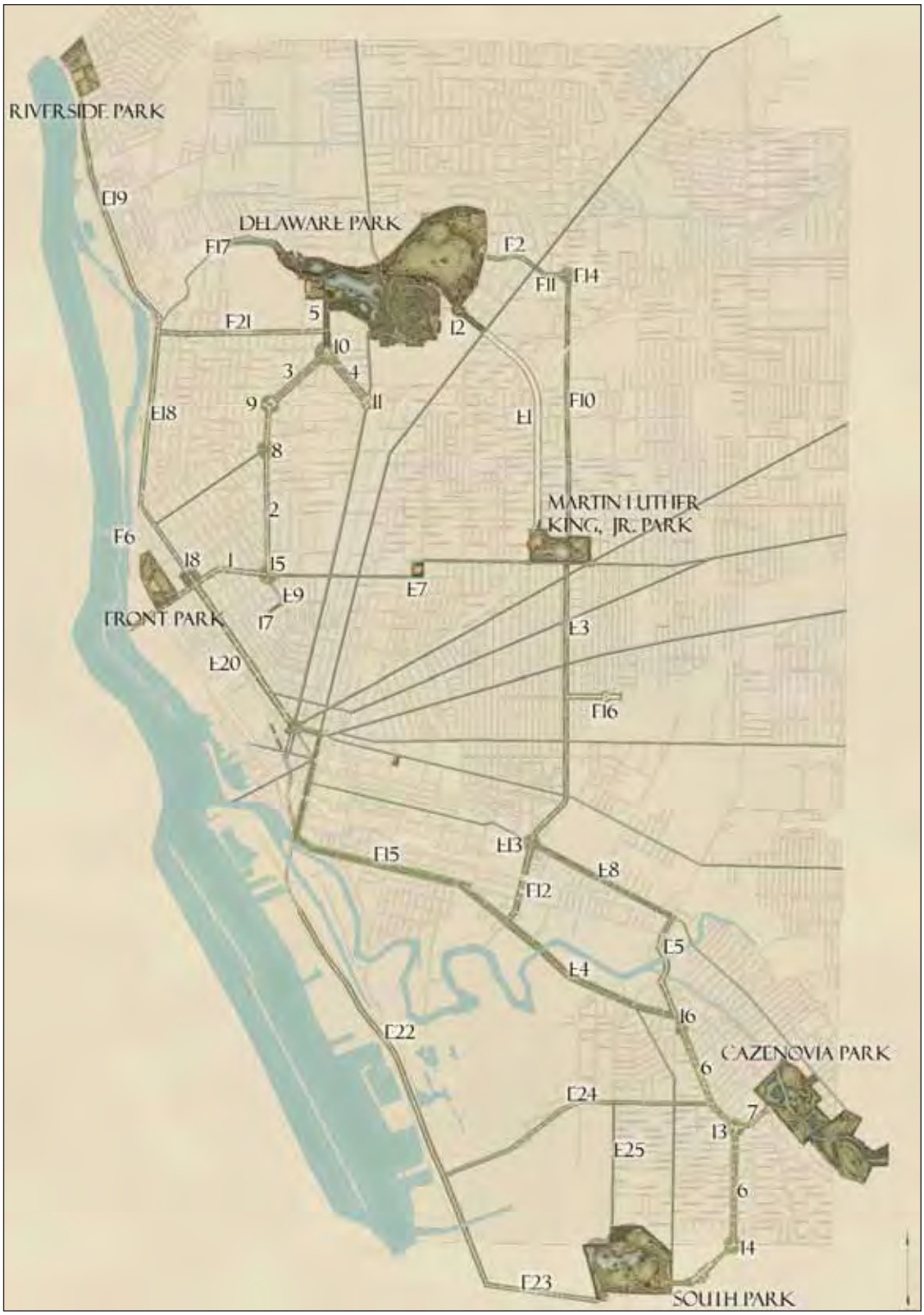
Project #E25: Hopkins Street

IMAGES

At right (from the left):

Jewett Parkway is part of the Olmsted-designed Parkside neighborhood north of Delaware Park. The Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Darwin D. Martin House is on Jewett Parkway.

The Bank is an Olmsted-designed circle that was mostly destroyed with the construction of the Peace Bridge.



This Buffalo Olmsted Park System map includes parkways, circles, and small spaces from with the cultural landscape, as well as connections and extensions outside of the cultural landscape.

MAKING THE PLAN: THE HISTORY OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

In constructing **The System Plan,** the Board of Trustees of the Conservancy has taken every opportunity to engage citizens adjacent to the parks and in the entire region. As such, the plan represents the collective deliberations of literally hundreds of participants. This chapter covers the history of the planning efforts by the Conservancy.

The Planning Process

From the origins of the "Friends of the Olmsted Parks," a system plan has been a dream of Buffalo's Olmsted Park System advocates. **The System Plan** process started in earnest with a 2001 public meeting at which the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy announced its restoration goals and invited comments on their initial vision. The Conservancy developed a comprehensive approach to prepare themselves for this extensive planning effort. They sought information on successful management structures, inventoried historic and contemporary planning documentation, and began working with local partners to help frame the approach to the plan.

Before contracting with the city and the county, the Conservancy asked the Central Park Conservancy to study their potential management and operations system. The Central Park Conservancy in New York City has been a successful model of park management and planning, and was one of the first such organizations in the country to assume legal responsibility for the governance of their Olmsted park. The success of this model facilitated the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy's conversations with the city and county regarding the future of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System in early 2004. Among its other useful organizational and operational considerations, the Central Park Conservancy recommended working with a broad based advisory committee. The Olmsted Advisory Council was formed at this time, and The Urban Design Project was commissioned to work with the Conservancy over the next three years to propose basic management policies and an approach to planning. The results of this effort were submitted to the Conservancy Board as recommendations and were largely adopted. The Conservancy staff initiated an inventory of all the historical and contemporary planning documentation on each park, parkway, circle, and small space in the system. This information was incorporated into a comprehensive evaluation of existing conditions, park use studies, and neighborhood contexts throughout the system.

In late 2004, The Urban Design Project was selected to manage the planning process and to complete this inventory. Working with a diverse set of expert consultants in early 2005, the Urban Design Project finished cataloging the information in a series of overlay graphics, and constructed a 3-D virtual model of the entire system. These tools were then used to evaluate project proposals from all previous

The first charrette in 2005 was held at the Center for Computational Research at UB's North Campus.

plans. These resulting project lists were circulated to all the park-user and park-advocacy organizations through the Olmsted Advisory Council. These organizations were invited to mark up the project lists with comments related to contemporary problems and historical considerations.

The Conservancy's approach to public involvement in Buffalo has been an ongoing, inclusive, and adaptive process. The goal has been to bring together a broad cross-section of stakeholders: local residents and businesses; elected officials and government agencies; visitors and tour operators; bikers, walkers, and drivers; and people with interests as divergent as golf and bird-watching. This open process of public involvement continues to lay the foundations for a community-driven initiative championed by a diverse constituency.

As a way of gathering and coordinating all the knowledge and visions regarding the future of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, two charrettes were organized—intense working sessions that employed all the documentation and input from various stakeholders. Participants in the first charrette, held in April 2005, included the Conservancy staff, The Urban Design Project-led consulting team, the city, the county, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council, and the Delaware North Companies.

The draft plan results were reviewed with the Olmsted Advisory Council, posted on the Conservancy Web site for comment, and used in multiple additional public meetings. Results from all this work were then assembled and used in a second charrette with the Long Range Planning Committee of the Conservancy Board. Again the results were posted on the Web along with a full narrative of the draft plan. This work was again vetted in public meetings, and used as a foundation for the plans presented in this document.

A Framework for Involvement

Conservancy Board of Trustees

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Board of Trustees is responsible for the management and oversight of all matters pertaining to the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. The Conservancy grew out of a grassroots effort by a group of citizens in 1978 with the founding of the Friends of Olmsted Parks advocacy group. In 1996, the Friends group became the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy as a §501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The membership of the Conservancy elects the Board of Trustees, representing park advocates, business leaders, historic preservationists, and local leaders.

Olmsted Advisory Council

The Olmsted Advisory Council is comprised of representatives of a broad-based group of community organizations and park users whose main purpose is to encourage and facilitate public participation in the planning process. Members of these representative organizations manage the Olmsted Advisory Council (See Table 9). Meetings are held often to discuss issues relevant to the Conservancy, **The System Plan,** and the community.

The Olmsted Advisory Council gives the Conservancy a direct connection to the community and provides a public outlet for enhancing education about the entire park system. This system-wide advocacy group assists with decision making and public policy. The Olmsted Advisory Council is engaged in implementing and sustaining efforts related to future capital projects, programming, and advocacy in the Olmsted system.

A small grants program has been developed through the Conservancy for small capital improvements, including amenities or landscape improvements or programming within the Olmsted system. Community groups, including members of the Olmsted Advisory Council, are eligible for these grants. This program allows the community an opportunity to develop and implement ideas for the parks that are harmonious with **The System Plan.**

Table 9 | Community Organizations Represented on the Olmsted Advisory Council

Board of Block Clubs	Ferry Circle/Richmond	Parkside Community Association
Botanical Gardens Society	Front Park	Partners for a Livable Western New York
Buffalo Audubon Society	Gates Circle	Police Athletic League
Buffalo Croquet Club	Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council	Porter Avenue/Parkway
Buffalo Rugby	Girl Scout Council of Buffalo & Erie County	Preservation Coalition
Buffalo Museum of Science	Goin' South	Riverside Park
Buffalo Zoo	Greater Buffalo Track Club/Fleet Feet	Riverside Park Community Association
Cazenovia Golf Club	Junior League	Shakespeare in Delaware Park
Colonial Circle/Richmond	King Urban Life Center	Soldiers Circle
Community Foundation	Landmark Society	South Buffalo Alive
Days Park	Martin Luther King, Jr. Park	South Park Golf Club
Delaware Park Dogs	McKinley High School Career & Technical Education – Horticulture Department	South Park Women's Golf
Delaware Park Rose Garden	McKinley Parkway Homeowners' Association	Symphony Circle
Delaware Park Steering Committee	Medaille College	United Neighborhoods
Delaware Park Women's Golf	Medaille College Lacrosse	West Side Community Collaborative
Delaware Seniors Golf Club	Martin Luther King, Jr. Block Club	
Delaware Soccer	New Millennium Group	

Past and Ongoing Meetings

The Long Range Planning Committee, organized as a subcommittee of the Conservancy Board in 2004, has held 15 meetings to discuss the scope and progress of **The System Plan.** The Olmsted Advisory Council has held 21 meetings on the plan since 2002. At first they reviewed material for the planning that was being prepared by staff, and since 2004, they have worked with The Urban Design Project team engaged to complete the work. The Conservancy Board has reviewed work in progress in 5 separate sessions since early 2005, including a Board retreat on the subject in 2006. (See Table 10)

Table 10 | The System Plan Number of Meetings Held by Group

Group/Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Long-Range Planning Committee	0	0	2	2	6	5	15
Olmsted Advisory Council	1	9	5	3	2	1	21
Public Meetings	1	0	0	1	0	4	6

The 2007 public meeting at the West Side Community Center was well attended.

Public Meetings

An important aspect of any public project is conducting open-forum meetings and educational workshops for the involved citizenry. The public is informed of these events through print and electronic media and the team ensures that community leaders are involved in these proceedings. To facilitate this participation by representatives of community-based organizations and board members elected from the Conservancy membership, five meetings open to the community have been held since The Urban Design Project consultant team was contracted in early 2005. A series of Buffalo public meetings will also be held as part of the plan's adoption process into Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan. (A more detailed *Citizen Participation Report* with additional public comments can be found in the Supplemental Materials)

The "Start-up" Meeting

A meeting to initiate work on the plan was held in September 2002 at the Buffalo Museum of Science. At this meeting, the Conservancy unveiled to the public their intention of developing a plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. They began the process in-house with Conservancy staff. In 2004, the Conservancy contracted with The Urban Design Project to develop a plan consistent with the ongoing community visioning process and the requirements of its designation as an historic cultural landscape. A second major public meeting was held in 2005 to reinvigorate the process.

Recent Public Input Sessions

Three public meetings were held in May 2007 to discuss **The System Plan.** Each of the three meetings included a presentation of each of the six destination parks and the system as a whole, while primarily focusing on those destination parks in the immediate vicinity of the meeting place. These meetings were meant to get feedback from residents of the communities surrounding the parks about the recommendations for the parks.

The first meeting occurred on May 9, 2007 at the West Side Community Center and focused on Riverside Park and Front Park. Comments ranged from the desire to reduce in-park motor vehicle traffic and the need for additional bike lanes, to improving access to the waterfront. A detailed discussion of the status of the cross-border management plan also took place. Other suggestions included removing all aspects of the golf course from Delaware Park, integrating Buffalo's Richardson complex into the Olmsted system, including security in the planning efforts (e.g., crime prevention through environmental design), placing community centers into the parks to better integrate the neighborhoods, and bringing the Department of Transportation to the "table."

The second meeting was held at the Buffalo Museum of Science on May 14, 2007. The two parks of particular concern at this meeting were Delaware Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Comments varied broadly, but concerns and recommendations about signage, the water features in Delaware Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, existing and potential parkways and connections, and the Scajaquada and Kensington Expressways, were most prominent.

The third meeting was conducted on May 22, 2007 at the Buffalo Irish Center. This meeting primarily focused on Cazenovia Park and South Park, was well attended, and included much discussion. Two key issues were heavily discussed during this meeting: user fees and park facilities. The consensus seemed to be that user fees negatively affect many of the youth leagues in South Buffalo due to affordability issues. Many attendees were also concerned with the potential loss of the ice rink, senior center, and ball diamonds as a result of the plan—these facilities are used by many and are valued by the community.

The final public input session generated a lot of discussion and helped shape priorities for the Conservancy.

Final Public Input Session

The final public input session was held at the Museum of Science in Martin Luther King, Jr. Park on November 15, 2007. The presentation provided a summation of the entire plan for Olmsted system, including high priority projects specific to each park and those projects that would be implemented during the first five years. The purpose of the meeting was to finalize the recommendations in the plan. The meeting was also meant to determine the public's priorities for the restoration of the parks in the next five years.

