

Niagara River Greenway Commission Consultation and Review Form

Date of Submittal:

Project Registration Number (*office use only*):

Type of Review Required (please check one):

Mandatory Consultation for proposals seeking Greenway Funding

Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement for proposals not seeking Greenway Funding

PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name:	City of Niagara Falls
Mailing Address:	745 Main Street
State:	NY
Zip Code:	14301
Federal ID#:	16-6002548
Charities Registration #:	N/A

PROJECT TYPE (Please check only ONE)

Trail Development / Improvement

Interpretation / Cultural Monuments

Ecosystem / Riparian Habitat Restoration

Stewardship

Niagara River Greenway Placemaking / Public Access / Wayfinding

FUNDING COMMITTEE

Host Community Standing Committee

Ecological Standing Committee

Buffalo and Erie County Standing Committee

State Parks Standing Committee

Unsure at this time / N/A

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED

\$3,054,067.80

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES

Source	Amount
<u>None</u>	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name:	<u>Transformational Investment in City of Niagara Falls Community Green Spaces, Water and Ecological Resources- featuring Hyde Park</u>
Location (include GPS coordinates if possible):	See attached Attachment A , Project List for individual projects Jayne – SBL 161.18-1-63 Gill Creek – SBL 159.12-1-3 Hyde Park – SBL 144.20-1-2 91 st Street – SBL 161.14-4-1 Garden Ave Pocket Park - SBL 144.31-1-49 Black Creek – SBL 161.14-3-44.11 Nor-Lock – SBL 144.40-2-19 Gluck – SBL 144.56-1-24 Liberty – SBL 144.73-2-65 Stephenson – 160.20-1-1 70 th Street – 160.15-2-9
Project Site Address:	Jayne – 8600 Joliet Avenue Gill Creek – 3085 Niagara Street Hyde Park – 3200 Pine Avenue 91 st Street – 9100 South Military Road Beech Avenue – 1300 Beech Avenue Black Creek – 9501 Colvin Boulevard Nor-Lock – 2330 Lockport Street Gluck – 1550 Weston Avenue Liberty – 1010 20 th Street Stephenson – 7406 Stephenson Avenue 70 th Street – 540 70 th Street
State:	NY
Zip Code:	Jayne 14304 Gill Creek 14303 Hyde Park 14301 91 st Street 14304 Beech Avenue 14305 Black Creek 14304 Nor-Lock 14305 Gluck – 14305 Liberty – 14301 Stephenson – 14304 70 th Street – 14304
Minor Civil Division(s):	City of Niagara Falls
County:	Niagara
Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other):	City of Niagara Falls owns all the properties listed in this application.

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Name:	<u>Robert Restaino</u>
Title:	Mayor
Business Address:	745 Main Street
State:	NY
Zip Code:	14301
Work Number:	716-286-4320
Cell Number:	716-804-4610
E-Mail Address:	Robert.restaino@niagarafallsny.gov

PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

Name:	<u>Kevin A Forma</u>
Title:	Director of Planning
Organization / Firm:	City of Niagara Falls
Business Address:	745 Main Street, Room 305, Niagara Falls
State:	NY
Zip Code:	14301
Work Number:	716-286-4477
Cell Number:	718-956-9630
E-Mail Address:	Kevin.forma@naigarafallsny.gov

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please attach material which responds to the following six items in the order that they are presented.

1. In a brief paragraph, describe the project and its purpose, how and when it will be accomplished, and why it is important.

At 530 acres, Hyde Park, in the city of Niagara Falls, is the largest urban park in New York State west of Manhattan and centerpiece of the Niagara Falls Park System. It includes an assortment of community recreational resources, and Hyde Park Lake, a section of the ecologically crucial Gill Creek, whose headwaters are on the Tuscarora Nation and runs from New York Power Authority's (NYPA) reservoir to the Niagara River. Ecological degradation, water quality concerns, limited accessibility to park and water resources, and deteriorating park facilities have greatly reduced the ability of the community to utilize and benefit from this collection of important resources.

This project launches a transformational initiative to enhance Niagara Falls City Parks, including all aspects of Hyde Park- from functionality, community accessibility, and aesthetic appeal to ecological resilience and sustainability. The proposed work over the next three years includes advancing design of 3 priority ecosystem restoration projects, and investments in ecological stewardship of existing green infrastructure and living shoreline projects in Hyde Park, water quality monitoring and response to Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) events, community engagement, and required upgrades or replacement to legacy park facilities across the City of Niagara Falls to continue to meet the needs of the community now and in the future.

The municipal parks of Niagara Falls are an integral part of the City's infrastructure and require significant upgrades and repairs due to years of continued disinvestment. These legacy facilities have outlasted their useful lives and require important upgrades or replacement to continue to meet the needs of the community. The individual projects and their costs have been included as Attachment A, to this application (See project list). The City intends to competitively bid for the work to complete the projects, which may include multiple contractors depending upon the scope of the projects and skills of the respondents. Each of the parks provides the community with a myriad of recreational activities, however, Hyde Park, not only provides recreational activities for all Niagara Falls residents but is also a local and regional draw.

2. Referring to the Niagara River Greenway Plan, clearly document and describe how the proposed project will advance the Niagara River Greenway vision including the goals, principles, and criteria that define that vision.

