



# Niagara River Greenway NEWSFLASH

Spring 2024



*The Niagara River Greenway has been hard at work lately; we have been engaging and supporting 10 grassroots community groups in WNY, helping them with clean ups, bike rides, walks, pollinator gardens, and more!*

## Spring Clean Ups

Our spring clean ups were very successful this year! Our Adopt-a-Trail groups held 15 clean ups, picking up over 3,800 pounds of trash. Many of these groups have been in action and adopting the Shoreline Trail for a few years now, such as the Rotary clubs involved in the Niagara River Greenway Rotary Steering Committee. However, we welcomed three new groups to the fun this year!

Dupont / Local Steelworks 6992 adopted a 0.9 mile section of the Shoreline Trail from Aqua Lane Park to Vulcan Street, the Canisius University Rotaract Club adopted a 0.4 mile section from Erie Street to Hanover Street, and a cohort of local businesses, government officials, organizations, and individuals adopted a 2.0 mile section on the Niagara Street Cycle Track, running from Hamilton Street to Hampshire Street.



The cohort on Niagara Street, called the Niagara Street Adopt-a-Block Collaborative, aims to keep the street and accompanying cycle track clean and inviting. They held their first major clean up in March, with 60 volunteers coming out to help, amassing 4 large piles of garbage and creating a clean stretch from the Peace Bridge to Amherst Street. This major clean up sparked Tim Hortons to implement stricter litter management on their Niagara Street property and Ellicott Development maintenance teams to be tasked with a weekly clean up along their properties.

## Native Pollinator Gardens & Tree Plantings

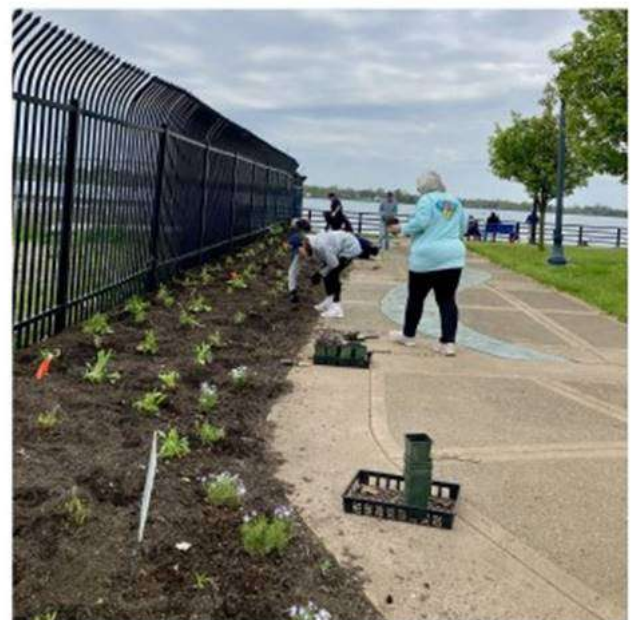
Our Adopt-a-Trail and grassroots community groups haven't just been out picking up trash, but also beautifying their communities. This spring, 365 native plants and 53 trees were planted in just 3 work day sessions in the Niagara River Greenway focus area.

Canisius University's Rotaract Club joined with the Rotary Club of Buffalo to create a native plant garden along their section of the trail. The students helped prep the garden ahead of time with trash pickups, then designed and implemented the garden with the help of Buffalo landscape architect, Brian Dold.

The Buffalo Sunrise Rotary planted their own pollinator garden at Towpath Park. They made quick work with 9 volunteers, planting 325 native plants in 1.5 hours!

The Grand Island Nature Alliance, a grassroots community group on Grand Island, spent Arbor Day planting trees with the New York State Parks & Historic Sites along the Shoreline Trail at West River. NY State Parks gave them a brief lesson on how to properly plant a tree, then they got to work contributing to NY's 25 million trees by 2033 goal.

A multi-year plan is currently underway to transform the West Side Rowing Club's property, with implementation of a new pollinator garden area beginning on June 29th. Phase 1 will



include the installation of 4,000 square feet of cardboard and 70 cubic yards of mulching, followed by a visioning session with Brian Dold and other experts. The goal is to envision and design a world-class pollinator area along the Niagara River Greenway.

## Creating a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative

One grassroots community group we support is resident-powered and located in Niagara Falls, aiming to make their community a better place to live, work, and play. The Creating a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative focuses on improving their community in three areas: healthy food, healthy people, and healthy behaviors.

“Walk with Us” is an event that culminates the three of these aspects into one day with a wellness walk starting at the Niagara Falls Underground Heritage Center. The focus is on improving mental health, physical health, and social connection. Participants are offered healthy snacks before the walk begins, then take part in a 2 mile walk along the Upper Gorge Trail.

The Niagara River Greenway is excited to partner with Creating a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative. Promoting a healthier lifestyle to create a more vibrant community is our goal and we were thrilled to be able to engage over 200 community members at this event! We can't wait to continue our partnership to expand outdoor wellness programming.

*We hope to continue to encourage community and school groups to develop healthy activities on the Greenway and through our Blue Fund Grant, sponsor programs to help grassroots groups get started in an effort to promote active outdoor recreation on the parks and trails of Western New York.*