Following the presentation, most attendees remained in the auditorium for a detailed question and answer session. Additionally, many written comments were received at the end of the meeting. Several key issues were addressed both during the question and answer session and in the written comments, including the alignment of Front Park and its relationship with the proposed Peace Bridge Plaza, African American history in Buffalo in relation to the Olmsted parks, and the relationship between the Scajaquada Expressway and Delaware Park.

Meetings with City and County Officials

The executive and legislative branches of Erie County and the City of Buffalo have been regularly consulted in crafting the plan. In addition to municipal representation on the Olmsted Advisory Council and on the Olmsted Board of Trustees over the years, staff have participated in the charrette process and there has been several meetings with key leadership testing the guiding principles and recommendations in the plan. Formal reviews by the municipalities will be conducted through the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) required for the adoption of **The System Plan** as part of the *Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan.*

Other Tools for Involvement

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Web Site – http://www.buffalo olmstedparks.org/

An up-to-date and quality Web site continues to serve as a very effective tool for broadcasting information to the general public. The Conservancy's Web site not only provides visitors with the appropriate information, but also invites them to participate in the planning process. In this vein, the Conservancy Web site offers basic information about the plan, photographs, and a schedule of events, maps, a news page, and a tab for updates on the plan with opportunities to comment. The site continues to include the work products of the Olmsted Advisory Council.

Newsletters and Mailings

The dissemination of information to Conservancy members and other park through the Conservancy's newsletter is an important way to keep stakeholders informed. There are approximately 2,000 households on the mailing list including Conservancy members, volunteers, and corporate sponsors. Newsletters were originally sent out quarterly. In the last few years, however, they have been sent out approximately twice a year. Past newsletters can also be found on the Conservancy Web site.

Continued Participation

The implementation of the plan will require as much, if not more, cooperation among the Conservancy, city and county governments, and the public, as the creation of the plan had. This continued involvement will help update priorities and needs, and refine the plan and its recommendations so that this tool can do the most good for the future of our region. The Olmsted Advisory Council will continue to be an important vehicle for park users and park advocates to significantly influence system development.

IMPLEMENTING THE SYSTEM PLAN

Introduction

The System Plan of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is a working document. It is a tool to start the process of detailed project planning, design and construction. It also provides the Conservancy with a roadmap to guide the implementation of the plan. The plan identifies recently completed, short-term, and long-term capital improvements. Recently completed projects are those completed during the plan development process pursuant to the plan's guiding principles. Short-term actions are those that are planned for the next 5 years. Long-term steps have a planning horizon estimated at 20 years or longer. In addition to implementing the physical buildout of plan recommendations, the plan also contains recommendations for resource protection, resource interpretation, visitor experience management, strategic partnerships, plan adoption, and monitoring and enforcement provisions. In order to be a useful management tool, it is anticipated that the plan will be updated regularly and reassessed, in conjunction with the completion of various park facilities. The key implementation components of **The System Plan** are outlined below.

Capital Investment and Phasing Plan

Implementation of the plan and achievement of its goals are dependent on the availability of sufficient and reliable capital and operating funds to cover anticipated construction, staffing and equipment costs. This section includes recommendations for implementing the plan using a phased and coordinated multi-year approach. The capital investment and phasing plan documents the specifics of the restoration process methodology, including phasing, priorities, and costs.

The Long-Term Vision: The System Plan

The Cost of Implementing the Plan

The System Plan is highlighted by a series of recommendations for the restoration of each park, parkway, circle, and small space within the Olmsted system. It also includes a series of recommendations for additional connections and extensions to the system. These recommendations are all capital projects and require financial investments. Cost estimates were generated to give an approximate cost for the plan's recommendations.

In total, all of the recommendations in the plan will cost approximately $428 million in 2008 constant dollars (See Table 11). Because Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is an historic designed landscape, and on the National Register of Historic Places, plan recommendations differentiate projects within and outside of the cultural landscape. The restoration of everything within the cultural landscape, including the six major parks, the parkways, circles, and small spaces, will cost approximately $252.5 million. The projects outside of the cultural landscape, including connections and extensions to the system, as well as other projects outside of the parks, will cost approximately $175.5 million.

Comparison of Park Spending

The full cost of restoration may seem daunting with Buffalo's current underfunding of the park system. If Buffalo spent the national average of $80 per resident on the parks instead of the current $9.58, and devoted the additional $70.42 on restoring the Olmsted system, it would only take 21 years to complete the full restoration described in this plan.

Selected Major Cities	Operating & Capital Dollars Spent per Resident on Parks (2001)
Seattle	$214
Washington, D.C.	$155
Chicago	$131
Portland, OR	$99
Boston	$58
New York	$54
Buffalo	less than $10
National Average	**$80**

(Sources: Breinlich, Angelika, Laura Quebral Fulton, Jonathan Hastings, Holly Lindstrom, Mark McGovern, Megha Pareka, and Jaclyn Patrignani. Under the Guidance of Professor Lynda Schneekloth and Professor Robert Shibley. (2005) Green Infrastructure Report. Buffalo, NY: University at Buffalo.)

Harnik, Peter. (2004) *Newark, New Jersey: An Open Space Analysis.* Trust for Public Land, Center for City Park Excellence.

Funding sources for these projects will be numerous, as no single entity, including the Conservancy, can take on all of these costs. The funding sources can range from private donors to different local and state governments or agencies. The recommendations will not all be implemented at the same time, and the costs of the plan will spread out over more than 20 years. The Conservancy will implement the projects in the Five Year Plan first. Other projects will be started incrementally and it is anticipated that funding sources, needs, and priorities will change with time.

Cost estimates were developed for each project recommended in parks, parkways, circles, small spaces and system extensions. The hard costs of the build-out of the plan recommendations include but are not limited to:

- Site preparation, restoration, and landscaping
- Building rehabilitation and construction
- Infrastructure
- New and restored support facilities (maintenance facilities, restrooms, etc.)
- Amenities (benches, tables, lighting, etc.)

The total costs include a 20 percent multiplier on construction, labor, and materials, for unforeseen contingencies. Total costs also include a 12 percent multiplier on top of construction, labor, materials, and contingency to estimate the soft costs involved in the project design and construction process, including contractual engineering, architectural, legal, project management, and other services involved in the detailed design process. The numbers provided herein are 2008 constant dollars. It must be emphasized that these are preliminary projected costs, and provide the Conservancy and its partners with order-of-magnitude estimates and relative project costs. When the Conservancy initiates a project, detailed costing will have to be a part of the project development.

The estimates reflect capital-related expenditures only, and do not include the operation and management costs that will be needed to maintain the parks and the completed capital projects.

Cost estimating for a plan as complex as **The System Plan** demanded a decision structure. Three decisions guided the development of costs:

- Type and quality required for each project.
- Geographically delineated areas, or precincts, were used to organize costs by groups of projects.
- A category called basic park elements that estimated all elements not included in a specific project

Different design standards were applied to develop cost estimates for different types of basic projects depending on the goals and requirements of each project type. For example, full historic restoration costs more than simple building repair.

The cost for a precinct (such as Parkside Lodge Precinct) includes individual projects within the area (for example, the Quarry Garden and the Parkside Lodge), and the basics such as paths, plantings, furnishings, etc. within that space. All basics were divided into the precincts. All overlapping projects, such as when a perimeter road was also a parkway, were only counted once in the total cost estimates.

Table 11 shows cost estimates broken down by precinct for each park. Each of the specific project recommendations described in this plan falls within a geographically defined precinct. (A detailed matrix of each project recommendation and related costs can be found in the *Detailed Cost Estimates* Appendix)

Precincts

Following the method used in the *Rebuilding Central Park: A Management and Restoration Plan,* we placed all recommended projects into geographically delineated precincts within each of the six parks. Precincts were defined based on meeting one or more of the following criteria: publicly identifiable areas or activity centers; logical clusters of related projects; physically adjacent or continuous areas; or similar landscape types. (Note: Precincts for cost estimation are different from Conservancy garden zones.) The number associated with each precinct does not represent a priority ranking. A map of each precinct can be found in the *Detailed Cost Estimates* Appendix.

Table 11 | Full Plan Implementation Cost Estimates

Parks and Precincts	Total Costs[1]
Delaware Park	
1 - Albright-Knox Precinct	616,000
2 - Casino Precinct	11,068,000
3 - Delaware Avenue Precinct	88,000
4 - Gala Water Precinct	1,812,000
5 - Historical Society Precinct	224,000
6 - Meadow Precinct	5,623,000
7 - Parkside Lodge Precinct	10,328,000
8 - Perimeter Precinct	1,209,000
9 - Ring Road Precinct	6,368,000
10 - Rumsey Woods Precinct	2,081,000
11 - Scajaquada Corridor Precinct	36,473,000
12 - Zoo Precinct	323,000
Improvements Inside Delaware Park	*76,213,000*
Improvements Outside Delaware Park	*4,173,000*
Total Delaware Park and Vicinity	*80,386,000*
Front Park	
1 - The Front Precinct	16,734,000
2 - Fort Porter Site	4,310,000
Improvements Inside Front Park	21,044,000
Improvements Outside Front Park	76,000
Total Front Park and Vicinity	21,120,000
Martin Luther King, Jr. Park	
1 - Central Water Features Precinct	11,497,000
2 - Fillmore Avenue Precinct	2,195,000
3 - Greenhouse/Picnic Grove Precinct	3,091,000
4 - Museum Precinct	1,342,000
5 - Perimeter Precinct	11,240,000
Improvements Inside MLK Park	29,365,000
Improvements Outside MLK Park	10,050,000
Total MLK Park and Vicinity	39,415,000
South Park	
1 - Botanical Gardens Precinct	385,000
2 - Central Meadow Precinct	144,000
3 - Lake Precinct	9,040,000
4 - North Meadow Precinct	1,454,000
5 - Perimeter Precinct	1,630,000
6 - Ring Road Precinct	4,492,000
Improvements Inside South Park	17,145,000
Improvements Outside South Park	1,354,000
Total South Park and Vicinity	18,499,000

(continued on next page)

Table 11 | Full Plan Implementation Cost Estimates (continued)

Parks and Precincts	Total Costs[1]
Cazenovia Park	
1 - Bowl Precinct	439,000
2 - Casino Precinct	5,805,000
3 - Creek Precinct	10,108,000
4 - Golf Course Precinct	996,000
5 - Perimeter Precinct	36,724,000
Improvements Inside Cazenovia Park	54,072,000
Improvements Outside Cazenovia Park	2,082,000
Total Cazenovia Park and Vicinity	56,154,000
Riverside Park	
1 - Concourse and River Precinct	6,311,000
2 - Hotaling Drive Precinct	1,119,000
3 - Minnow Pools Precinct	746,000
4 - Playing Fields Precinct	45,000
5 - South Recreation Precinct	560,000
Improvements Inside Riverside Park	8,781,000
Improvements Outside Riverside Park	1,741,000
Total Riverside Park and Vicinity	10,522,000
Total Improvements Inside All Major Parks	**206,620,000**
Total Improvements Outside All Major Parks	**19,476,000**
Total Major Parks and Vicinities	**226,096,000**
Parkways, Circles, and Small Spaces	**45,923,000**
Extensions	**155,983,000**
Total Within the Cultural Landscape	**252,543,000**
Total Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]	**175,459,000**
Grand Total Costs[1]	**428,002,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Extensions and projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

The Cost Estimating Tool

The cost estimating tool, developed with Microsoft Access, is an interactive and flexible data-base of projects and associated costs. The cost estimating tool can be used to aggregate project costs into various categories of total costs. The projects were given attributes such as park location, precinct, type of project, phase, priority, funding source, jurisdiction, and project start year. Each item that makes up a project was also assigned an item category, such as building, pathway, planting, water feature, and many more. These categories will make it easier for the Conservancy to organize projects, raise funds, and keep track of progress on the plan. A query function in the database allows users to find these total costs by any combination of categories. For instance, a user can easily find the total cost for a specific park, or the user can find the total cost for all of the pathways within a specific precinct of a specific park. Since each project has several associated attributes, one can query numerous combinations of attributes.

This database is very flexible and can be updated as progress on implementing the plan continues. Material unit costs, inflation, funding sources, project phasing, priority, and start year are all likely to change as the plan is implemented. New projects not described in this plan may arise. Projects in this plan may be refined. The cost estimating tool allows the user to update in response to these types of developments. While the initial cost estimates are important to establish the scope and magnitude of the plan and its elements, the cost estimating model is a dynamic tool that will enable the Conservancy to refine and alter the estimates based on changing needs and assumptions over time.

IMAGES

Above:

The abandoned ice rink in Front Park was recently removed and the landscape restored to its historic character. This is just part of the work already completed on **The System Plan.**

Short-Term Projects: The Five Year Plan

Introduction

The objective of this section of **The System Plan** is to analyze the financial implications of implementation of the first five year phase and to provide the scope of financial resources that are needed to undertake the plan. This information enables the organization to develop and initiate a capital campaign to meet these funding needs. As the Conservancy and its government partners, the City of Buffalo and Erie County, work together to execute the plan, this analysis will help inform decision makers as to the extent of public initiatives required to help implement the project. Consideration should also be given to the *Operation Alignment Assessment Report* prepared by Clear Intent Strategy for the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Board of Trustees. The strategy identifies that the most critical challenge is "to make strategic choices."[32] A series of tables provide projected capital and operating costs over the first five years of the plan in an effort to address that challenge.

Five Year Plan Program Development

Five Year Plan Project Selection Criteria

Important work will be started and completed in the first five years of plan implementation. The project study team, informed by a series of interviews with Conservancy staff and board members and suggestions made by park users and the public throughout the planning process, developed a set of criteria, aligned with the guiding principles, upon which to base project selection in the first five years. Considerations included urgency or need and relative funding needs and availability. The team then held a series of meetings to determine which specific projects met the criteria for inclusion in the Five Year Plan.

The project selection criteria for the first five years of plan implementation include:

- Criteria 1: Restore the basic or fundamental elements of the parks—the landscapes and furnishings that define the parks as Olmstedian and the amenities that provide comfort, information, and safety to park visitors. It also addresses major drainage and erosion issues in need of attention to prevent further damage.
- Criteria 2: Implement projects related to the Niagara River Greenway. This highly visible set of projects is a high priority for completion in the initial phase of the work due to funding availability; the increased access, recognition, and visibility it brings to the Olmsted system; and the regional benefits to all recreational users, to the city and its neighborhoods.
- Criteria 3: Address critical needs in a timely way to improve safety and prevent unnecessary costs related to deferred maintenance. The intent is to get the parks stabilized and then implement a consistent program of scheduled maintenance and investment.