The proposal is true to advancing the vision of the Niagara River Greenway Plan, satisfying the principles, goals and criteria that define that vision, including, but not limited to:

Excellence

The proposed improvements at the parks throughout the City of Niagara Falls will ensure residents and visitors are provided with amenities and safe recreation opportunities. The design of the new living shoreline restoration projects will be completed in congruence with the history of success of BNW's Living Shorelines projects. BNW's Young Environmental Leaders Program (YELP) has a 10-year legacy of excellence in experiential education and field-based learning. The City and BNW are committed to ensuring that this project is completed with excellence. These restored and enhanced amenities will serve the residents and

visitors to Niagara Falls, improving overall quality of life and the experiences visitors have in Western New York.

Restoration

One of the key strategies outlined in the recently completed Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan is shoreline restoration in several areas along Gill Creek and Hyde Park Lake. The design of the 3 priority restoration sites will utilize nature-based solutions to recreate a healthy and higher-functioning shoreline environment. When implementation funding is secured in the future and the project designs come to fruition, outcomes will include improved habitat, reduced nutrient loading, and improved water quality. Adaptive Management of completed restoration sites through RestoreCorps and connection of NFHS students to restoration efforts extend the impacts of the in-ground restoration work.

Celebration

This project will be designed to celebrate the park spaces and natural resources that make the City of Niagara Falls unique. As beneficiaries of the park improvements and future environmental restoration, residents and visitors to the park spaces around the City will enjoy the new and improved amenities and associated benefits from spending time in green spaces.

Sustainability

Every effort will be made to ensure that the priority living shoreline site, and future restoration sites as outlined in the master plan, incorporate design concepts that have proven successful in other living shoreline restoration sites. The goal for all Waterkeeper's living shoreline sites is to transform degraded shorelines into a more natural, resilient, and self-repairing environment. We have successfully accomplished this at several locations within the Niagara River Greenway, one of which is located along Hyde Park Lake, south of the proposed living shoreline sites discussed in this proposal. The lessons learned about sustainability and plant establishment from the previous Hyde Park Lake living shoreline project will be applied to the proposed project areas. Adaptive Management of completed restoration sites through RestoreCorps and connection of NFHS students to restoration efforts extend the sustainability of the in-ground restoration work. In addition, to support continued efforts to address climate change, certain structures are being removed from existing floodplains which will help to alleviate adverse conditions in the floodplains.

Authenticity

Authenticity of place can be reinforced through the celebration of native flora and creating meaningful experiences for people to engage with their natural heritage. The support of the combination of initiatives within this proposal touches on all these things. Improved parks and trail connections will showcase the City's vast park system and will provide opportunities to re-create connections between people and their natural heritage. The design of the living shoreline site will make progress towards returning degraded spaces to their authentic ecological condition. Adaptive Management of completed restoration sites through RestoreCorps and connection of NFHS students to these resources create an authentic sense of place and cultivate feelings of ownership and community.

Accessibility

The Gill Creek masterplan specifies improved connectivity and access to surrounding regional assets and trail systems. Enhancements will facilitate further amplification of already-growing visitor presence along the shoreline in designated public access points, including a kayak launch, while also ensuring shoreline protection measures are successful and sustained. The City, has developed a plan to significantly improve the conditions of the various parks as part of this proposal. These upgrades will help ensure and improve access to a variety of recreational opportunities for all City residents.

Ecological Integrity

The living shoreline restoration projects along Gill Creek and Hyde Park Lake will have a transformative effect on Gill Creek, which in effect, will lead to a healthier Niagara River system.

Partnerships

The City of Niagara Falls has partnered with BNW on many planning and design efforts in the past and this project will be a continuation of an already productive relationship. Additional partners and stakeholders, including the Greenway Commission will be pulled in as relevant during the completion of the proposed work. Additionally, strong partnerships with the local schools will be leveraged in support of the YELP program, and community connections will be continued through the RestoreCorps program.

Public Well-Being

This project seeks to improve degraded park amenities, make progress to restore ecosystem services and address water quality concerns in Gill Creek and Hyde Park Lake, and educate youth. Safe and functional amenities within the City's Parks will improve the ability for the public to enjoy these important community resources. Frequent harmful algal blooms in Hyde Park Lake pose a public health crisis and the design of priority living shoreline projects will make progress towards addressing these water quality issues. Altered landscape management practices and proposed shoreline restoration will help alleviate water quality concerns and make the waterbody safer for public access and enjoyment. The restoration of the numerous City parks included project is aimed to achieve and promote physical and mental wellness of a large segment of the community. These investments will help to promote and spark revitalization and renewal in the surrounding community. The proposed projects will advance the Niagara River Greenway vision by creating a positive economic impact through attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, and creating a sense of place that fosters social interaction and civic pride.

Community Based

Community involvement will occur through BNW's RestoreCorps and YELP Programs. The City's program was a direct result from community input and has received numerous letters of support, which are included as Attachment B incorporated as part of this application.

Connectivity

The Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan considered strategic and holistic restoration efforts along Gill Creek as they are related to each other. The restoration design included in this proposal advances the top priority sites identified through the plan, ensuring that restoration projects and area improvements are linked to one another and contribute to a larger whole. Connecting community to these resources is fundamental to this project. In addition, the masterplan identifies links and connections to surrounding regional assets and trail systems.

