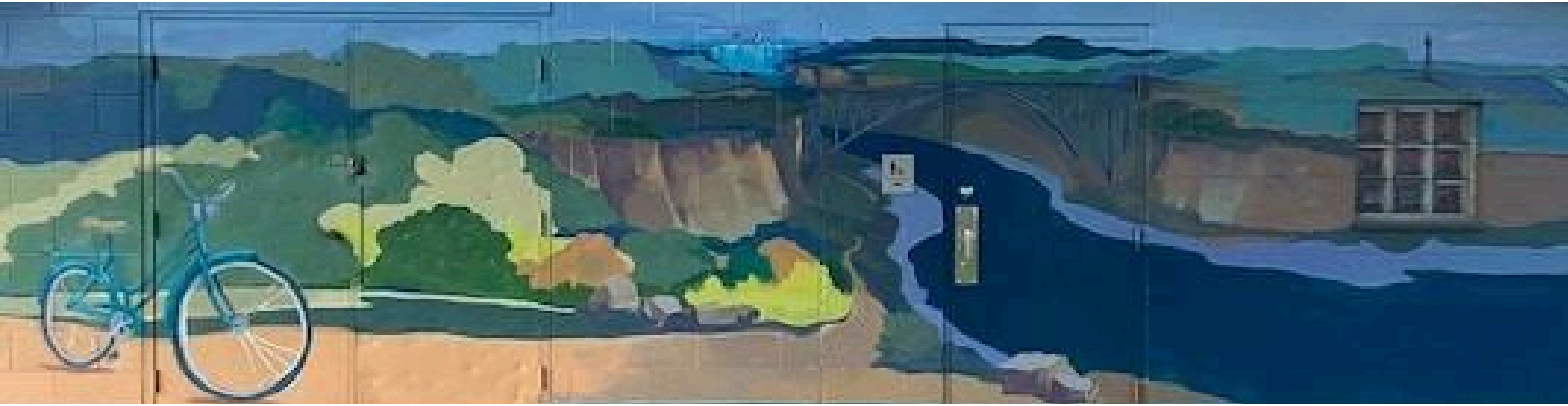




Niagara River Greenway NEWSFLASH

Summer 2024



Niagara River Greenway has been enjoying working outdoors up and down the Niagara River corridor; we collaborated with local artists to bring a new public art project to life at Academy Park; hosted our annual paddling event, helping schools with their environmental projects, and working on completing the Shoreline Trail!

Public Art Project: Academy Park Gets a Beautiful New Mural

Academy Park, located between 9th Street and Portage Rd. in Lewiston, has been the center of many village gatherings and has recently undergone some improvements, like the installation of a bike path around the perimeter and a stunning public art piece surrounding the comfort station. Nestled along the 14-mile bike trail stretching from the falls to the mouth of the Niagara River, Academy Park is the perfect spot for bikers and visitors to pause, relax, and appreciate this stunning community art installation. This powerful public art piece strengthens Lewiston's identity as a vibrant and artistic community while offering enjoyment to both residents and visitors. We worked closely with the Lewiston Council on the Arts and the Village and Town of Lewiston to see these projects come to fruition.