IMAGES

Above:

The Five Year Plan will address drainage and erosion problems such as the erosion along Cazenovia Creek.

Right:

These images of existing and digitally represented pathways in South Park are examples of how pathways can be restored throughout the Olmsted system. (existing/proposed)

Five Year Plan Project Descriptions

Criteria 1: Restore Basic Park Elements

The first category of projects to be included in the Five Year Plan is the restoration of basic park elements that are not dependent on the completion of other long term projects. The basic park elements support everyday park use, and make the parks accessible, comfortable, and enjoyable places to be.

The Five Year Plan includes the costs of completing the following work related to basic park elements:

- Restore Historic Elements
  - Restore the parks' historic furnishings
  - Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation
- Provide User Amenities
  - Restore and maintain public restroom facilities
  - Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains
- Improve Access and Circulation
  - Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system
  - Introduce traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures at park roads
  - Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage (especially at park entrances)
- Address Drainage and Erosion Problems
  - Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the parks

Note that the rehabilitation of the Olmsted roadway and lighting system, although basic park elements, will not be addressed in the first five years. The roadways within the parks need major improvements in surfacing, drainage, and curbing. It is more cost effective to address lighting needs at the same time as the road work. These improvements will require large investments and long term maintenance, and are scheduled for later phases of the plan.

IMAGES

Above:

The restoration of the pathways in Cazenovia Park, like the other Olmsted parks, will extend the Niagara River Greenway trail system. (existing/proposed)

Criteria 2: Implement Projects Related to the Niagara River Greenway

The second category of projects in the Five Year Plan includes those related to the Niagara River Greenway and the Olmsted Park System (See the *Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy: Connecting Parks and People in the Niagara River Greenway* in the Supplemental Materials). The Niagara River Greenway projects to be included in the first five years of restoration include projects that are:

- On the Niagara River Greenway
- At park entrances
- In park pathways

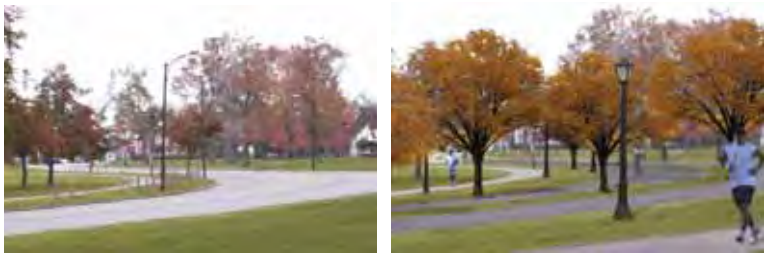
Criteria 3: Meet Critical Needs

The third category addresses critical needs projects, defined as those that must be addressed for urgent reasons such as safety and security concerns or because deferring the projects to later dates will worsen the deterioration of the feature to be restored. Each park has one critical need project selected for the first five years.

- Delaware Park: Renovate the casino building and the plaza and rationalize its service facilities.
- Front Park: Restore the picnic shelter.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park: Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue (improve pedestrian safety).
- South Park: Replace the ring road bridge.
- Cazenovia Park: Stabilize Cazenovia Creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access.
- Riverside Park: Improve the existing playground.

The bridge on the ring road in South Park is deteriorating and will be restored as part of the Five Year Plan. (existing/proposed)

The playground in Riverside Park is a critical need project in the Five Year Plan. (existing/proposed)



Traffic calming measures can be used to improve pedestrian safety on Fillmore Avenue through Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. (existing/proposed)

Five Year Plan High Impact Projects

In addition to fixing the basics and taking care of critical needs, there are projects that should be considered for funding in the first five years if earmarked funds can be obtained. These projects are highly visible, reflect the priorities of park users, and would build excitement for the plan to gain more general funding support. In fact, a number of these projects are underway wholly or in part, and as additional targeted funds become available, these should be the first projects addressed beyond stabilizing the parks. Some may be completed within the first five years, some may not. Either way, they are not budgeted for the Five Year Plan.

- Delaware Park: Restore the Rumsey Woods Shelter House.
- Front Park: Restore the Terrace.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park: Restore the greenhouse, its additions, and floral displays, and restore the shelter house.
- South Park: Create a Father Baker Garden on the site of the former bus loop.
- Cazenovia Park: Renovate the casino building and develop a programmed use for it.
- Riverside Park: Reinterpret the Minnow Pools.

The Cost of Implementing the Five Year Plan

Based on the estimates and project phasing plan developed for The System Plan, the following section provides projections of the anticipated capital costs to be incurred on a yearly basis for the first five years of implementation of the plan (See Table 12).

The total cost of implementing the Five Year Plan is $28.7 million, including $13.4 million for the basics and $15.3 million for critical needs (See Table 12). Major projects include the restoration of the Delaware Park casino and plaza ($8.7 million) and the work described above on pathways ($4.4 million), and landscapes and plantings ($5.9 million), in all the parks.

IMAGES

Below:

Restoration on the greenhouse, shelter house, and floral displays are high impact projects in Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. (existing/proposed)

Table 12 | Five Year Plan Cost Estimates

Project	Total Costs[1]
Criteria 1: Restore the Basics	**13,421,000**
Restore Historic Elements	
Furnishings	553,000
Landscapes and plantings	5,938,000
Provide User Amenities	
Restroom facilities[2]	-
Drinking fountains	92,000
Improve Access and Circulation	
Pathways	4,378,000
Traffic and pedestrian safety	771,000
Signage	192,000
Address Drainage and Erosion	1,497,000
Criteria 2: Implement Projects Related to the Niagara River Greenway	
On the Shoreline Trail[3]	-
At park entrances[4]	-
In park pathways[5]	-
Criteria 3: Meet Critical Needs	**15,262,000**
Delaware Park	
Casino and plaza	8,709,000
Front Park	
Picnic shelter	622,000
Martin Luther King, Jr. Park	
Fillmore Avenue safety and streetscape	2,195,000
South Park	
Ring road bridge	1,042,000
Cazenovia Park	
Stabilize Cazenovia Creek	2,681,000
Riverside Park	
Improve playground	13,000
Total	**28,683,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Included in the cost of restoring the Delaware and Cazenovia casinos, the Rumsey Woods Shelter House, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. shelter house.

[3] Not included in cost estimates.

[4] Cost is included in Pathways.

[5] Same total as Pathways.

Work Already Started

The Conservancy has begun implementing the plan and close to $2 million has already been spent on projects from the plan. Much but not all of this work is part of the Five Year Plan. In Delaware Park, these projects include the beginning of the restoration of the Parkside Lodge and the construction of a bridal path along Parkside Avenue. In Front Park these projects include significant restoration work on the Terrace, restoration of many of the park's pathways, the removal of the abandoned ice rink, and the removal of two underused tennis courts. In Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, parts of the greenhouse have been restored as well as its surrounding floral displays and maintenance area, and two-way traffic has been returned to West Parade. On top of this work, new tree plantings have been established throughout the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.

Five Year Financial Plan

The following pages outline a financial plan for the projected growth of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy over the first five years of implementation. The tables below outline both one-time capital costs and recurring expenses for management, maintenance, and operations.

Sources and Uses of Capital Funds

Sources of Funds

Potential sources of funding have been grouped into five categories; government, corporate, foundation, individual, other (in-kind and sources of direct revenues from services or fees). It is assumed that government sources (city, county, state, and federal) will contribute 75 percent of the capital costs during the first five years. This includes potential New York Power Authority relicensing agreement Niagara River Greenway funds. This reflects both a proportion typical of urban park systems nationally, as well as the nature of many of the five-year projects (e.g., infrastructure projects such as Cazenovia Creek and South Park's ring road bridge). Corporate donations are expected to equal approximately 6 percent; foundation support will bring in 10 percent; individuals will bring in 8 percent; and fees and in kind revenues about 1 percent (See Table 13).

Table 13 | Sources and Uses of Funds, Five Year Capital Improvement Program

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Sources of Funds						
Government	2,585,000	2,585,000	5,447,000	5,447,000	5,447,000	21,512,000
Corporate	207,000	207,000	436,000	436,000	436,000	1,721,000
Foundation	345,000	345,000	726,000	726,000	726,000	2,868,000
Individual	276,000	276,000	581,000	581,000	581,000	2,295,000
Other	34,000	34,000	73,000	73,000	73,000	287,000
Total Revenues	**3,447,000**	**3,447,000**	**7,263,000**	**7,263,000**	**7,263,000**	**28,683,000**
Uses of Funds						
Projects to Restore the Basics	2,684,000	2,684,000	2,684,000	2,684,000	2,684,000	13,421,000
Projects that Meet Critical Needs	763,000	763,000	4,579,000	4,579,000	4,579,000	15,262,000
Total Costs[1]	**3,447,000**	**3,447,000**	**7,263,000**	**7,263,000**	**7,263,000**	**28,683,000**

[1] Total costs as defined in Table 12.

Uses of Funds

Capital funds will be used to pay for the projects identified as part of the Five Year Plan. These costs and the projects are defined in the project descriptions. The analysis calculates costs for program services, facilities, and administration and overhead. There are both one-time and recurring expenses that accompany the development and stewardship of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. Recurring expenses will consist of staff salary and benefits, office expenses, and promotional material.

Projected Changes in the Conservancy Operating Budget

The analysis estimates the growth in the Conservancy's annual operating budget for each of the first five years of plan implementation, and estimates the amount of additional funding that the organization will require to cover its operating expenses. Annual operating expenses are expected to rise based on need for increased development and marketing staff, substantial funds required for plan implementation, to expand and enhance maintenance activities to protect the investment by ensuring that the improved park system will be well cared for, and to manage the growing operation. Based on the input of Conservancy staff, the operating expense projections assume that operating costs increase at an average proportion equal to 15 percent of capital funds expended (See Table 14).

Government grants, contracts, and in-kind services (e.g., county maintenance staff) currently account for only 53 percent of operating budget income (fiscal year 2008 budget based on past year actuals and existing contracts). A recommended level of government support of operating needs is 75 percent, based on the Central Park management and restoration plan prototype and typical operating support levels nationwide. For the Five Year Plan, it is recommended that the Conservancy seek a phased in increase in the proportion of government support to 63 percent by year five (i.e., a two percent increase per year).

Table 14 | Change in Conservancy Operating Expenses, Five-Year Plan

	FY 2008 Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Annual Increase in Expenses from Prior Year	NA	517,000	517,000	1,089,000	1,089,000	1,089,000
Total Annual Expenses	2,480,000	2,997,000	3,514,000	4,604,000	5,693,000	6,782,000
Annual % Increase from Prior Year	NA	21%	17%	31%	24%	19%
Total % Increase from Baseline (2008)	NA	121%	142%	186%	230%	273%

Land and Resource Management

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is responsible for managing critical resources, both historic and natural. What follows is a list of those resources and the criteria that must be addressed according to the formal historic cultural landscape designation.

Historic Resources

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is a cultural landscape, designated as a historic designed landscape by the National Park Service (NPS) and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The plan must address historic landscape guidelines from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as well. Both state and national designation carry preservation responsibilities. (See the *Historic Preservation Guidelines* Appendix for a matrix of recommended projects against NPS and SHPO guidelines)

- State Historic Preservation Office guidelines address:
  - Topography
  - Vegetation
  - Circulation
  - Buildings and Structures
  - Site Furnishings and Objects
  - Spatial Organization and Land Patterns
- The National Park Service's guidelines overlap many state concerns but also add additional criteria including:
  - Organizational Elements of the Landscape
    Spatial Organization and Land Patterns
  - Character Defining Features of the Landscape
    Topography
    Vegetation
    Circulation
    Water Features
    Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects
- Additional recommendations for preserving buildings and facilities include:
  - Rehabilitate and/or adaptively reuse historic structures.
  - Reconstruct historic structures where appropriate.
  - Use 'green' sustainable practices when rehabilitating/reconstructing structures.
  - Decommission/demolish derelict or underutilized non-historic structures.
  - Relocate non-historic activities/structures outside of the parks when appropriate.
  - Do not build new non-historic structures in the Olmsted parks.

Natural Resources

Environmental features of significance in the Buffalo Olmsted Park System include two major creeks with associated floodplains (Scajaquada Creek and Cazenovia Creek), wetlands (Cazenovia Park, Delaware Park, South Park), water bodies (Hoyt Lake and South Park Lake), and the steep slopes along the Niagara River which define the edge of Front Park and Riverside Park. The restoration and management of the park system should be done with an awareness of and sensitivity to the scenic quality of the natural resources, the important groundwater recharge and flood mitigation functions of wetlands, and the role of the parks as a habitat for native wildlife. Not only do these green spaces serve as critical breeding grounds for large numbers of birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects, they are also important to the migratory routes of many bird species.

Niagara River Corridor Globally Significant Important Bird Area (IBA)

Important Bird Areas, or IBAs, are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of birds and are designated by the Audubon Society. IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds and often support a significant proportion of one or more species' total population. In winter, the Niagara River hosts up to 19 species of gulls—60 percent of the world's gull species—and large congregations of other waterfowl species, making it a globally significant IBA. During the winter migration, the Niagara River hosts up to 20 percent of the world's population of Bonaparte's Gulls. It is part of the migratory route for many other species of birds including terns, egrets, and herons. Front and Riverside Parks are located along this waterfront flyway, and the IBA extends inland along the Scajaquada Creek, linking it with Delaware Park.

Once designed and implemented, the park landscapes function as 'analogous natural systems,' meaning that they approximate a natural system even though they are not natural but constructed. They must be managed and maintained because they are heavily used by people in the city and because many of the landscapes are designed to arrest natural vegetative succession. The edges of these landscapes are also important and productive transitional areas that provide different types of habitat. What follows are a series of guidelines for the protection and management of the parks' environmental features and landscapes.

