

NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY COMMISSION  
APPLICATION

Project Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Consultation and Review Form*

Type of Review Required:   X   Mandatory Consultation  
           Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement

**PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION**

Name:           BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY            
Mailing Address:           PARKSIDE LODGE - 84 PARKSIDE AVE            
State:           NEW YORK           Zip Code:           14214            
Federal Id#           22-2720927           Charities Registration #           15-08-95          

**PROJECT TYPE**

Check all that apply:   X   Environmental      X   Cultural/Heritage      X   Land or Water Public Access  
           Cultural                                 Trail                        X   Educational/Interpretive  
  X   Waterfront or Land Based Development      X   Signage  
  X   Recreational                                 Other

Project Name:           SOUTH PARK LAKE - AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION            
Location:           SOUTH PARK            
Site Address:           2441 SOUTH PARK            
State:           NEW YORK           Zip Code:           14220            
Minor Civil Division(s):           CITY OF BUFFALO            
County:           ERIE          

Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other):           CONTRACTED MANAGER            
          AND OPERATOR OF THE BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS SYSTEM FOR THE CITY OF BUFFALO.

**AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL**

Name: STEPHANIE CROCKATT Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Business Address: PARKSIDE LODGE - 84 PARKSIDE AVE

State: NEW YORK Zip Code: 14214

Telephone Number: (716) 838-1249 X16 Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: (716) 835-1300

E-Mail Address: stephanie@bfloparks.org

**PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT**

Name: BRIAN DOLD Title: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ADVOCACY

Organization/Firm: BUFFALO OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

Business Address: PARKSIDE LODGE - 84 PARKSIDE AVE

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South Park

Ecosystem Restoration Project

11/16/15

**Project Narrative** – The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is partnering with the City of Buffalo and the United State Army Corp of Engineers on the South Park Lake Ecosystem Restoration project. The project is being conducted under the authority of Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (WRDA '96), Public Law 104-303. The identified problem at the project is almost a century of plant growth in a pond with limited hydrology; excessive erosion; accumulated nutrients from natural and anthropogenic sources that facilitate eutrophication and systemic degradation of the South Park Lake aquatic and wetlands ecosystem, including shoreline and near-shore habitats. South Park Lake lies within South Park, a 155-acre multiple use park, which is part of the City of Buffalo Olmsted Parks system and a local, regional, and nationally recognized urban cultural and natural resource. The lake was constructed in the early 1900s to provide key ecological/recreational functions in an otherwise urban industrial/residential landscape, and is one of only three lakes in the City of Buffalo. The lake presently supports relatively shallow water, elevated seasonal water temperatures, a high BOD, low dissolved oxygen, and an overall low functioning state that is a fraction of its potential value to fish, wildlife, and residents of the area.

The proposed South Park Lake restoration project would restore habitat, ecosystem structure and function to approximately 24 acres of lacustrine and palustrine habitat, facilitate recovery of flora and fauna diversity, promote food chain redevelopment, and return functioning aquatic and wetland resources to fish, wildlife, and residents of the City of Buffalo and the neighboring City of Lackawanna. The geographic scope of the proposed project encompasses the 24-acre South Park Lake and shoreline, the inlet drainage swale, depressional wetlands, and immediate near-shore areas. A number of alternatives were considered during the course of the investigation including ways to reduce sediment loads, maintain existing aquatic and wetland habitat, and various methods for removing existing accumulated sediment. It was determined that removing accumulated sediment to original contours will provide a useful project life of over 100 years. Various levels of dredging were investigated to determine cost effectiveness. Major project components of the preferred alternative include removal of debris from shoreline and lake areas with disposal off-site, dredging of an estimated 100,000 cubic yards of accumulated organic matter, mineral based sediment, and aquatic vegetation, and transport of dredged material to suitable upland disposal site for re-use or to an approved confined disposal facility (i.e., Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) #4). Through detailed investigations, it was determined that sediment removal was feasible and that the most cost effective method would be to drain the lake and use land based equipment to excavate the sediment, load it into trucks, and haul it to nearby sediment placement areas.

In addition, the project would include removal and replacement of existing lake outlet structure(s), establishment of target shoreline and littoral zone slopes and grades, grading of wetland and riparian buffer areas, installation of bioengineering measures along the shoreline, and creation of shallow gradient points of public access to the lake. Restoration techniques would include application of native topsoil, planting, seeding, and mulching of shoreline, wetland, and riparian areas, installation of waterfowl nesting boxes, snags for fish habitat, and other appropriate habitat enhancement features, fish stocking, introduction of aquatic plant management measures, and establishment of nuisance wildlife deterrent measures. All disturbed soils areas will be restored to pre-existing conditions and seeded.