3. Define the budget for the total proposed project and include costs for the following:

Project Component	Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (2026)	Year 3 (2027)	TOTAL
Ecosystem + Public Access Design and Engineering	\$350,000	\$150,000	-	\$500,000
RestoreCorps + Water Quality Monitoring	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
YELP	\$55,000	-	-	\$55,000
Park Restoration	\$2,439,067.80	-	-	\$2,439,067.80
TOTAL	\$2,864,067.80	\$170,000	\$20,000	\$3,054,067.80

Identify all sources of funding and the amount of funding expected from each source. Identify and quantify funds that are already on hand or have been allocated for the proposed project. Explain how the project will be operated and maintained.

There are currently no funds allocation for design or construction activities. After completion, the Park will be operated and maintained by the City Department of Public Works.

4. Describe the measures taken at the local level to gain community and government support for this project (hearings, petitions, public surveys, resolutions of support or other methods). If this project has been cited or described in a local planning document or some equivalent thereof, attach copies of that documentation highlighting the sections that are relevant to the proposed project. Describe the role of municipal agencies, stakeholder groups, consultants, volunteers or others who will be involved in the proposed project.

In 2023, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW) led the development of the Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan which looked at existing conditions along the waterway and included robust community and partner engagement, ultimately resulting in a prioritized list of restoration projects to improve the health of Gill Creek. This proposal focuses on advancing the design/engineering for three areas identified as top priorities in the Restoration Plan. Design of public access features is also incorporated

in the scope of this work. BNW will lead this work in partnership with a qualified consultant and will work closely with the City of Niagara Falls and other stakeholders to ensure the work is in alignment with the greater vision for Hyde Park. This project proposes community engagement with the Niagara Falls City School District to be planned with input from a partner NFHS teacher, school superintendent Mark Laurie,

and the City of Niagara Falls. Water quality monitoring and adaptive landscape management of restoration sites will be carried out in partnership with the City of Niagara Falls.

The current plan for park facilities improvements was developed through an extensive survey of municipal assets, as well as in direct response to concerns from the community related to the improvement of the assets listed in the attached document. The survey was performed by municipal employees who will continue to monitor the condition of the municipal assets.

5. Describe and document the environmental setting and existing conditions at the proposed project site. If you are not the owner of the property include a letter(s) or resolution(s) evidencing support for the project by the owner. Provide photographs, conceptual plans and drawings that show the site as it presently exists and how the site will change with the addition of the proposed project. Describe how your project will comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The existence of wetlands, significant upland and aquatic habitats, and plant or animal species that are classified as rare, threatened, or endangered should be noted. Explain how such natural resources will be protected and/or enhanced. Cite any relevant project-related studies.

Gill Creek has undergone extensive modifications related to heavy industrial, commercial, and residential development. These modifications have negatively impacted natural stream function, habitat, water quality, and quality of life for nearby residents. According to the New York State (NYS) Department of Environmental Conservation's Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List, "aquatic life support and recreational uses in Gill Creek are impaired and aesthetics are significantly impacted by various toxic and other contaminants from historic/past discharges, contaminated sediments, municipal/industrial inputs and other urban nonpoint sources to the stream" (2014). Hyde Park Lake is a 484-acre impoundment formed by a dam in Gill Creek at the southern end of Hyde Park. Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's Riverwatch Program has confirmed Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in Hyde Park Lake nearly every year since 2017.

The algal blooms, nutrient loading, and other pollutants exert negative impacts on aquatic life, recreational uses, and economic development within the Niagara Falls community and can create potential human health risks associated with recreation choices. Improving the health of the water and nearshore area within Hyde Park Lake is critical to the restoration of significant ecosystem services that support fish and wildlife, clean drinking water, community health and enjoyment of resources, and a vibrant economy.

See Attachment C photo documentation of the current conditions.

6. Please attach the proposed project timeline, identify any relevant milestones, and provide an estimated date for project completion/opening. If funded, it is expected that the project sponsor or point of contact will notify the Commission of the project opening date as it nears completion. *(Note: This addition to the application was made September 2018.)*