- Protect and restore soils.
  - Aerate and enrich compacted soils.
  - Compost organic wastes and reuse the end product.
  - Protect steeper slopes through vegetation and/or other means.
- Protect, enhance and diversify vegetation within Olmsted's landscape types (meadows, bogs, arboretum, woodlands, parkland, perimeter wooded areas and so on).
  - Use native species and hardy cultivars.
  - Diversify tree / shrub selections.
  - Restore woodlands through planting in layers.
  - Avoid using pesticides through integrated pest management (IPM) techniques to protect water bodies and natural organisms.
  - Control invasive species.
  - Develop a hierarchy of areas according to level of maintenance.
- Protect and enhance water bodies.
  - Rehabilitate/reconstruct Olmsted's water systems where appropriate.
  - Interpret Olmsted's water bodies where inappropriate to reconstruct.
  - Provide public access points and appropriate recreational opportunities on water bodies.
  - Prevent pollution.
- Provide effective drainage and stormwater control.
  - Infiltrate as much water as quickly as possible through reintroducing natural wetland areas
  - Improve drainage in areas like pathways where standing water is hazardous.
  - Use engineering solutions where necessary to manage the waters.

A Need for Environmental Remediation

Environmental contamination has reduced the habitat values and restricted public use and enjoyment of the water bodies and watercourses that are part of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.

- Cazenovia Creek is a main tributary to the Buffalo River, the lower portion of which was identified by the Great Lakes Water Quality Board of the International Joint Commission (IJC) as one of the 43 Areas of Concern (AOC) in the Great Lakes Region.
- The water and bottom sediments of the Niagara River and its tributaries are also a listed Area of Concern. Industrial contaminants and others sources of pollution including runoff from inactive hazardous waste sites, combined sewer overflows and other point and nonpoint sources have contributed to the degradation of water quality and habitat in the Niagara River and its tributaries.
- Pathogens enter the Scajaquada Creek from combined sewer overflows. The creek is contaminated with Type C botulism that is fatal to birds and other wildlife. Blockages in the bypass tunnels cause high concentrations of botulism in the creek through Forest Lawn Cemetery, causing high waterfowl mortality rates in this area. Scajaquada Creek also has very high concentrations of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) and elevated levels of fertilizers and salts. Contamination levels make it unsafe for swimming.
- Hoyt Lake in Delaware Park is contaminated with the pollutants that flow through Scajaquada Creek. The lake was identified as one of the nearly 100 fish consumption advisories issued by the New York State Department of Health for water bodies across the state due to pollution from Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxics (PBTs). Also listed were the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers and Lake Erie.

■ Additional policies.

- Develop plans for park features that provide suitable indigenous species habitat for fisheries and wildlife.
- Manage park sites and facilities to protect the integrity of the natural resources.
- Monitor and minimize public use impacts regarding water quality and sensitive species.
- Prepare a status report on key species within the Olmsted parks.
- Develop policies to protect the seasonal use of the Olmsted parks by key species.
- Continue and enhance policies for the use and management of pesticides and fertilizers and encourage organic alternatives.
- Develop waste-management and recycling programs that incorporate litter control.
- Develop and enforce pollution protection programs to minimize chemical discharge.
- Work with government agencies to achieve water quality levels needed for unrestricted use.
- Promote landscaping with native plants.
- Research and promote use of energy efficient facilities and equipment.
- Integrate environmentally friendly materials into design of park features and operations.
- Identify improvements to water quality resulting from park initiatives.

Visitor Experience Management

The Conservancy should build on its past success in community outreach and develop a visitor use framework that ensures that visitors of all types will have access to a high quality experience and will have a minimal impact on the park's constructed and natural features. Thresholds of "acceptable change" (which may be "no change" for certain areas) will need to be developed for sensitive protected lands, and clear regulation of activities and access to these areas should be specified.

- Recreational Opportunities
  - Facilitate participation in a broad range of activities related to the parks' recreational values.
  - Balance unstructured/passive recreation opportunities as provided by Olmsted with structured/active single use allocation of space for recreation.
  - Work to provide safe access to the park lakes and creeks by creating additional boating and docking opportunities.
  - Enforce and encourage diverse and safe boating activities that do not have significant adverse impacts on Olmsted parks' ecology.
  - Expand opportunities for recreational fishing.
- Security
  - Provide lighting in the parks in areas that are heavily used at night.

    Retain existing lighting where needed.

    Maintain lights on city streets, parkways, and circles.

    Turn park lights off when parks close (10pm) except in locations that need lights for security purposes.
  - Provide restrooms that are supervised, safe, and clean.
  - Provide well maintained pathways.
  - Formalize rules and safety measures for access to the water.
- Safety
  - Provide for pedestrian and bike safety and accessibility.
  - Separate pedestrian and automobile circulation where possible.
  - Employ traffic calming measures on park roads.
  - Redirect through-traffic away from the parks where possible.
- Wayfinding
  - Make the entrances and neighborhood connections to the parks clear and articulated so that the parks are clearly an amenity to the surrounding area.
  - Provide informational and directional signage that identifies the cultural landscape and natural systems.
- Visitor Comfort
  - Make parks ADA accessible for diverse populations.
  - Provide restrooms for park users

    During park events.

    During permitted uses or public gatherings.

    Always open in occupied buildings.
  - Provide drinking fountains in high use areas.

Resource Interpretation Management

Education

This section of the implementation plan seeks to capitalize on the Olmsted parks' combination of important ecological values and urban location by promoting awareness, understanding, and stewardship of the park system's thousands of annual visitors. One of the most important uses of any park is to provide a forum for educational discovery. Due to their rich natural and social history, the parks are of broad educational interest to local residents as well as regional, national and international visitors.

Construction of park facilities and other infrastructure to enhance educational opportunities in the parks can offer new and expanded programs for children, adults, and seniors. As plans for these programs and facilities progress, the Conservancy must develop partnerships with Western New York's many educational and cultural institutions to ensure that park visitors can learn from experts in the fields that relate to the parks' history and ecology.

The Conservancy should work to:

- Promote knowledge of the park system's historic resources, prehistory and history by offering educational programs.
- Provide facilities where park visitors can gain an appreciation and understanding of the Olmsted parks and their ecological and cultural history.
- Develop partnerships with educational and cultural institutions knowledgeable about the parks' ecology and history to offer programs and interpretive materials for park visitors.
- Differentiate historic resources from any contemporary interventions.
- Provide ecological and historic interpretive elements in the Olmsted parks.
- Develop a range of written materials to facilitate public education.
- Provide opportunities for students and volunteers to gain knowledge of the parks through internships and training.
- Ensure the pubic availability of research conducted within the Olmsted parks.
- Establish a library of technical reports and data collected from research and monitoring conducted within the Olmsted parks.

Layers of Cultural History Recommendations

There have been many sites of Native American and African American historical significance identified within the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. This overlapping heritage provides many opportunities to give park-goers a basic interpretation of the historical relationship that the Olmsted parks and parkways share with local Native and African American people. For instance, there a number of highly significant Native American sites in and around Cazenovia Park, as well as along the Niagara River and Scajaquada Creek that could easily be connected through interpretation. In the same regard, there are sites of African American heritage near Martin Luther King, Jr. Park that could be linked with other areas of significance along the Olmsted system such as the Niagara River crossing of the Underground Railroad. It is feasible that these interpretations could be used for educational purposes, as well as to support community, economic, and tourism development. (See the *Layers of Cultural History Report* in the Supplemental Materials for more detailed information)

Research

- Provide research opportunities in the Olmsted parks for interested educational institutions.
- Establish an Environmental Committee.
- Encourage research that provides a clearer understanding of the Olmsted parks' ecological, geological, and cultural features.
- Encourage research that expands the knowledge base regarding biotic communities and relationships between these communities and the Olmsted parks' physical features.
- Work with agencies involved in monitoring the city's ecosystem to identify issues or activities with the potential to affect Olmsted parks' resources, or to further the understanding of the ecosystem.
- Monitor recreational fishing, tracking information such as the species caught and the physical characteristics of the individual specimen.
- Support research to further investigate the Native American, African American, and other park era histories.

Partnerships and Cooperation

As the primary management entity for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy will continue to have primary responsibility for managing the implementation of the plan. As such, Conservancy staff will continue to sustain and expand grassroots regional support for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System including the Olmsted Advisory Council. The Conservancy will provide staff support and technical expertise for park maintenance, operations, and funding support.

The plan recommends cooperative management initiatives with public or private organizations that support the Conservancy's mission and can leverage non-Conservancy technical or financial resources. These partnerships may include joint operational programming services, co-investment or co-sponsorship of capital investments, inter-agency agreements for land or facilities management, lease arrangements, joint advertising and marketing plans, and other options.

Primary Support Partners

Many Buffalo Olmsted Park System recommendations require partnering with the City of Buffalo or Erie County to implement improvements. These two primary support partners of the Conservancy have a direct fiscal or management connection with the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. The enthusiastic participation and strong financial support of the city and county will be crucial to the success of the restoration. The City of Buffalo is the owner of the Olmsted parks, parkways, circles, and smaller spaces. The Conservancy's responsibility to manage, operate, restore, and enhance the Buffalo Olmsted Park System rests first on an agreement between the City of Buffalo and Erie County regarding the management of all parks in the city. A 2004 agreement between the county and the Conservancy also laid the framework for cooperative stewardship of the Olmsted system (See Table 15). The agreement states that **The System Plan** will be jointly created and adopted by the Conservancy, the county, and the city. The plan is further vested in the City of Buffalo through the *Queen City of the 21st Century: City of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan,* where it is incorporated by reference. All alterations, major repairs, and capital improvements within the parks and parkways, shall be in accordance with the plan as approved.

Table 15 | Responsibilities by Entity[1]

Entity/Jurisdiction	General Responsibilities	Specific Tasks
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy		
DESTINATION PARKS: Cazenovia, Delaware, Front, Martin Luther King, Jr., Riverside, and South Parks (all areas unless otherwise specified)	General maintenance of open space, interior park roadways and pathways	Lawn, horticultural, and tree care; graffiti removal; playground repair; building, structure, and monument repair and care; snow removal
SMALLER PARKS: Columbus, Days, and Prospect Parks; Heacock Place (all areas unless otherwise specified)	General maintenance of open space, interior park roadways and pathways	Lawn, horticultural, and tree care; graffiti removal; playground repair; building, structure, and monument repair and care; snow removal
CIRCLES: Agassiz, Colonial, Ferry, Gates, McClellan, McKinley, Soldiers, and Symphony Circles (all areas unless otherwise specified)	General cleaning and aesthetic upgrades	Coordinate maintenance of NYS Routes 384 and 198 through Delaware Park with NYSDOT
PARKWAYS: Bidwell, Chapin, Humboldt, Lincoln, McKinley, and Red Jacket Parkways (all areas unless otherwise specified)	General cleaning and aesthetic upgrades	Coordinate maintenance of NYS Routes 384 and 198 through Delaware Park with NYSDOT
City of Buffalo		
DESTINATION AND SMALLER PARKS: park roads and parking lots, creeks, major infrastructure and utilities		Scajaquada Creek and its trash rack
CIRCLES: Ornamental lights		
PARKWAYS: Streetlights and poles, traffic lights and signals, street, road and sidewalk pavements, curbing, and signage; major walls, barriers, and fencing.		
Erie County		
SOUTH PARK: All botanical gardens-related		
COLUMBUS PARK: Library		
Erie County and/or the City of Buffalo		
CAZENOVIA PARK: pool, community center, rink	Repair major walls, barriers, fencing	
DELAWARE PARK: Shakespeare in the Park, casino, zoo, art gallery, historical society, radio tower complex, labor center	Repair major walls, barriers, fencing	
FRONT PARK: skating facility	Repair major walls, barriers, fencing	
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK: school, museum	Repair major walls, barriers, fencing	
RIVERSIDE PARK: pool, rink, senior center	Repair major walls, barriers, fencing	

[1]Based on Inter-Municipal Agreement between the City of Buffalo and Erie County, and the Agreement between the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and Erie County, both dated July 1, 2004.

Secondary Support Partners

In addition to primary support partners, the Conservancy has secondary partnerships with federal and state agencies, regional organizations, not-for-profits, and other local entities. The following is a brief description of some of the key partners and how they can work with the Buffalo Olmsted Park System.

Federal Agencies

Federal agencies that are potential partners for the Conservancy's restoration plan include the Army Corps of Engineers (stream related projects) and the National Park Service, which has funds to rehabilitate sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

New York State Agencies

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy will seek partnerships with many New York State agencies, programs, and initiatives. These include but are not limited to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Department of State (DOS), and the Department of Transportation (DOT). Specifically, a partnership agreement similar to that between Erie County and the Conservancy should be sought with the DOT for maintenance of the state right-of-way lands adjoining the Scajaquada Expressway that are contiguous with existing Conservancy managed park land. New York State agencies have annual grants programs that specifically target parks, natural resources, and historic sites. The DOT also administers the New York State Scenic Byways Program. Under this program, once a scenic byway is established through a nomination process, funds are available for economic development and resource management. The Buffalo Olmsted parkway system should be nominated as a scenic byway and connected with other scenic byways in the region. Partnerships with the DEC are required for any projects that affect New York State designated wetlands, lakes, and stream corridors, as well as projects that involve hazardous material remediation.

Foundations, Not-for-Profits, and Regional Organizations

Western New York foundations, private non-profits, and regional organizations provide an array of philanthropic services and funds. These organizations are natural allies of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, promoting local and regional planning, preserving parks and open space, developing interpretive and educational programs or conserving natural and cultural resources. The Conservancy will need to work closely with these organizations and other local interests seeking their support and encouraging their efforts in a mutually beneficial process to implement the goals of the plan.

Plan Adoption

Adoption Mechanisms

The plan was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy in January of 2008. It must also be adopted by the involved government agencies—Erie County and the City of Buffalo. To be most effective, the plan must be adopted as an amendment to the City of Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan to provide the city with the planning base to justify increased operating and capital contributions to the Buffalo Olmsted Park System. Consideration should be given to amending the Buffalo Niagara Framework for Regional Growth, recently adopted by Erie County, to include **The System Plan.** As with the city, adoption by the county sends a powerful message that these jurisdictions fully support the goals and projects designed to enhance the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, one of our region's greatest assets.