To date, Chapters 1-4 of the Report have been completed, including documentation of existing conditions, and formulation of plans and alternatives. \$342,671.00 has been spent to date on Study development. To complete the study, prior to construction, the work remaining includes evaluation of alternative plans and completion of the NEPA environmental assessment of the recommended plan.

### **Principles of the Niagara River Greenway Plan**

- Excellence – every project undertaken by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy is done with excellence. Within the scope of the project would be securing a professional project team and utilizing only the best in construction materials and methods in completing construction.
- Sustainability / Ecological Integrity – the project would be executed with the agreed upon best practices in managing the landscape. The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy has a commitment to sustainable practices.
- Accessibility / Connectivity – this project represents a key node in the South Buffalo community and Greenway focus area within the City of Buffalo.
- Public Well-Being – the project is an important investment in a strong working-class community building on strong assets and ensuring their viability for future generations.
- Restoration – this principle represents the cornerstone of *The Buffalo Olmsted Parks System: Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, as one of the 7 Guiding Principles, and is in the forefront of everything done by the Conservancy.
- Authenticity / Celebration – The investment in South Park would be in celebration of the extensive Olmsted legacy of this region.
- Partnerships/ Community based – The BOPC has work extensively with both the City of Buffalo and the local community stakeholders in developing a vision for the restoration of South Park as a component of the *Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Additionally, for this project, connections with the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, Buffalo Niagara

Riverkeeper and US Army Corp of Engineers have provide valuable partnership and advise in working through the steps required to address the issues of South Park Lake.

**Project Budget:**

Planning*	\$ 492,671
Construction**	\$ 3,200,000 (Estimate)
Acquisition	\$ 0
Administration	\$ 327,500
Operation and Maintenance / Year**	\$ 37,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 4,057,171

*\*\$342, 671.00 in funds have already been secured for development if the Ecosystem Restoration Study. Matching funds can be leveraged for the completions of the Study through a 50/50 cost share agreement.*

*\*\* Construction funds will be will not be a part of this intitial NRG request and will be implemented at a later date under a federal/ non-federal 70/30 cost share agreement.*

*\*\*\* The project will be operated and maintained through contractual agreement, by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy through the City of Buffalo.*

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy’s vision for the Greenway has been incorporated into the development of the *Buffalo Olmsted Parks System Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The *21<sup>st</sup> Century Plan* looks to place the Parks System within the green infrastructure of the city, restoring and building off of the assets brought to the region by Joseph Ellicott, Frederick Law Olmsted and the Niagara River as Buffalo’s reason for being. Ecosystem restoration of historic park features was incorporated into the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Plan* as a part of the public process of the plan. This process included 21 meetings of the BOPC Advisory Council, 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. During this same 5 year period 6 public meetings were held throughout the city as well as 15 meetings of the BOPC Long Range Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees, who approved the

plan. Final design plans developed as a part of this project will be vetted with the City of Buffalo Department of Public Works and the Community prior to construction. Following the construction of this project the BOPC will continue to engage local residents on volunteer plantings and other enhancements at South Park as a part of our ongoing role as park stewards.

The South Park Lake Ecosystem Restoration project will be coordinated through the NEPA process to comply with any and all SEQRA regulations relevant to the project. All necessary study of existing conditions will be a part of the initial technical site analysis of the project.

### Project Schedule

#### Spring 2016

- Continue study process evaluating alternative plans and completing the NEPA environmental assessment of the recommended plan. (12 month process)

#### Fall 2016

- Begin coordination of efforts with local gov't representatives to prioritize project for federal funding

#### Spring 2017

- Review completed Report with local gov't representatives and coordinate funding for construction.

#### Spring 2018

- Construction as weather permits.

SOUTH PARK LAKE  
PROJECT AREA MAP  
NOV. 2015

PROJECT AREA



4800 ft

**SOUTH PARK LAKE**  
**PARK MAP**  
NOV. 2015



SOUTH PARK LAKE



# The Olmsted City

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

Edited by Robert G. Shibley and Lynda H. Schneekloth

**DEVELOPED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF:**

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy  
City of Buffalo  
County of Erie

**DEVELOPED WITH THE CONSULTING SUPPORT OF:**

The Urban Design Project, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

**WITH**

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

**WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM:**

The Center for Computation Research, University at Buffalo, State University of New York  
Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council  
Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts

**WITH GENEROUS FUNDING FROM:**

The John R. Oishei Foundation

**WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM:**

Baird Foundation  
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo  
Former Erie County Legislator Judy Fisher  
Paul and Niscah Koessler  
Erie County Legislator Lynn Marinelli  
Corinne and Victor Rice

Jake Schneider, Schneider Design Architects  
Watson, Bennett, Colligan, Johnson & Schechter, LLP  
Margaret L. Wendt Foundation  
City of Buffalo  
County of Erie

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

**The Urban Design Project**  
School of Architecture and Planning



**University at Buffalo**  
The State University of New York

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**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.