Solicitation estimated completion October 2024

Construction estimated completion Spring/Summer 2025

Attachment A
Project List

Park	Project Description	Project Description 2	Cost
Jayne	Demo Old Restroom		17,000.00
	Basketball hoops and posts		7,800.00
Gill Creek	Replace metal roof on utilities building		20,500.00
	Swing replacemetnt (2)		438.00
	Repair playsurface		2,500.00
Hyde	Demo Dock and Building		25,500.00
	Metal roof replacements		
		Centennial Shelter	21,500.00
		Oasis Shelter	21,500.00
		Shelter C	11,000.00
		Shelter D	11,000.00
		Duck Island Comfort Stattion	21,500.00
		Utility Building - Bowling Green	8,500.00
		Comfort Station Little League	25,000.00
		Duke Center Shelter	17,000.00
		Comfort Station Splash Pad	21,500.00
	Roof Repairs		
		Splash Pad Shelter	4,000.00
		Storage Building (Animal Shelter)	200,000.00
	Replace Lifeguard Shed - Pool		5,000.00
	Storage Building (Animal Shelter) doors		50,000.00
	Replace Duke Center Windows		8,000.00
	Replace/Repair Play Surface - Inclusive Playground		40,000.00
	Remove and relocated old Marquee Sign and Install new sign - Sal Maglie		112,000.00
	Install New Picnic Shelter		20,000.00
	Repurpose portion of bowling green to Roller/ice rink		110,000.00
	Repair Existing BowlingGreen		50,000.00
	Repurpose tennis courts for pickleball		55,000.00
	Repurpose tennis courts for basketball		24,000.00
	Repair remiaing tennis courts		15,000.00
	Drainage, infrastructure, and utilities		100,000.00
	New Scoreboard - Sal Maglie		150,000.00
	Repair beach volleyball courts		5,000.00
	Repair Swings		219.00
	Inclusionary Swing		4,200.00
	Spin and sit		12,900.00
	Play surface (4 Pods Non-inclusive)		7,000.00
91st Street	Demo and repair of playground		35,000.00
	New swings		7,400.00
	New Roof on utilities building		24,000.00
	Walk Bridge (2)	2,700.00	5,400.00
	New Playsurface		3,500.00
Garden Ave Pocket Park	Gazebo		35,000.00
Black Creek	Repairs		100,000.00
	Remove interpretaive panel frame and install picnic shelter		
	Tree removal	72,000.00	
	New slide	7,200.00	
	Playsurface	3,000.00	
	Sky Rail	10,400.00	
Norlock			250,000.00
	ADA Chin bar	4,700.00	
	Baby swings (2)	574.00	
	Swing Replacement	438.00	
	Clean and repair adult fitness equipment	3,750.00	
	Remove old foundations (both sides of adult fitness area)	3,750.00	7,500.00
	New perimeter treatment for adult fitness equipment		1,500.00
	New ADA accessible surface in ADA playground		75,000.00
	Repair ADA Swings	1,230.00	
	Demo and install new playground equipment (octagon climber)	18,300.00	
	Install new pathways from sidewalk to connect to exist path and create ADA accessible path to ADA play area		7,000.00
	Install new benches (see below)		
	New perimeter treatment for ADA and play equipment		23,000.00

Gluck	Install new baby swing		287.00
	Install new benches (see below)		
	Remove water fountain (in house)		0.00
Liberty	New Swings		219.00
	Install play equipment		20,884.00
Stevenson Park	Swing Set	2,100.00	2,100.00
	Swing Set	3,123.00	3,123.00
	Activity Set (small)		24,500.00
	Swing Replacement (4)	219.00	876.00
70th Street	Garbage cans	1,425.00	17,100.00
Various	Benches(36)	785.00	28,260.00
Total			1,876,206.00
Contingency and Escalation (30%)			2,439,067.80

Attachment B
Letters of Support

August 13, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly Spanbauer", written over a printed name.

Holly Spanbauer

Resident of the City of Niagara Falls

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, *Thomas E. Carroll*

Patricia Mazzone

N.F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Sincerely,



Niagara Falls Resident

Matthew J. Leo

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Niagara Falls Resident



August 14, 2024

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Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Sincerely,

PAULIE PALCHINSKI
Paulie - Palachinski

August 14, 2024

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P.O. Box 1132
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Sincerely,



Allen B. Polchinski

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Sincerely,

John MALLETT
John Mallett
N.F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

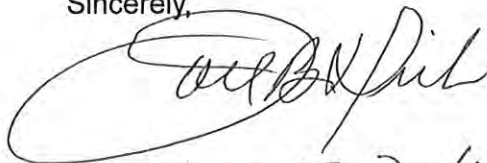
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Sincerely,



JOEL B. DICK

NIAGARA FALLS RESIDENT

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

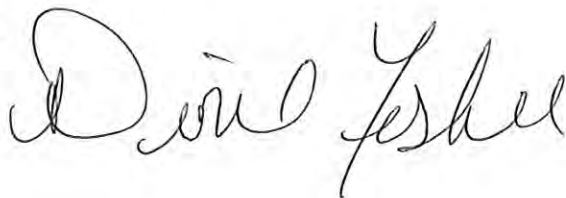
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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don Zesch". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


TERRY E MANNING

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Thomas Mercante

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


N. F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

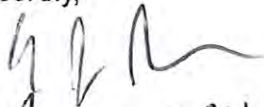
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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Gerald J. Gibas

N.F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dakota Gibas
Dakota Gibas
N.F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:


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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


THOMAS D RYAN

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

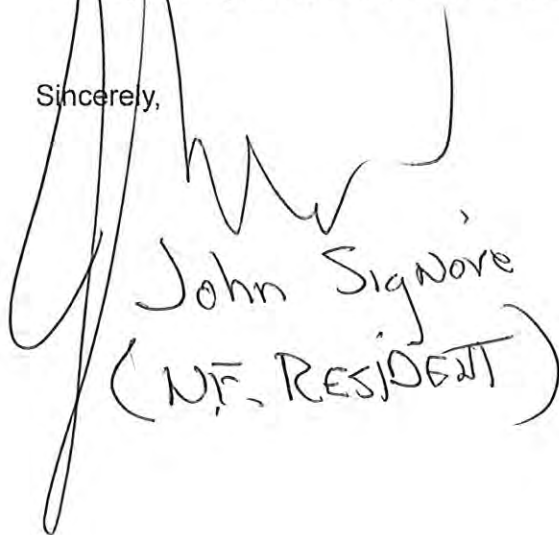
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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



John Signore
(NF RESIDENT)

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony Navarra
ANTHONY NAVARRA

N.F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

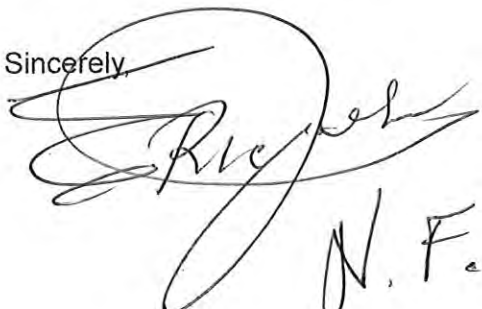
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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



N. F. R.
ERIC JOHNS

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

George LaForte
N. F. resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Spaulan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "M".