Relevant Environmental and Land Use Laws

The System Plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System must be reviewed, approved, and implemented in accordance with existing federal, state, and local laws. In addition, the plan will move forward within the framework of existing, ongoing, and future policies and plans conducted by all levels of government. The plan will also be realized in the context of planned public infrastructure projects for improvements related to highways and roads, water and sewer systems, hazardous environmental conditions, and poorly functioning hydrological systems. Many of the issues related to the Olmsted parks are addressed by existing work. It is important that the Conservancy be informed of and actively involved as appropriate in the implementation of these linked initiatives.

State Environmental Quality Review

An amendment to the city's Comprehensive Plan would require review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). It is anticipated that a General Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) would be prepared. GEISs are commonly used to assess the environmental impact of a sequence of actions contemplated by a single organization that are part of an entire plan applicable to a broad area. The GEIS will also provide the Conservancy with important information on the environmental effects, both positive and potentially adverse, related to implementation of **The System Plan.** The environmental assessment also includes the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review of the plan.

Historic Preservation Legislation

The requirements of the Federal Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the State Historic Preservation program must be satisfied through a process known as a Section 106 review. This process accompanies the review of all federal permits. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) will review **The System Plan** to ensure that the proposed activities will have no significant adverse impact on registered or eligible archaeological sites or historic structures. The review is conducted through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Water-Related Permits

In-water construction requires state and federal permits from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), respectively, as well as a Coastal Zone Consistency determination from the New York Department of State (DOS) to support the federal review.

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899

Under this federal law, ACOE is empowered to regulate all new structures in navigable waters. It is the purpose of this law to protect navigation and navigable channels. Navigable waters include all water area up to the mean high-water line. New structures such as floating docks, moorings, and pier reconstruction are regulated pursuant to this law.

Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1987

ACOE is directed to regulate dredging or filling in navigable waters. In regulating such activities, Section 404 requires, as a condition of federal permit approval, a state water quality certificate to acknowledge that the proposed activities will not contravene state water quality standards. By inter-agency agreement, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of Interior, review and comment on these permit applications.

Coastal Zone Consistency

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) program provides for the local application of Federal Coastal Zone Management policies under state supervision. The main purpose of an LWRP is to help develop the waterfront to maintain and improve waterfront lands to preserve and enhance the community character, economic prosperity, important natural resources, and public access to the waterfront. Federal permits in states such as New York that have approved coastal zone consistency programs must be accompanied by a Coastal Zone Consistency determination. In New York State, these consistency determinations are made by the Division of Coastal Resources of the Department of State (DOS) (19 NYCRR Part 600).

Environmental Conservation Law Title 5, Article 15, Protection of Waters

Protection of waters authorization is required for disturbance in the water, including such activities as pier construction, dredging and filling. It is intended to limit impacts to water bodies pursuant to the Environmental Conservation Law Title 5, Article 15. To implement this policy, the Protection of Waters regulatory program is designed to prevent undesirable activities on or in water bodies.

Natural Resource Conservation Protected Native Plants Program

This 1989 regulation established four lists of protected plants: endangered, threatened, rare, and exploitably vulnerable. SEQR directs applicants for permits to consult the lists for the possible existence of endangered and threatened species, and may try to look for alternative strategies to lessen the impact of activities on these species.

CONCLUSIONS

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy has completed its task to create a long term plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System as announced in 2001. The final report, **The System Plan,** lays out a map for restoring the parks for the next generation of the citizens of Western New York.

The plan is based on hours of community input, thoughtful direction by the Long Range Planning Committee and the Olmsted Board of Trustees, and the significant contribution of talented staff over six years. The professional team, under the direction of The Urban Design Project that included Trowbridge and Wolf, Landscape Architects, and Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Engineers, offered competent professional experience and imagination to generate a planning structure that set goals, recommendations, design proposals, cost estimates, and a plan for implementation.

The System Plan is complete. But the work of implementation and funding lies ahead. No one has promised that the task will be easy. But neither was it easy for the late 19th century and early 20th century generations of Olmsted, Dorsheimer, and others to put the parks in place. We have been the recipients of the farsighted vision of earlier generations who gave us this unique park and parkway system.

The work before the Conservancy, the City of Buffalo and County of Erie, and indeed, all citizens of Western New York, is to bring forth the vision for the next 100 years by preserving and restoring the nationally designated historic cultural landscape and expanding the ribbon of green through the city and region. May it be said 100 years from now that our generation stepped forward with a vision and plan that preserved the places of green and enriched the quality of life of our children's children.

Hopefully, crowds like this one on the lake in Delaware Park will become commonplace in all of the parks once again.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Historic Preservation Guidelines

The Buffalo Olmsted Park System is officially designated by the National Park Service (NPS) as a cultural landscape, specifically a historic designed landscape, on the National Register of Historic Places. **The System Plan** closely follows the preservation guidelines set forth by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as well as the preservation guidelines of the NPS. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) will review **The System Plan** to ensure that the proposed activities will have no significant adverse impact on registered or eligible archaeological sites or historic structures. The review is conducted through SHPO. Both the SHPO and NPS preservation guidelines are detailed in this appendix. Following these guidelines are tables that show how each recommendation for the plan fits within these separate but similar guidelines.

New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

- **Topography**—The shape of the land—its slope, form, aspect—is important in defining the character of an historic landscape. Topography creates space in the landscape, supports specific uses and other landscape features, and often directs or creates views. Emphasis should always be on proper maintenance practices which protect topographic features and attributes. Care should be taken in project work to protect fragile soils, slopes and landforms. Protective measures, such as erosion controls and limits on construction vehicles and equipment, should be incorporated into projects.
- **Vegetation**—Individual plants, such as a specimen tree, or groups of plants, such as a hedge row, alee, agricultural field or woodlot, can contribute to an historic landscape's significance. Vegetation may be important for its historical association, horticultural or genetic value, or aesthetic or functional qualities.
  - As with any historic feature, maintenance is of the utmost importance, with an emphasis on retention and repair. Unlike more static features such as buildings and structures, vegetation is very dynamic; therefore, treatment must acknowledge the full range of vegetation processes, including germination, growth, seasonal change, maturity, decay and death.
  - Daily, seasonal, and cyclical practices, such as corrective pruning, cabling, deep root fertilization, and propagation, can prevent more extreme repair measures at a later date. If and when replacement of an individual plant or group of plants is unavoidable, care should be taken to insure the replacement vegetation matches the historic in habitat, form, color, texture, fruit/flower and scale.

- **Circulation**—Within the historic landscape, historic circulation features can occur as individual elements or as systems or networks. Examples such as roads, parkways, trails, paths and canals illustrate the wide range of circulation features which may occur within a historic landscape. Routine maintenance of these features helps to ensure that individual elements, as well as entire networks, can be retained. When a specific feature or portion of a system no longer actively supports circulation, such as an abandoned rail corridor or canal lock, the feature should be retained and protected.
  - Special attention must be given to considering repairs and/or modifications which address contemporary circulation issues, such as vehicular speed limits, sight-lines, and maintenance procedures (e.g. snowplowing). While such issues are valid, care must be taken to retain the historic character of circulation features important to the property's significance. Alignment, surface treatment, width, edge, grade, materials and infrastructure are those attributes which define the character of a circulation feature. Repairs and limited replacement should respect their attributes.
- **Buildings and Structures**—Historic buildings and structures are important components within historic landscapes. Their relationship to one another and to the other landscape features discussed, is a key concern when considering both routine maintenance or special projects within the landscape.
- **Site Furnishings and Objects**—Site furnishings and objects are small-scale elements that may be movable or permanently installed, used seasonally or continuously, and can be independent of other elements or can be part of a system. In addition, these elements may be functional, decorative or both. While furnishings and objects may appear to be small components in the historic landscape, the cumulative effect of these elements is an important facet of a property's historic significance.
  - The location, aesthetic and construction details, and materials of benches, lights, signs, fences, flagpoles, monuments or urns should be carefully considered in both routine maintenance and more involved undertakings. Of particular concern is the relocation of some furnishings and objects to accommodate new uses. Elements such as historic streetlights, entry signs, and memorials, have direct functional or associative relationships with other features in the landscape. Moving these elements not only diminishes their importance, but establishes a false historic image. Routine maintenance of site furnishings and objects will increase the life of these elements. When portions of these elements are too deteriorated to repair, replacement—of all or a portion of the element—should match the original in location, design, materials and finish.

- **Spatial Organization and Land Patterns**—Much like the floor plan and ceiling heights of an interior contribute to the character and significance of a building or structure, the spatial organization and land patterns within the landscape affect its character and significance. The organization or patterns of the landscape are defined by topography, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, and furnishings and objects. Some of these features form the "walls" of a space, such as a hedge, fence or wall; others act as "corridors," channeling movement or directing views, like walks, bridges or creeks. Together, some or all of these features create spaces—many related to specific functions or uses.
  - The evaluation of proposed changes to spatial organization and land patterns considers the relative significance of a specific space or pattern to the overall landscape. In historic designed landscapes, spaces may be "ranked" in terms of importance. For example, the front lawn of an estate grounds may be considered more significant than a storage yard associated with a secondary support building. Similarly, land patterns can be organized in a hierarchical fashion: the overall arrangement of fields to orchards to woodlot may be considered more important than the specific patterns of crops within the fields or trees within the orchard.

National Park Service (NPS)

- **Organizational Elements of the Landscape**
  - Spatial Organization and Land Patterns refers to the three-dimensional organization and patterns of spaces in a landscape, like the arrangement of rooms in a house. Spatial organization is created by the landscape's cultural and natural features. Some form visual links or barriers (such as fences and hedgerows); others create spaces and visual connections in the landscape (such as topography and open water). The organization of such features defines and creates spaces in the landscape and often is closely related to land use. Both the functional and visual relationship between spaces is integral to the historic character of a property. In addition, it is important to recognize that spatial relationships may change over time due to a variety of factors, including environmental impacts (e.g. drought, flood), plant growth and succession, and changes in land use or technology.
- **Character-Defining Features of the Landscape**—There are many character-defining features that collectively contribute to the historic character of a cultural landscape. These are as follows:
  - Topography, the shape of the ground plane and its height or depth, is a character-defining feature of the landscape. Topography may occur naturally or as a result of human manipulation. For example, topographic features may contribute to the creation of outdoor spaces, serve a functional purpose, or provide visual interest.

- Vegetation features may be individual plants, as in the case of a specimen tree, or groups of plants such as a hedge, alee, agricultural field, planting bed, or a naturally-occurring plant community or habitat. Vegetation includes evergreen or deciduous trees, shrubs, and ground covers, and both woody and herbaceous plants. Vegetation may derive its significance from historical associations, horticultural or genetic value, or aesthetic or functional qualities. It is a primary dynamic component of the landscape's character; therefore, the treatment of cultural landscapes must recognize the continual process of germination, growth, seasonal change, aging, decay, and death of plants. The character of individual plants is derived from habit, form, color, texture, bloom, fruit, fragrance, scale and context.
- Circulation features may include roads, parkways, drives, trails, walks, paths, parking areas, and canals. Such features may occur individually or be linked to form networks or systems. The character of circulation features is defined by factors such as alignment, width, surface and edge treatment, grade, materials, and infrastructure.
- Water features may be aesthetic as well as functional components of the landscape. They may be linked to the natural hydrologic system or may be fed artificially; their associated water supply, drainage, and mechanical systems are important components. Water features include fountains, pools, cascades, irrigation systems, ponds, lakes, streams, and aqueducts. The characteristics of water features include reflective qualities, associated plant and animal life, as well as water quality. Special consideration may be required due to the seasonal changes in water such as variations in water table, precipitation, and freezing.
- Structures, site furnishings, and objects may contribute to a landscape's significance and historic character. Structures are non-habitable, constructed features, unlike buildings which have walls and roofs and are generally habitable. Structures may be significant individually or they may simply contribute to the historic character of the landscape. They may include walls, terraces, arbors, gazebos, follies, tennis courts, playground equipment, greenhouses, cold frames, steps, bridges, and dams. The placement and arrangement of buildings and structures are important to the character of the landscape; these guidelines emphasize the relationship between buildings, structures, and other features which comprise the historic landscape. For additional and specific guidance related to the treatment of historic buildings, please consult the Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. Site furnishings and objects generally are small-scale elements in the landscape that may be functional, decorative, or both. They can include benches, lights, signs, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, fences, tree grates, clocks, flagpoles, sculpture, monuments, memorials, planters, and urns. They may be movable, used seasonally, or permanently installed. Site furnishings and objects occur as singular items, in groups of similar or identical features, or as part of a system (e.g. signage). They may be designed or built for a specific site, available though a catalog, or created as vernacular pieces associated with a particular region or cultural group. They may be significant in their own right, for example, as works of art or as the work of an important designer.