# —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 Tiff Street and the Tiff 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



BUFFALO, NY



ERIE COUNTY

\*These projects are not numbered on the map.

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.)

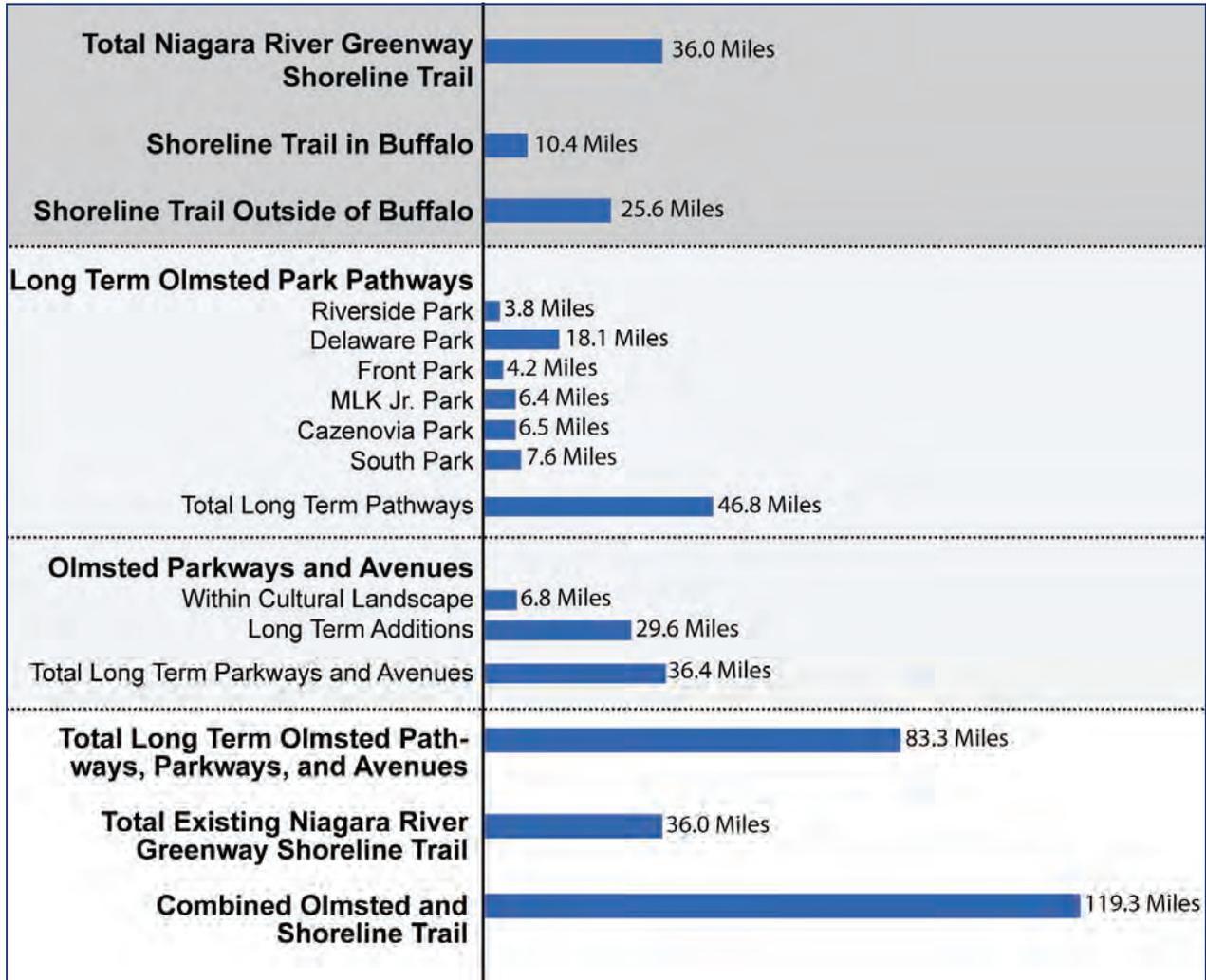
The lake in South Park has suffered from a lack of maintenance and needs dredging.

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.



# Part Five: Niagara River Greenway and the Buffalo Olmsted Park and Parkway System



## Seamlessly Connected Systems

The existing Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail is approximately 36 miles in length. The draft proposals in the Buffalo Olmsted Park and Parkway System 20 Year Management and Restoration Plan show the Parks having 46.8 miles of pathways in the long term. The 20 Year Plan shows the Parkway and Avenue System, with fully developed pathways, trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes, to total 36.4 miles

in the long term. Integrating the Olmsted and Greenway System expands the Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail approximately 83.3 miles, to a total of more than 119.3 miles of Greenway that winds through the City of Buffalo.