N. F.

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



KENNETH H. BRYAN

N. F. Resident

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Frank E Page
N.F. Residt

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



ANTHONY P. O'CONNELL
CONCERNED CIT

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I write to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the city (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

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I, therefore, humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Baker

Electronically signed

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret K. Baker

Electronically signed

August 13, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:


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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


John Spanbauer

Resident of the City of Niagara Falls

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Coree Froman, Concerned Citizen

~~Brooke Nelson~~

Concerned Citizen for the improvement of Niagara Falls

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shane Nelson', written in a cursive style.

Shane Nelson

Concerned Citizen for the improvement of Niagara Falls

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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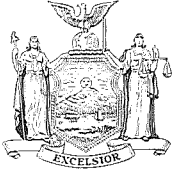
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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brooke Nelson

Brooke Nelson



ANGELO J. MORINELLO
Assemblyman 145th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Committee on Codes

COMMITTEES
Economic Development, Job Creation,
Commerce and Industry
Labor
Tourism, Parks, Arts and
Sports Development
Veterans' Affairs

Legislative Commission on
Toxic Substances and
Hazardous Wastes

8/12/2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

ANGELO J. MORINELLO,
NYS Assemblyman, 145th District

AJM/cld

Plati Niagara Inc.

7708 Niagara Falls Boulevard ♦ Niagara Falls, NY 14304 ♦ (716) 283-0621

August 17, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

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I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Frank Strangio
Owner



Antonio's



August 16, 2024

Jeffrey Elder

Niagara County Legislature 4th District

Jeffrey.Elder@niagaracounty.com

1143 Ontario Avenue

Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Niagara Greenway Commission

P.O. Box 1132

Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members,

I am writing to express my support for the ongoing and proposed improvements to the parks within Niagara Falls, NY. As a Niagara County Legislator, I understand the critical importance of our parks as essential assets to the health, well-being, and economic vitality of our community.

The city parks of Niagara Falls serve as vital green spaces that provide residents and visitors with opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and connection to nature. They are not only a source of community pride but also a key driver of local tourism and economic development. Enhancing these parks will significantly contribute to the quality of life for all who live in or visit Niagara Falls.

Investing in our parks is an investment in our future. Improvements such as upgraded playgrounds, enhanced walking and biking trails, improved safety measures, and the addition of community spaces will ensure that our parks remain vibrant and accessible to

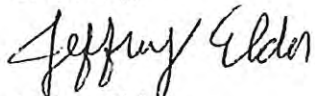
everyone. These enhancements will foster a greater sense of community, promote healthy lifestyles, and serve as a catalyst for further economic growth in the area.

Moreover, well-maintained parks are essential for environmental sustainability. They help in preserving biodiversity, improving air quality, and providing natural stormwater management, which is particularly important in urban areas like Niagara Falls. By prioritizing the improvement of our parks, we are also demonstrating our commitment to environmental stewardship and the long-term sustainability of our city.

I strongly encourage the Greenway Commission to approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements. Let us work together to create spaces that reflect the beauty, history, and potential of Niagara Falls, ensuring that future generations can enjoy and benefit from these treasured public assets.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to collaborating with you to ensure the successful realization of these improvements.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Elder

Niagara County Legislature 4th District

Jeffrey.Elder@niagaracounty.com

Phone: (716) 990-9750



The Legislature
Niagara County

Legislator Christopher J. McKimmie
3rd District
Niagara County Legislature

August 12, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Christopher J. McKimmie
Niagara County Legislator, 3rd District



THE LEGISLATURE NIAGARA COUNTY

LEGISLATOR CHRISTOPHER VOCCIO
6th District
Niagara County Legislature

August 14, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CV", is written over a faint circular stamp.

Christopher Voccio
Niagara County Legislator, 6th District



**NIAGARA FALLS TEACHERS
800 MAIN STREET SUITE 1A
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14304**

August 13, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

Well maintained public parks will benefit the students of the school district in which we serve allowing them to have a safe place to play while spending time with family outdoors.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Weiss

President, Niagara Falls Teachers

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael Monaco

Director, Niagara Falls Water Authority

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Gerald Cracknell

Commissioner, Niagara Falls Housing Authority



Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation

6311 Inducon Corporate Drive, Suite One

Sanborn, NY 14132-9099

716-278-8760

Fax 716-278-87569

Board of Directors

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Christopher Voccio
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Recording Secretary

8/12/2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

I writing to express my support of the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in various parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

It is my belief that the City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in the various parks is vitally important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. I further believe that these restoration and repairs will produce a positive impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the entire City. These proposed improvements are in line with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. Furthermore, these projects will directly address the Commission's goals by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew Chavez
Project Manager



August 12, 2024

Niagara Greenway Commission
P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Dear Commission Members:

On behalf of the USA Niagara Development Corporation, I writing to express the support of our agency for the City of Niagara Falls' application for Greenway funding related to improvements in key parks around the City (Jayne Park, Gill Creek Park and Hyde Park).