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Delaware Park		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #1:	Support and participate in the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway to a parkway		x	x		x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #2:	Restore the Meadow		x	x	x		x		x		x	x		x	
Project #3:	Reconstruct the Ring Road considering its historic alignment			x								x			
Project #4:	Restore the Lodge area		x		x		x		x		x			x	
Project #5:	Restore the Casino area		x		x	x	x		x		x			x	
Project #6:	Restore the Rumsey Woods area	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x		x	
Project #7:	Restore or interpret the original shoreline configuration and redesign the path around the Gala Water (Hoyt Lake) to reflect the new shape			x			x		x			x	x		
Project #8:	Construct a wetland to improve water quality at the junction of Hoyt Lake and the Scajaquada Creek		x								x		x		
Project #9:	Enhance the playgrounds				x									x	
Project #10:	Reposition the baseball diamonds and rotate the athletics fields				x		x		x					x	
Project #11:	Provide water based recreation opportunities on Hoyt Lake														
Project #12:	Remove tennis courts along the Scajaquada Expressway (in the southern part of the Meadow) and improve other tennis courts in the park				x		x		x					x	
Project #13:	Improve connections to cultural activities within the park			x								x			
Project #14:	Connect the park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood			x								x			
Project #15:	Highlight the park's connections to the "Olmsted Crescent" of cultural activities			x								x			
Project #16:	Explore opportunities to connect Delaware Park to Forest Lawn Cemetery			x								x			
Project #17:	Connect the park to the Niagara River Greenway			x								x			
Project #18:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
		State Historic Preservation Office							National Park Service						

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Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Delaware Park (continued)		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #24:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					
		State Historic Preservation Office							**National Park Service**						

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Front Park		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #1:	Restore the Terrace		x	x		x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #2:	Rebuild Lakeview House				x									x	
Project #3:	Restore the Playground/Hippodrome		x				x		x		x				
Project #4:	Restore the Picnic Shelter				x									x	
Project #5:	Construct an earthen berm or barrier between the park and the thruway	x								x					
Project #6:	Construct site walls to reclaim views				x									x	
Project #7:	Remove ice rink and restore original grading	x			x		x		x	x				x	
Project #8:	Relocate tennis courts to locations outside of the park				x		x		x					x	
Project #9:	Relocate the children's playground to the northern edge of the park, closer to the residential neighborhoods				x		x		x					x	
Project #10:	Restore historic park entrance at Porter and Busti Avenues			x			x		x			x			
Project #11:	Restore connections between Front Park and the rest of the park system			x								x			
Project #12:	Reinterpret Fort Porter	x	x		x		x		x	x	x			x	
Project #13:	Recreate Sheridan Drive along the southwest border of the park			x								x			
Project #14:	Restore or interpret "The Bank" designed by Olmsted, depending on the final design of the Peace Bridge Plaza			x								x			
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting, design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #19:	Restore maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					
		State Historic Preservation Office							National Park Service						

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #1:	Renovate and enhance the Casino building				x									x	
Project #2:	Restore the Humboldt Basin				x		x		x				x	x	
Project #3:	Restore the original Fountain as a splash pad				x		x		x				x	x	
Project #4:	Restore the Lily Pool		x		x		x		x		x		x	x	
Project #5:	Improve the historic Greenhouse area		x	x	x		x		x		x	x		x	
Project #6:	Restore Picnic Grove		x		x		x		x		x			x	
Project #7:	Redesign the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial within the loop area					x	x		x					x	
Project #8:	Redesign the south Ring Road as a pedestrian pathway and relocate parking to Best Street			x								x			
Project #9:	Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue			x								x			
Project #10:	Redesign the southwest entrance of the park			x			x		x			x			
Project #11:	Redesign the southeast entrance of the park			x			x		x			x			
Project #12:	Consolidate and improve the playground on the south side of the park near the Humboldt Basin				x		x		x					x	
Project #13:	Relocate the basketball courts and arena outside of the park				x		x		x					x	
Project #14:	Relocate the tennis courts outside of the park				x		x		x					x	
Project #15:	Interpret the remnant of the historical Humboldt Parkway at the former north entrance of the park			x			x		x			x			
Project #16:	Rationalize and expand parking for the Museum and park users within and outside of the park			x								x			
Project #17:	Redesign the school bus drop-off area to articulate the park road			x			x		x			x			
Project #18:	Redesign the Rose Garden near the Science Museum		x				x		x		x				
Project #19:	Design a circle at Best Street near the Kensington Expressway			x								x			
Project #20:	Redesign the Best Street/ Genesee Street intersection			x								x			
Project #21:	Open West Parade to two-way traffic			x								x			
Project #22:	Widen the sidewalks and add a vegetative buffer to the bridges that cross the Kensington Expressway		x	x							x	x			
Project #23:	Deck over the section of the expressway by the park			x			x		x			x			

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State Historic Preservation Office | National Park Service

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (continued)		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #24:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #25:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #26:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #27:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #28:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
Project #29:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #30:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #31:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #33:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #34:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					
		State Historic Preservation Office							**National Park Service**						

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

South Park		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #1:	Enhance the Arboretum and botanical collection around the Conservatory		x				x		x		x				
Project #2:	Repair the lake and improve water quality		x				x		x		x		x		
Project #3:	Restore the Meadow		x		x		x		x		x			x	
Project #4:	Repair the Ring Road			x								x			
Project #5:	Replace the bridge			x	x							x		x	
Project #6:	Discourage local traffic from using the park as a thoroughfare			x								x			
Project #7:	Articulate the park's main entrance as a major gateway			x			x		x			x			
Project #8:	Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians			x			x		x			x			
Project #9:	Create a 'Father Baker Garden' where the unused bus loop is located		x				x		x		x				
Project #10:	Construct the Boathouse				x									x	
Project #11:	Enhance the appearance and utility of the concession structure				x									x	
Project #12:	Integrate South Park with surrounding urban Lackawanna neighborhood			x								x			
Project #13:	Connect South Park to the Greenway through trails along Ridge Road			x								x			
Project #14:	Connect South Park to Tifft Street and the Tifft Nature Preserve			x								x			
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #19:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					
		State Historic Preservation Office							National Park Service						

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Cazenovia Park		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
		State Historic Preservation Office							National Park Service						
Project #1:	Renovate the Casino and the central Concourse		x	x	x				x		x	x		x	
Project #2:	Remove parking and access road along the creek on south side of the park and provide new residential access from Potters Road			x								x			
Project #3:	Construct a pedestrian bridge over Cazenovia Creek			x								x		x	
Project #4:	Improve the pedestrian connections between the original park and its newer section			x								x			
Project #5:	Restore the park's south entrance connecting to Red Jacket Parkway			x			x		x			x			
Project #6:	Create an enhanced 'parking garden' at the entrance at Seneca Street		x	x					x		x	x			
Project #7:	Stabilize the creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access	x	x						x	x	x		x		
Project #8:	Develop overflow areas along the creek to absorb more flood waters	x							x	x			x		
Project #9:	Reinterpret the former lake edge behind the Casino								x				x		
Project #10:	Improve sports fields as required				x									x	
Project #11:	Relocate non-historic facilities out of the historic section of the park				x		x		x					x	
Project #12:	Connect Cazenovia Park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood			x								x			
Project #13:	Connect Cazenovia Park to the Niagara River Greenway system			x								x			
Project #14:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #16:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #17:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #18:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #22:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Riverside Park		State Historic Preservation Office: Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		National Park Service: Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Project #1:	Reestablish the central Concourse		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #2:	Reinterpret the Minnow Pools		x				x		x		x		x		
Project #3:	Relocate and redesign the pedestrian bridge on its historic alignment			x	x							x		x	
Project #4:	Establish a pier on the Niagara River where the new pedestrian bridge lands			x								x	x		
Project #5:	Reconstruct Hotaling Drive			x								x			
Project #6:	Improve parking along Crowley Avenue			x								x			
Project #7:	Improve existing playground				x									x	
Project #8:	Rationalize and improve existing sports fields				x									x	
Project #9:	Relocate senior center, swimming pool, and ice rink facilities		x	x	x		x		x		x	x		x	
Project #10:	Enhance connections between the original Olmsted park and the newer section of the park			x								x			
Project #11:	Develop safe connections between Riverside Park and the adjacent neighborhoods			x								x			
Project #12:	Extend the park connections to the Niagara River Greenway and Washington and Towpath Parks			x								x			
Project #13:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings					x								x	
Project #15:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting					x								x	
Project #16:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities				x									x	
Project #17:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains					x								x	
Project #18:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system			x								x			
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system			x								x			
Project #20:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads			x								x			
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage			x		x						x		x	
Project #22:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation		x				x		x		x				
Project #23:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	x								x					

Appendix A | Checklist of Historic Designation Compliance

Parkways, Circles, and Small Spaces		Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Buildings and Structures	Site Furnishings and Objects	Spatial Organization and Land Patterns		Spatial Organization and Land Patterns	Topography	Vegetation	Circulation	Water Features	Structures, Site Furnishings, and Objects	
Parkways															
Project #1:	Porter Avenue		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #2:	Richmond Avenue (The Avenue)		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #3:	Bidwell Parkway		x	x		x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #4:	Chapin Parkway		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #5:	Lincoln Parkway		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #6:	McKinley Parkway		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #7:	Red Jacket Parkway		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Circles															
Project #8:	West Ferry Circle		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #9:	Colonial Circle (Bidwell Place)		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #10:	Soldiers Circle (Soldiers Place)		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #11:	Gates Circle (Chapin Place)		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #12:	Agassiz Circle		x	x		x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #13:	McClellan Circle		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #14:	McKinley Circle		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Project #15:	Symphony Circle		x	x		x					x	x		x	
Small Spaces															
Project #16:	Heacock Place		x	x		x	x		x		x	x		x	
Project #17:	Days Park		x			x					x			x	
Project #18:	Columbus and Perla Park (Prospect Park)		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x	
		State Historic Preservation Office							**National Park Service**						

Appendix B – Detailed Cost Estimates

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Delaware Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - Albright-Knox Precinct		**616,000**
Project #13:	Improve connections to cultural activities within the park	353,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	123,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	126,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	2,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	12,000
2 - Casino Precinct		**11,068,000**
Project #5:	Restore the Casino area	10,282,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	37,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	388,000
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	73,000
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	38,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	4,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	57,000
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	185,000
3 - Delaware Avenue Precinct		**88,000**
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system[4]	0
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	56,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	32,000
4 - Gala Water Precinct		**1,812,000**
Project #7:	Restore or interpret the original shoreline configuration and redesign the path around the Gala Water (Hoyt Lake) to reflect the new shape	908,000
Project #8:	Construct a wetland to improve water quality at the junction of Hoyt Lake and the Scajaquada Creek	145,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	9,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	168,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	9,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	147,000
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	426,000
5 - Historical Society Precinct		**224,000**
Project #13:	Improve connections to cultural activities within the park	29,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	9,000
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	18,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	6,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	158,000

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Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Delaware Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
6 - Meadow Precinct		**5,623,000**
Project #2:	Restore the Meadow	4,093,000
Project #10:	Reposition the baseball diamonds and rotate the athletics fields	954,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	26,000
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	11,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	214,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	2,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	323,000
7 - Parkside Lodge Precinct		**10,328,000**
Project #4:	Restore the Lodge area	9,475,000
Project #9:	Enhance the playgrounds	202,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	37,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	258,000
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	123,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	4,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	225,000
8 - Perimeter Precinct		**1,209,000**
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	14,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	198,000
Project #24:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	276,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	677,000
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	44,000
9 - Ring Road Precinct		**6,368,000**
Project #3:	Reconstruct the Ring Road considering its historic alignment	6,254,000
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	94,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	20,000
10 - Rumsey Woods Precinct		**2,081,000**
Project #6:	Restore the Rumsey Woods area	874,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	28,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	138,000
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	268,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	12,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	609,000
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	148,000

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Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Delaware Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
11 - Scajaquada Corridor Precinct		**36,473,000**
Project #1:	Support and participate in the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway to a Parkway	33,734,000
Project #11:	Provide water based recreation opportunities on Hoyt Lake[5]	0
Project #12:	Remove tennis courts along the Scajaquada Expressway (in the southern part of the Meadow) and improve other tennis courts in the park	339,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	5,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,593,000
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	353,000
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	151,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	8,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	286,000
12 - Zoo Precinct		**323,000**
Project #13:	Improve connections to cultural activities within the park	323,000
Outside the Park		**4,173,000**
Project #14:	Connect the park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood	15,000
Project #15:	Highlight the park's connections to the Olmsted Crescent of cultural activities	5,000
Project #16:	Explore opportunities to connect Delaware Park to Forest Lawn Cemetery[6]	0
Project #17:	Connect the park to the Niagara River Greenway	5,000
Project #18:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	941,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	3,207,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**76,213,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**4,173,000**
Total for Delaware Park and Vicinity		**80,386,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

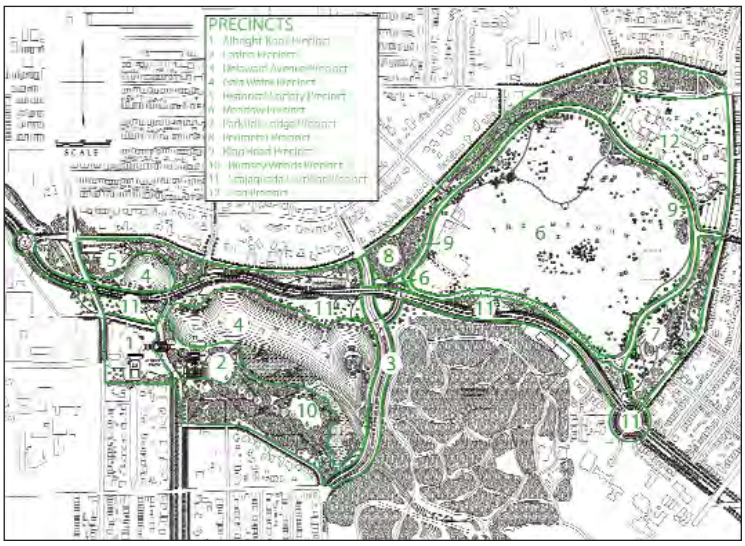
[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] Only maintenance is needed, therefore there are no capital costs.

[5] There are no capital costs associated with this project.

[6] The cost of this project is included in connecting the park to the surrounding neighborhood.



Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Front Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - The Front Precinct		**16,734,000**
Project #1:	Restore the Terrace	2,350,000
Project #2:	Rebuild Lakeview House	2,619,000
Project #3:	Restore the Playground/Hippodrome	892,000
Project #4:	Restore the Picnic Shelter	622,000
Project #5:	Construct an earthen berm or barrier between the park and the thruway	635,000
Project #6:	Construct site walls to reclaim views	3,411,000
Project #7:	Remove ice rink and restore original grading	2,000,000
Project #8:	Relocate tennis courts to locations outside of the park	486,000
Project #9:	Relocate the children's playground to the northern edge of the park, closer to the residential neighborhoods	141,000
Project #10:	Restore historic park entrance at Porter and Busti Avenues	1,525,000
Project #13:	Recreate Sheridan Drive along the southwest border of the park	828,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting, design and install lighting	1,001,000
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system[4]	0
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[5]	0
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads[6]	0
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	13,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	179,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	32,000
2 - Fort Porter Site		**4,310,000**
Project #12:	Reinterpret Fort Porter	3,665,000
Project #14:	Restore or interpret "The Bank" designed by Olmsted, depending on the final design of the Peace Bridge Plaza	21,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	51,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting, design and install lighting	396,000
Project #19:	Restore maintain, or install drinking fountains	7,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	122,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	48,000
Outside the Park		**76,000**
Project #11:	Restore connections between Front Park and the rest of the park system	3,000
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	73,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**21,044,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**76,000**
Total for Front Park and Vicinity		**21,120,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] Only maintenance is needed, therefore there are no capital costs.

[5] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in restoring the Busti entrance and Sheridan Drive.

[6] The cost of traffic calming on park roads is included in restoring Sheridan Drive.

Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - Central Water Features Precinct		**11,497,000**
Project #1:	Renovate and enhance the Casino building	4,281,000
Project #2:	Restore the Humboldt Basin	3,680,000
Project #3:	Restore the original Fountain as a splash pad	1,137,000
Project #4:	Restore the Lily Pool	941,000
Project #12:	Consolidate and improve the playground on the south side of the park near the Humboldt Basin	177,000
Project #18:	Redesign the Rose Garden near the Science Museum	101,000
Project #25:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	51,000
Project #26:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	11,000
Project #27:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #28:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #29:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	876,000
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	9,000
Project #33:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	82,000
Project #34:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	147,000
2 - Fillmore Avenue Precinct		**2,195,000**
Project #9:	Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue	2,195,000
Project #30:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #31:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads[5]	0
3 - Greenhouse/Picnic Grove Precinct		**3,091,000**
Project #5:	Improve the historic Greenhouse area	2,447,000
Project #6:	Restore Picnic Grove	89,000
Project #7:	Redesign the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial within the loop area	122,000
Project #25:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	37,000
Project #27:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #28:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #29:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	143,000
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	7,000
Project #33:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	40,000
Project #34:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	202,000
4 - Museum Precinct		**1,342,000**
Project #16:	Rationalize and expand parking for the Museum and park users within and outside of the park	1,331,000
Project #28:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	7,000

(continued on page 169)

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
5 - Perimeter Precinct		**11,240,000**
Project #8:	Redesign the south Ring Road as a pedestrian pathway and relocate parking to Best Street	1,154,000
Project #10:	Redesign the southwest entrance of the park	0
Project #11:	Redesign the southeast entrance of the park	16,000
Project #15:	Interpret the remnant of the historical Humboldt Parkway at the former north entrance of the park	375,000
Project #17:	Redesign the school bus drop-off area to articulate the park road	1,352,000
Project #23:	Deck over the section of the expressway by the park	8,064,000
Project #26:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	26,000
Project #29:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	20,000
Project #30:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #31:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads[5]	0
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	15,000
Project #33:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	218,000
Outside the Park		**10,050,000**
Project #13:	Relocate the basketball courts and arena outside of the park	193,000
Project #14:	Relocate the tennis courts outside of the park	226,000
Project #16:	Rationalize and expand parking for the Museum and park users within and outside of the park	584,000
Project #19:	Design a circle at Best Street near the Kensington Expressway	1,613,000
Project #20:	Redesign the Best Street/Genesee Street intersection	1,615,000
Project #21:	Open West Parade to two-way traffic	3,000
Project #22:	Widen the sidewalks and add a vegetative buffer to the bridges that cross the Kensington Expressway	112,000
Project #24:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	4,176,000
Project #26:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,528,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**29,365,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**10,050,000**
Total for Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Vicinity		**39,415,000**

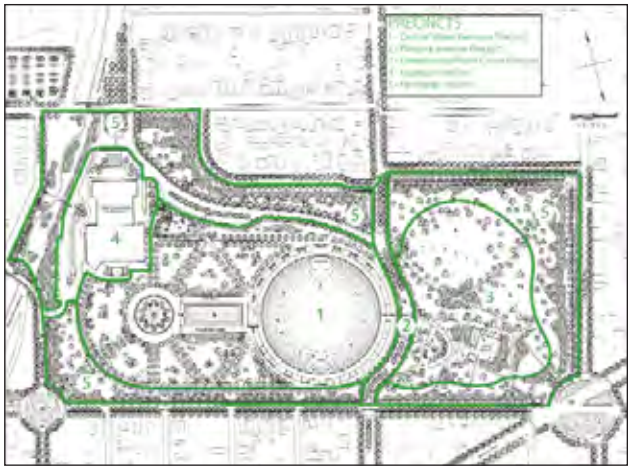
[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in other park projects.

[5] The cost of traffic calming on park roads is included in other park projects.



Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

South Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - Botanical Gardens Precinct		**385,000**
Project #1:	Enhance the Arboretum and botanical collection around the Conservatory	57,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	40,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	182,000
Project #19:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	99,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	3,000
2 - Central Meadow Precinct		**144,000**
Project #3:	Restore the Meadow	56,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	5,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	7,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	3,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	73,000
3 - Lake Precinct		**9,040,000**
Project #2:	Repair the lake and improve water quality	7,579,000
Project #10:	Construct the Boathouse	1,028,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	26,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	31,000
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	167,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	3,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	206,000
4 - North Meadow Precinct		**1,454,000**
Project #3:	Restore the Meadow	23,000
Project #11:	Enhance the appearance and utility of the concession structure	1,208,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	9,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	30,000
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #19:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	133,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	47,000
5 - Perimeter Precinct		**1,630,000**
Project #6:	Discourage local traffic from using the park as a thoroughfare	414,000
Project #8:	Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians	4,000
Project #9:	Create a 'Father Baker Garden' where the unused bus loop is located	342,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	14,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	96,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	2,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	728,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	30,000

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Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

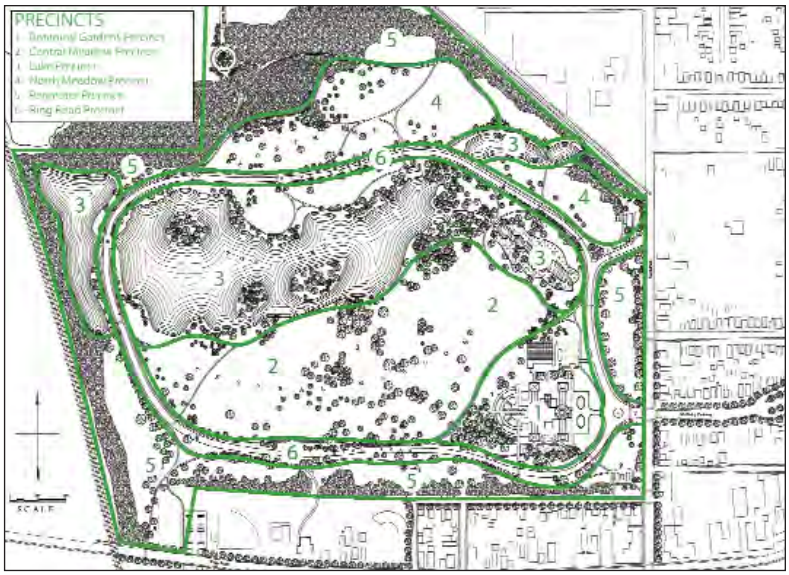
South Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
6 - Ring Road Precinct		**4,492,000**
Project #4:	Repair the Ring Road	762,000
Project #5:	Replace the bridge	1,042,000
Project #7:	Articulate the park's main entrance as a major gateway	528,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,514,000
Project #19:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	405,000
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	188,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	10,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	39,000
Outside the Park		**1,354,000**
Project #12:	Integrate South Park with surrounding urban Lackawanna neighborhood	13,000
Project #13:	Connect South Park to the Greenway through trails along Ridge Road	8,000
Project #14:	Connect South Park to Tifft Street and the Tifft Nature Preserve	17,000
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	131,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,185,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**17,145,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**1,354,000**
Total for South Park and Vicinity		**18,499,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in the restoration of the ring road.



Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Cazenovia Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - Bowl Precinct		**439,000**
Project #10:	Improve sports fields as required	289,000
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	14,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	47,000
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	19,000
Project #22:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	3,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	15,000
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	52,000
2 - Casino Precinct		**5,805,000**
Project #1:	Renovate the Casino and the central Concourse	5,147,000
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	28,000
Project #16:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	69,000
Project #17:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #18:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	11,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	111,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	197,000
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	75,000
Project #22:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	11,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	140,000
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	16,000
3 - Creek Precinct		**10,108,000**
Project #3:	Construct a pedestrian bridge over Cazenovia Creek	376,000
Project #7:	Stabilize the creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access	2,681,000
Project #8:	Develop overflow areas along the creek to absorb more flood waters	6,109,000
Project #9:	Reinterpret the former lake edge behind the Casino	526,000
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	33,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	49,000
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	38,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	296,000
4 - Golf Course Precinct		**996,000**
Project #4:	Improve the pedestrian connections between the original park and its newer section	52,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	68,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	856,000
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	20,000

(continued on page 173)

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Cazenovia Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
5 - Perimeter Precinct		**36,724,000**
Project #2:	Remove parking and access road along the creek on south side of the park and provide new residential access from Potters Road	60,000
Project #5:	Restore the park's south entrance connecting to Red Jacket Parkway	104,000
Project #6:	Create an enhanced 'parking garden' at the entrance at Seneca Street	634,000
Project #11:	Relocate non-historic facilities out of the historic section of the park	34,727,000
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	12,000
Project #16:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	151,000
Project #18:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	7,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	292,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	279,000
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	56,000
Project #22:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	17,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	337,000
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	48,000
Outside the Park		**2,082,000**
Project #12:	Connect Cazenovia Park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood	3,000
Project #13:	Connect Cazenovia Park to the Niagara River Greenway system	5,000
Project #14:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	358,000
Project #16:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,716,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**54,072,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**2,082,000**
Total for Cazenovia Park and Vicinity		**56,154,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Riverside Park		Total Costs[1]
1 - Concourse and River Precinct		**6,311,000**
Project #1:	Reestablish the central Concourse	2,200,000
Project #3:	Relocate and redesign the pedestrian bridge on its historic alignment	1,593,000
Project #4:	Establish a pier on the Niagara River where the new pedestrian bridge lands[3]	0
Project #9:	Relocate senior center, swimming pool, and ice rink facilities	2,474,000
Project #10:	Enhance connections between the original Olmsted park and the newer section of the park	15,000
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	19,000
Project #17:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	6,000
2 - Hotaling Drive Precinct		**1,119,000**
Project #5:	Reconstruct Hotaling Drive	899,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	164,000
Project #20:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	56,000
3 - Minnow Pools Precinct		**746,000**
Project #2:	Reinterpret the Minnow Pools	463,000
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	28,000
Project #18:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	82,000
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	7,000
Project #22:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	139,000
Project #23:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	27,000
4 - Playing Fields Precinct		**45,000**
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	2,000
Project #17:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #18:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	24,000
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	2,000
Project #22:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	13,000
5 - South Recreation Precinct		**560,000**
Project #7:	Improve existing playground	13,000
Project #8:	Rationalize and improve existing sports fields	339,000
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	19,000
Project #15:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	32,000
Project #16:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[4]	0
Project #17:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	4,000
Project #18:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	70,000
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	7,000
Project #22:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	76,000

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Appendix B | Individual Project Costs by Precinct

Riverside Park (continued)		Total Costs[1]
Outside the Park		**1,741,000**
Project #6:	Improve parking along Crowley Avenue	170,000
Project #11:	Develop safe connections between Riverside Park and the adjacent neighborhoods	118,000
Project #12:	Extend the park connections to the Niagara River Greenway and Washington and Towpath Parks	5,000
Project #13:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	168,000
Project #15:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,280,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**8,781,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**1,741,000**
Total for Riverside Park and Vicinity		**10,522,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of creating the pier is included in the relocation and redesign of the pedestrian bridge.

[4] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

Park Precinct Map

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Delaware Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Support and participate in the upgrade of the Scajaquada Expressway to a parkway	33,734,000
Project #2:	Restore the Meadow	4,093,000
Project #3:	Reconstruct the Ring Road considering its historic alignment	6,254,000
Project #4:	Restore the Lodge area	9,475,000
Project #5:	Restore the Casino area	10,282,000
Project #6:	Restore the Rumsey Woods area	874,000
Project #7:	Restore or interpret the original shoreline configuration and redesign the path around the Gala Water (Hoyt Lake) to reflect the new shape	908,000
Project #8:	Construct a wetland to improve water quality at the junction of Hoyt Lake and the Scajaquada Creek	145,000
Project #9:	Enhance the playgrounds	202,000
Project #10:	Reposition the baseball diamonds and rotate the athletics fields	954,000
Project #11:	Provide water based recreation opportunities on Hoyt Lake[4]	0
Project #12:	Remove tennis courts along the Scajaquada Expressway (in the southern part of the Meadow) and improve other tennis courts in the park	339,000
Project #13:	Improve connections to cultural activities within the park	705,000
Project #14:	Connect the park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood	15,000
Project #15:	Highlight the park's connections to the "Olmsted Crescent" of cultural activities	5,000
Project #16:	Explore opportunities to connect Delaware Park to Forest Lawn Cemetery[5]	0
Project #17:	Connect the park to the Niagara River Greenway	5,000
Project #18:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	941,000
Project #19:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	165,000
Project #20:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	5,707,000
Project #21:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #22:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	31,000
Project #23:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	1,541,000
Project #24:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	276,000
Project #25:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	339,000
Project #26:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	67,000
Project #27:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	2,526,000
Project #28:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	803,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**76,213,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**4,173,000**
Total for Delaware Park and Vicinity		**80,386,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] There are no capital costs associated with this project.

[5] The cost of this project is included in connecting the park to the surrounding neighborhood.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Front Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Restore the Terrace	2,350,000
Project #2:	Rebuild Lakeview House	2,619,000
Project #3:	Restore the Playground/Hippodrome	892,000
Project #4:	Restore the Picnic Shelter	622,000
Project #5:	Construct an earthen berm or barrier between the park and the thruway	635,000
Project #6:	Construct site walls to reclaim views	3,411,000
Project #7:	Remove ice rink and restore original grading	2,000,000
Project #8:	Relocate tennis courts to locations outside of the park	486,000
Project #9:	Relocate the children's playground to the northern edge of the park, closer to the residential neighborhoods	141,000
Project #10:	Restore historic park entrance at Porter and Busti Avenues	1,525,000
Project #11:	Restore connections between Front Park and the rest of the park system	3,000
Project #12:	Reinterpret Fort Porter	3,665,000
Project #13:	Recreate Sheridan Drive along the southwest border of the park	828,000
Project #14:	Restore or interpret "The Bank" designed by Olmsted, depending on the final design of the Peace Bridge Plaza	21,000
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	73,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	51,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting, design and install lighting	1,397,000
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #19:	Restore maintain, or install drinking fountains	7,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	122,000
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads[5]	0
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	13,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	227,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	32,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**21,044,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**76,000**
Total for Front Park and Vicinity		**21,120,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in restoring the Busti entrance and Sheridan Drive.