The City's focus on restoring and repairing the existing facilities in their parks system is critically important to the continued economic revitalization of Niagara Falls. These projects will generate a positive, long-lasting impact on the entire Niagara Falls community by improving parks throughout the City. The proposed improvements are in alignment with the commission's principles of sustainability, accessibility, public well-being and restoration. The proposed projects will directly address goals of the Niagara Greenway Commission by improving access to all the community, spark revitalization and renewal by improving the physical public spaces and improving the image of the City, promote long term sustainability by restoring and rehabilitating existing structures, and celebrate the history and heritage of the community by restoring a sense of pride that well maintained public spaces bring to the community.

I therefore humbly request that the Greenway Commission approve the City's request for funding for these very important improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Vilardo
President

Attachment C

Photos

Hyde Park



Hyde Park



Hyde Park



Hyde Park



Nor-Lock



Nor-Lock



Nor-Lock



91st Street



Garden Ave Pocket Park



Jayne Park



Liberty



Gluck



Gill Creek



Black Creek



Stevenson



Gill Creek



Host Community Narrative

Transformational Investment in City of Niagara Falls Community Green Spaces, Water and Ecological Resources- featuring Hyde Park

At 530 acres, Hyde Park, in the city of Niagara Falls, is the largest urban park in New York State west of Manhattan. It includes an assortment of community recreational resources, and Hyde Park Lake, the centerpiece of the ecologically crucial Gill Creek, whose headwaters are on the Tuscarora Nation and runs from New York Power Authority's (NYPA) reservoir to the Niagara River. Ecological degradation, water quality concerns, limited accessibility to park and water resources, and deteriorating park facilities have greatly reduced the ability of the community to utilize and benefit from this collection of important resources.

Gill Creek has undergone extensive modifications related to heavy industrial, commercial, and residential development. These modifications have negatively impacted natural stream function, habitat, water quality, and quality of life for nearby residents. According to the New York State (NYS) Department of Environmental Conservation's Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List, "aquatic life support and recreational uses in Gill Creek are impaired and aesthetics are significantly impacted by various toxic and other contaminants from historic/past discharges, contaminated sediments, municipal/industrial inputs and other urban nonpoint sources to the stream" (2014). Hyde Park Lake is a 484-acre impoundment formed by a dam in Gill Creek at the southern end of Hyde Park. Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's Riverwatch Program has confirmed Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in Hyde Park Lake nearly every year since 2017.

The algal blooms, nutrient loading, and other pollutants exert negative impacts on aquatic life, recreational uses, and economic development within the Niagara Falls community and can create potential human health risks associated with recreation choices. Improving the health of the water and nearshore area within Hyde Park Lake is a critical call to action to revitalize and restore significant ecosystem services that support fish and wildlife, clean drinking water, community health and enjoyment of the natural world, and a vibrant economy.

The municipal parks of Niagara Falls are an integral part of the City's infrastructure and require significant upgrades and repairs due to years of continued disinvestment. These legacy facilities have outlasted their useful lives and require important upgrades or replacement to continue to meet the needs of the community. The individual projects and their costs have been included as an attachment to this application (See project list). Each of the parks provides the community with a myriad of recreational activities, however, Hyde Park, not only provides recreational activities for all Niagara Falls residents but is also a local and regional draw. The City, has developed a multi year plan to significantly improve the conditions of the various parks included as part of this proposal. These upgrades will help ensure and improve access to important ecological resources, but also

provide a variety recreational opportunities for all City residents which support mental and physical wellness of the community.

These projects will promote the long-term sustainability by reducing the number of new materials required by improving or adaptively reusing existing facilities. Furthermore, to support continued efforts to address climate change, certain structures are being removed from existing floodplains which will help to alleviate adverse conditions.

In addition, these investments are intended to promote and spark revitalization and renewal in the community by improving the overall condition of these important public amenities. In this manner, the proposed projects will advance the Niagara River Greenway Commission's vision by creating a positive economic impact through the attraction of visitors and supporting local businesses, by creating a positive sense of place that fosters social interaction and civic pride throughout the community.

Funding Request Details:

With this project, the City of Niagara Falls launches a transformational initiative to enhance all aspects of Hyde Park- from functionality, community accessibility, and aesthetic appeal to ecological resilience and sustainability. Specific components and details of this funding request are as follows:

1) Ecosystem + Public Access Design/Engineering:

In 2023, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW) led the development of the [Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan](#) which looked at existing conditions along the waterway and included robust community and partner engagement, ultimately resulting in a prioritized list of restoration projects to improve the health of Gill Creek. This proposal focuses on advancing the design/engineering for three areas identified as top priorities in the Restoration Plan. These areas within Hyde Park currently exist as underutilized mowed lawn with a steep eroding shoreline and very little habitat value. The proposed project will restore aquatic, riparian, wetland, and meadow habitat extending from in-water to upland and will create a gradual transition between the land and water. The attached conceptual plans include more detailed information about the potential restoration opportunities at these project sites as a starting point which will be further explored and refined through the formal design process. The resulting condition will create at least 4 acres of improved habitat and a resilient shoreline that will grow stronger over time. The proposed restoration will help improve water quality and alleviate threats associated with recurring HABs through improved filtration and absorption of stormwater runoff from surrounding areas, and by addressing sediment inputs from the actively eroding shoreline. The project will create conditions that are resilient and sustainable under future climate scenarios and improve the health of Gill Creek/Hyde Park Lake for recreational uses. Design of public access features including boardwalks, informal fishing access, trails, a kayak launch, and signage

are also incorporated in the scope of this work. BNW will lead this work in partnership with a qualified consultant and will work closely with the City of Niagara Falls and other stakeholders to ensure the work is in alignment with the greater vision for Hyde Park.

2) RestoreCorps + Water Quality Monitoring:

The purpose of BNW's RestoreCorps program is twofold: to provide adaptive landscape management of recently completed living shoreline habitat restoration sites, and to foster community stewardship of our freshwater ecosystems. Through this program, BNW is able to mobilize a volunteer workforce to complete adaptive landscape management tasks in shoreline restoration areas to maximize the performance of important shoreline areas and ensure the longevity of investments made in initial restoration activities. Activities completed through the RestoreCorps program include invasive species management, upland native plug plantings, wetland plantings, dormant live stake plantings, meadow seeding, habitat box stewardship/ repair, and trail upkeep. This request includes funding support for adaptive management at completed restoration sites in the Gill Creek corridor throughout the duration of the grant period.

BNW's Riverwatch Program monitors water quality throughout the Niagara River Watershed and provides a network of "Eyes on the Water" to report pollution or other waterway issues like Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). This program has been instrumental in identifying and monitoring water quality issues within Gill Creek and Hyde Park Lake while also collecting important baseline data to document improvements resulting from habitat projects. This request includes funding to support Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper staff in carrying out regular visual observations, testing, response to HAB events, and appropriate community outreach around HABs and other water quality issues at Hyde Park Lake.

3) Young Environmental Leaders Program:

BNW's Young Environmental Leaders program (YELP) is an immersive program where high school students gain a heightened understanding of environmental principles while exploring local environmental science and environmental justice issues through experiential, hands-on learning sessions led by Waterkeeper staff. Students that successfully complete the program receive 3 transferable college credits from a partner institution of higher learning and can apply for Summer Mentorship, where they have 50 additional hours of stipend learning opportunities with Waterkeeper staff. Hyde Park and Gill Creek are utilized as a living classroom for several lessons and associated field work, in addition to Niagara Falls specific environmental justice lessons rooted in the history of Love Canal. This request includes funding for implementation of YELP at Niagara Falls High School in 2025-2026.

Project Component	Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (2026)	Year 3 (2027)	TOTAL
Ecosystem + Public Access Design and Engineering	\$350,000	\$150,000	-	\$500,000
RestoreCorps + Water Quality Monitoring	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
YELP	\$55,000	-	-	\$55,000
Park Restoration	\$2,439,067.80	-	-	\$2,439,067.80
TOTAL	\$2,864,067.80	\$170,000	\$20,000	\$3,054,067.80

4) Long Term Park Infrastructure Improvements

The purpose of these tasks is to improve the existing infrastructure within 11 City owned parks located throughout the community. Several of the amenities in these parks are in a severe state of distress and require significant investment to allow for the continued use of the community. This includes improvement and upgrade o ADA accessibility options, adaptive reuse of distressed active recreational courts, upgrades to amenities necessary for the continued use and enjoyment of the public, removal and repair of hazardous structures within the floodplain or other ecological areas, installation of new playground equipment to replace unrepairable equipment or missing equipment, and other amenities to ensure public access to recreational and other greenspace amenities.

The multiyear improvements have been chosen to enhance the existing investments being made by the city and others throughout the corridor. Whenever possible the City has chosen to improve or reuse existing structures to reduce the overall need for new materials and to maximize the overall impact on the community. These investments will improve the overall quality of life for all residents within Niagara Falls and are designed to spur additional investments within the community.

Leverage/Summary of Investments in the Corridor to Date:

This initiative leverages significant investments made and work done to date to support ecological restoration, water quality and accessibility, and educational programming in Hyde Park and the Gill Creek corridor.

In 2022-2023 Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW) worked with the City of Niagara Falls and conducted thorough community engagement and research to develop a strategic [Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan](#) which identifies priority projects and actions for

improving the ecology of Gill Creek, including several top priorities located in Hyde Park. The development of the plan was supported by the Greenway Ecological Fund and totaled \$47,000. BNW and the City of Niagara Falls have submitted a pending request for \$3,189,640 in funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to advance the three top priority projects identified in Hyde Park through the Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan which focus on Duck Island and a portion of the shoreline near the existing stadium. These priority projects also incorporate improved public access to connect the community to the water. Having the design and engineering complete for these priority sites will help to secure funding for implementation as many state and federal funding opportunities require 'shovel-ready' projects.

The City of Niagara Falls has secured \$1.3 million dollars through the American Rescue Plan to complete improvements to Duck Island to improve and repair the existing pavilion on the island. This work will be coordinated with the design process included in this funding proposal to ensure they build towards a cohesive vision for improvements of this important feature within Hyde Park Lake.