[5] The cost of traffic calming on park roads is included in restoring Sheridan Drive.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Renovate and enhance the Casino building	4,281,000
Project #2:	Restore the Humboldt Basin	3,680,000
Project #3:	Restore the original Fountain as a splash pad	1,137,000
Project #4:	Restore the Lily Pool	941,000
Project #5:	Improve the historic Greenhouse area	2,447,000
Project #6:	Restore Picnic Grove	89,000
Project #7:	Redesign the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial within the loop area	122,000
Project #8:	Redesign the south Ring Road as a pedestrian pathway and relocate parking to Best Street	1,154,000
Project #9:	Install traffic calming and streetscape features on Fillmore Avenue	2,195,000
Project #10:	Redesign the southwest entrance of the park	0
Project #11:	Redesign the southeast entrance of the park	16,000
Project #12:	Consolidate and improve the playground on the south side of the park near the Humboldt Basin	177,000
Project #13:	Relocate the basketball courts and arena outside of the park	193,000
Project #14:	Relocate the tennis courts outside of the park	226,000
Project #15:	Interpret the remnant of the historical Humboldt Parkway at the former north entrance of the park	375,000
Project #16:	Rationalize and expand parking for the Museum and park users within and outside of the park	1,915,000
Project #17:	Redesign the school bus drop-off area to articulate the park road	1,352,000
Project #18:	Redesign the Rose Garden near the Science Museum	101,000
Project #19:	Design a circle at Best Street near the Kensington Expressway	1,613,000
Project #20:	Redesign the Best Street/Genesee Street intersection	1,615,000
Project #21:	Open West Parade to two-way traffic	3,000
Project #22:	Widen the sidewalks and add a vegetative buffer to the bridges that cross the Kensington Expressway	112,000
Project #23:	Deck over the section of the expressway by the park	8,064,000
Project #24:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	4,176,000
Project #25:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	88,000
Project #26:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,565,000
Project #27:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #28:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	12,000
Project #29:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	1,039,000
Project #30:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #31:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads[5]	0
Project #32:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	38,000
Project #33:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	340,000
Project #34:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	349,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**29,365,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**10,050,000**
Total for Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Vicinity		**39,415,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in other park projects.

[5] The cost of traffic calming on park roads is included in other park projects.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

South Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Enhance the Arboretum and botanical collection around the Conservatory	57,000
Project #2:	Repair the lake and improve water quality	7,579,000
Project #3:	Restore the Meadow	79,000
Project #4:	Repair the Ring Road	762,000
Project #5:	Replace the bridge	1,042,000
Project #6:	Discourage local traffic from using the park as a thoroughfare	414,000
Project #7:	Articulate the park's main entrance as a major gateway	528,000
Project #8:	Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians	4,000
Project #9:	Create a 'Father Baker Garden' where the unused bus loop is located	342,000
Project #10:	Construct the Boathouse	1,028,000
Project #11:	Enhance the appearance and utility of the concession structure	1,208,000
Project #12:	Integrate South Park with surrounding urban Lackawanna neighborhood	13,000
Project #13:	Connect South Park to the Greenway through trails along Ridge Road	8,000
Project #14:	Connect South Park to Tifft Street and the Tifft Nature Preserve	17,000
Project #15:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	131,000
Project #16:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	94,000
Project #17:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	2,942,000
Project #18:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #19:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	12,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	907,000
Project #21:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system[4]	0
Project #22:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	188,000
Project #23:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	21,000
Project #24:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	973,000
Project #25:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	150,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**17,145,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**1,354,000**
Total for South Park and Vicinity		**18,499,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

[4] The cost of restoring the park roads is included in the restoration of the ring road.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Cazenovia Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Renovate the Casino and the central Concourse	5,147,000
Project #2:	Remove parking and access road along the creek on south side of the park and provide new residential access from Potters Road	60,000
Project #3:	Construct a pedestrian bridge over Cazenovia Creek	376,000
Project #4:	Improve the pedestrian connections between the original park and its newer section	52,000
Project #5:	Restore the park's south entrance connecting to Red Jacket Parkway	104,000
Project #6:	Create an enhanced 'parking garden' at the entrance at Seneca Street	634,000
Project #7:	Stabilize the creek beds and shoreline to prevent erosion and to manage points of access	2,681,00
Project #8:	Develop overflow areas along the creek to absorb more flood waters	6,109,000
Project #9:	Reinterpret the former lake edge behind the Casino	526,000
Project #10:	Improve sports fields as required	289,000
Project #11:	Relocate non-historic facilities out of the historic section of the park	34,727,000
Project #12:	Connect Cazenovia Park's perimeter to the surrounding neighborhood	3,000
Project #13:	Connect Cazenovia Park to the Niagara River Greenway system	5,000
Project #14:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	358,000
Project #15:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	87,000
Project #16:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,936,000
Project #17:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[3]	0
Project #18:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	18,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	567,000
Project #20:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	476,000
Project #21:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	188,000
Project #22:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	31,000
Project #23:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	1,644,000
Project #24:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	136,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**54,072,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**2,082,000**
Total for Cazenovia Park and Vicinity		**56,154,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Riverside Park		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Reestablish the central Concourse	2,200,000
Project #2:	Reinterpret the Minnow Pools	463,000
Project #3:	Relocate and redesign the pedestrian bridge on its historic alignment	1,593,000
Project #4:	Establish a pier on the Niagara River where the new pedestrian bridge lands[3]	0
Project #5:	Reconstruct Hotaling Drive	899,000
Project #6:	Improve parking along Crowley Avenue	170,000
Project #7:	Improve existing playground	13,000
Project #8:	Rationalize and improve existing sports fields	339,000
Project #9:	Relocate senior center, swimming pool, and ice rink facilities	2,474,000
Project #10:	Enhance connections between the original Olmsted park and the newer section of the park	15,000
Project #11:	Develop safe connections between Riverside Park and the adjacent neighborhoods	118,000
Project #12:	Extend the park connections to the Niagara River Greenway and Washington and Towpath Parks	5,000
Project #13:	Restore park perimeter roads to create more of a park-like setting in the surrounding neighborhoods	168,000
Project #14:	Restore the park's historic furnishings	68,000
Project #15:	Identify areas in need of lighting; design and install lighting	1,312,000
Project #16:	Restore and maintain public restroom facilities[4]	0
Project #17:	Restore, maintain, or install drinking fountains	12,000
Project #18:	Rehabilitate Olmsted pathway system	176,000
Project #19:	Rehabilitate Olmsted roadway system	164,000
Project #20:	Introduce traffic calming measures at park roads	56,000
Project #21:	Install appropriate wayfinding and branding signage	22,000
Project #22:	Restore historic landscape patterns and plantings, especially perimeter vegetation	228,000
Project #23:	Manage drainage and erosion issues throughout the park	27,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**8,781,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**1,741,000**
Total for Riverside Park and Vicinity		**10,522,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Outside the Park are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of creating the pier is included in the relocation and redesign of the pedestrian bridge.

[4] The cost of restoring restrooms is included in the restoration of park buildings.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Parkways, Circles, and Small Spaces		Total Costs[1]
Project #1:	Porter Avenue	6,709,000
Project #2:	Richmond Avenue (The Avenue)	7,827,000
Project #3:	Bidwell Parkway	4,778,000
Project #4:	Chapin Parkway	3,955,000
Project #5:	Lincoln Parkway	3,716,000
Project #6:	McKinley Parkway	12,300,000
Project #7:	Red Jacket Parkway	1,789,000
Project #8:	West Ferry Circle	370,000
Project #9:	Colonial Circle (Bidwell Place)	370,000
Project #10:	Soldiers Circle (Soldiers Place)	370,000
Project #11:	Gates Circle (Chapin Place)	370,000
Project #12:	Agassiz Circle	571,000
Project #13:	McClellan Circle	370,000
Project #14:	McKinley Circle	370,000
Project #15:	Symphony Circle	370,000
Project #16:	Heacock Place	317,000
Project #17:	Days Park	15,000
Project #18:	Columbus and Perla Park (Prospect Park)	1,356,000
Within the Cultural Landscape[2]		**45,923,000**
Outside the Cultural Landscape		**0**
Total for Parkways, Circles, and Small Spaces		**45,923,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] Projects listed as Parkways, Circles, and Small Spaces are included in the Within the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

Appendix B | Individual Project Costs

Connections and Extensions		Total Costs[1]
Project #E1:	Humboldt Parkway	24,876,000
Project #E2:	Jewett Parkway	1,712,000
Project #E3:	Fillmore Avenue South	12,300,000
Project #E4:	South System Connector[1]	5,222,000
Project #E5:	Bailey Avenue	2,397,000
Project #E6:	The Bank[3]	0
Project #E7:	Best-North	9,039,000
Project #E8:	South System Connector[2]	6,592,000
Project #E9:	Days Park Spur	735,000
Project #E10:	Fillmore Avenue North	8,561,000
Project #E11:	Jewett Parkway Extension	935,000
Project #E12:	Smith Street	2,137,000
Project #E13:	Larkin Circle	571,000
Project #E14:	Fillmore/Jewett Circle	571,000
Project #E15:	South Park Avenue	7,534,000
Project #E16:	Central Terminal Spur	1,789,000
Project #E17:	Scajaquada Shoreline Trail	1,921,000
Project #E18:	Niagara Street	7,492,000
Project #E19:	Niagara Street Upper	11,942,000
Project #E20:	Niagara Street Lower	11,629,000
Project #E21:	Forest Avenue	6,390,000
Project #E22:	Fuhrman Boulevard	13,933,000
Project #E23:	Fuhrman Boulevard Connector (Ridge Road)	3,853,000
Project #E24:	Tifft Street	9,668,000
Project #E25:	Hopkins Street	4,184,000
Within the Cultural Landscape		**0**
Outside the Cultural Landscape[2]		**155,983,000**
Total for Extensions		**155,983,000**

[1] Total costs are in constant 2008 dollars and include hard construction costs (labor and materials) times a 20 percent contingency factor, times a 12 percent multiplier for engineering, design, legal and other fees.

[2] All Extensions are included in the Outside the Cultural Landscape subtotal.

[3] The cost of restoring The Bank is included in the restoration of Front Park.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The System Plan for the Buffalo Olmsted Park System was possible because of the consistent efforts of a large number of people over a seven-year period. The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Board of Trustees initiated the planning process and has provided leadership throughout. The management of the process was delegated to the Long Range Planning Committee with support from the Olmsted Advisory Council, and the Conservancy staff. Both the City of Buffalo and Erie County participated in the formative stages of plan development and in the reviews throughout the process. The WNY legislative delegation members were also involved through briefings and formal reviews of the plan in process. Their comments have been invaluable as the plan has been aligned with the needs of all its constituencies.

The Conservancy is also grateful for the support and participation of the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council, Delaware North Companies, and Doug Blonsky of the Central Park Conservancy for contributing their consulting expertise.

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

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- Jeffrey Tower, Tree Care Technician

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The Urban Design Project, School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Project Directors

- Robert Shibley, AIA, AICP
- Lynda Schneekloth, ASLA

Project Manager

- Elizabeth Cheteny, AICP

Staff Associates

- Jason Babcock-Stiner
- Sean Brodfuehrer
- Prasanta Bhattarai
- Prabhat Dahal
- Dattatreya Das
- Jajean Rose-Burney
- Nishu Sinha
- William Smith, Jr.
- Creighton Randall
- Punnen Thomas
- Taryn Weaver
- Yi (Simon) Zhu

Technical Writing

- David Herzberg
- Erin Hatton

Center for Computational Research (CCR)

- Thomas Furlani, Director
- Martins Innus
- Adam Koniak
- Adrian Levesque

Trowbridge and Wolf, Landscape Architects, LLP

Principal
- Peter Trowbridge

Associates
- Thomas Brown
- Noah Demarest
- Bret LeBleu
- Kimberly Michaels
- Olivia Shea

Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Engineers, PC

Principal
- Mark V. Mistretta, RLA, ASLA

Associates
- Arthur V. Traver III, RLA, ASLA
- Warit Silavisesrith, GISP
- Gregory M. Robinson, RLA, ASLA
- Robert J. Frazer, RLA, ASLA

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- Buffalo Rugby
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- Colonial Circle/Richmond
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- Days Park
- Delaware Park Dogs
- Delaware Park Rose Garden
- Delaware Park Steering Committee
- Delaware Park Women's Golf
- Delaware Seniors Golf Club
- Delaware Soccer
- Ferry Circle/Richmond
- Front Park
- Gates Circle
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- Girl Scout Council of Buffalo and Erie County
- Goin' South
- Greater Buffalo Track Club/Fleet Feet
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- King Urban Life Center
- Landmark Society
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- McKinley High School Career and Technical Education – Horticulture Department
- McKinley Parkway Homeowners' Association
- Medaille College
- Medaille College Lacrosse
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Block Club
- New Millennium Group
- Parkside Community Association
- Partners for a Livable Western New York
- Police Athletic League
- Porter Avenue/Parkway
- Preservation Coalition
- Riverside Park
- Riverside Park Community Association
- Shakespeare in Delaware Park
- Soldiers Circle
- South Buffalo Alive
- South Park Golf Club
- South Park Women's Golf
- Symphony Circle
- United Neighborhoods
- West Side Community Collaborative

"A park is a work of art, designed to produce certain effects upon the mind of men."

– Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.

Congratulations to the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the entire Buffalo-Niagara Region

The System Plan represents a consensus about the vision, administration, maintenance and capital improvements necessary to manage Buffalo's Olmsted Park System well into the 21st century.

This plan could not have been possible without funding from

The John R. Oishei Foundation

We salute you and support your efforts.

David Colligan of Watson, Bennett, Colligan, Johnson & Schechter is proud to have participated in the development of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System's **The System Plan.** The Watson Bennett firm is honored to be a part of this extremely important and worthwhile community endeavor. Watson Bennett legal services include: Corporate Law, Estate Planning, Personal Injury and Real Estate.

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First edition printing of The System Plan was underwritten by Watson, Bennett, Colligan, Johnson & Schechter, LLP

IMAGE

Below:

These children are looking out at the lake in Delaware Park. The Vaux-designed settees and bandstand can be seen in the photo. (Source – Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.)

BUFFALO
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The Urban Design Project
School of Architecture and Planning

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