BNW is also currently leading the Gill Creek Green Infrastructure Project (construction anticipated to start in January 2025) which will apply nature-based solutions throughout 2.2 acres within Hyde Park to reduce point source pollution from two outfalls that flow into Gill Creek and non-point source pollution from the Hyde Park Golf Course. Once implemented the project will capture 2.3 million gallons of untreated stormwater runoff each year. The project is supported via funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative with matching funds from the City of Niagara Falls through the Greenway Host Community Standing Committee totaling \$767,060.

A successful restoration project was also completed along the Hyde Park Lake shoreline in 2017, led by BNW and supported by the New York Power Authority Greenway Ecological Fund (\$201,417). This project continues to serve as an important educational tool illustrating how park landscapes can be managed in a manner that promotes ecological health. This project includes similar techniques to those that will be applied through the solutions proposed in the Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan. BNW continues to lead adaptive management of this site through funding from the Greenway Ecological Fund estimated at \$53,500 in 2023 & 2024. BNW's RestoreCorps program and Restoration and Adaptive Management Program Stewards (RAMPS) assist with this work.

Additionally, with \$176,414 in funding from the U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, BNW mobilized volunteers to plant over 1,000 trees and shrubs during a three-year period along Gill Creek to strengthen the riparian corridor. This project offered 682 volunteers a direct way to help improve the well-being of their communities and local watershed. Plantings implemented during this project are one step towards restoring the water quality and aesthetic beauty of Gill Creek while also enhancing recreational opportunities.

BNW has been conducting water quality monitoring and sampling in Hyde Park and along Gill Creek for many years. At Hyde Park Lake, this work has specifically included observation, analysis, and community outreach around persistent annual Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). This program is supported through several funding sources. In 2024 it is estimated that at least \$5,000 in funding support from the East Hill Foundation contributed to monitoring within the Gill Creek corridor.

From 2018-2023 (5 school years), BNW's Young Environmental Leaders Program was implemented at Niagara Falls High School with several of the field experiences at Gill Creek in Hyde Park. Students who successfully complete YELP receive 3 transferable college credits and can apply for Summer Mentorship, where they have additional stipend learning opportunities with Waterkeeper staff. When BNW ran YELP at Niagara Falls High School, the credits were through Niagara University. YELP at Niagara Falls High School is an investment of between \$50,000 and \$60,000 per year. Since the 2022-2023 school year we have been unable to secure funding to run the program at NFHS but have continued to work with a partner teacher at NFHS to provide supplemental experiential field-based learning opportunities to her students throughout the year. Past funding for Niagara YELP included the City of Niagara Falls, Niagara Area Foundation, and Garman Family Foundation. In addition to YELP, BNW has run educational experiences for students at Gaskill Prep.

The City of Niagara Falls has been investing heavily, primarily through American Rescue Plan Funding, in the repair of its existing infrastructure including:

- \$863,000 for Hyde Park pool restoration, to extend the existing life of the existing pool by repairing and upgrading concrete liner complete.
- \$750,000 for improvements to Center Court and 91st Street pools including repair of the existing concrete liners and pump equipment. Anticipated start spring 2025 to be completed prior to start of swim season 2025.
- Approximately \$2 million in stadium improvements to bring in minor league team to help spur economic revitalization and provide additional recreational activities. Complete.
- Approximately \$300,000 for the repair and upgrade to the Gill creek comfort station. Complete.
- Approximately \$100,000 for upgrades to the existing ice skating pavilion in Hyde Park. Complete.

The City of Niagara Falls is also currently engaged in facilitating a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program study, funded in part by NYS Department of State and local match funds, to improve access to the City's waterfront resources including Gill Creek, the Niagara River, and Cayuga Creek. This multiyear study is expected to identify specific actionable projects to improve waterfront access and amenities and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2025.

\$1.8 million in funding from the Niagara River Greenway Commission and the Ralph C Wilson Jr Foundation LaSalle supported the completion of the Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail with the final section completed through Wheatfield, opening up continuous recreational trails between Buffalo and Niagara Falls which will be completed in November 2024. The City, in coordination with the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council, are planning to update and ratify the Niagara Falls and Regional Bike Master Plans, to provide greater connectivity to Hyde Park, increasing accessibility to the City's disadvantaged communities for active wellness recreation.

Beyond the investments completed to date and the work included in this proposal, BNW and the Greenway Commission are committed to continuing to work with the City of Niagara Falls and other local partners to support ecological restoration, improved access, water quality improvements, community engagement, stewardship and educational programming.

The City has been focusing on addressing years of disinvestment in its existing infrastructure and enhancing recreational options throughout the entire community. The City seeks continued reinvestment in its existing assets to meet the demands and ensure that its assets can continue to serve the public for the foreseeable future. The City is grateful to continue to partner with BNW and others to ensure a healthy and revitalized natural and physical environment for everyone.

This includes advancing trail connections connecting Hyde Park to local communities as called for in the upcoming revised Niagara Falls Bike Master Plan as well as ecological and community engagement priorities outlined in the Gill Creek Conceptual Restoration Plan and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. Continuing to engage the community through the YELP program and complete stewardship through the RestoreCorps program are also ongoing priorities beyond the scope of this proposal.