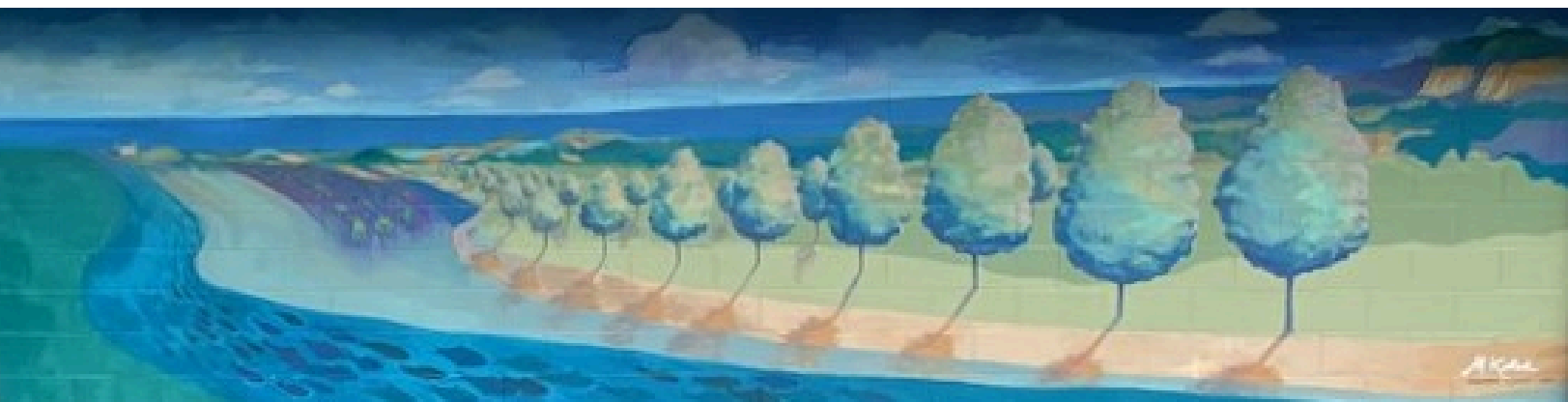


What makes this public art piece so unique is the incorporation of modern sculpture with a painting. Local artist Dan Buttery has completed a 3D element that allows viewers to become part of the mural. A sculpted tree is surrounded by an artistic bench that viewers can sit on and take a picture of the beautiful painting by Lewiston's own artist, Maureen Kellick. The combination of Dan's 3D elements and Maureen's vivid four-walled mural of the River's gorge and escarpment regions creates a dynamic and immersive viewing experience. The multi-faceted nature of the mural successfully captures and showcases the naturally abundant surroundings of the Niagara River Greenway in Lewiston. Visitors can appreciate these landscapes from all angles, as they are encouraged to take photos around the entire building.



It seems very fitting that Maureen was the person chosen to paint the Niagara River in this public art piece, since she was the person to win the Niagara River Greenway logo design competition back in 2006! As shown in the photo to the right, Maureen was awarded a \$500 cash prize for winning the competition at Beaver Island State Park on Grand Island, where she triumphed among 73 logo submissions. As a lifelong resident of Lewiston, her mural at Academy Park highlights her deep community dedication and ability to foster a stronger bond between

residents and their community. We were very happy to have the talents of both Dan and Maureen to complete such a prominent art piece in the Village of Lewiston and along the Shoreline Trail. Make sure to visit in person!



New Shoreline Trail Connections

The Niagara River Greenway continues to work to connect the gaps in the Shoreline Trail segments. Our current focus has largely been up north and we are getting really close to having a completed trail!

The Wheatfield trail is in construction and ahead of schedule, working to connect Gratwick Park in North Tonawanda to Griffon Park in Niagara Falls.

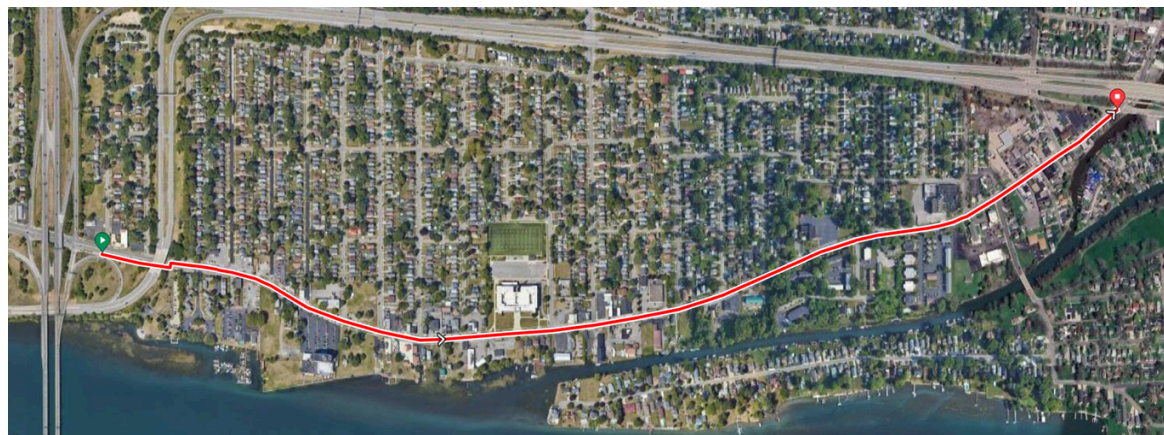
The new multi-use trail begins at 102nd Street on the north side of River Road at the Griffon Park trail terminus, crosses to the south side of River Road and follows the active rail line. A road diet will be implemented to accommodate the trail once it

reaches the existing pavement section of River Road. This section of the Niagara Shoreline Trail will be shady, peaceful, and very safe for family riding!



The LaSalle Section of our Niagara Shoreline Trail is also under construction to connect the North Grand Island Bridge to Cayuga Drive in Niagara Falls. This will save cyclists from riding in traffic on Buffalo

Avenue, giving us another great trail connection. These new connections will now allow cyclists to fully ride from Tonawanda to Niagara Falls on an easily navigable and safe route!



Environmental Summit Projects

Our Environmental Ambassador Summit teams have been working hard and their ideas from February have really come to life! Since presenting their projects earlier this year, we've been able to watch a number of proposals become a reality all around Western New York! Our first place team, Tapestry Charter School, completed a school-wide clean up and focused on educating others on the implications of microplastics. Our second place finalist, Riverside Academy, created a greenhouse in their school's backyard (seen top right), where they plan to grow native plants to be used around campus and within their community. The third place team, Mount St. Mary Academy, created a native pollinator garden, accompanied by a beehive in which they hope to produce honey from in the upcoming year!

Kenmore West High School recently celebrated the completion of a long-awaited project (*seen center and bottom right*) centered around three ecologically significant islands in the Niagara River and the species of birds that inhabit them. Collaborating with the Town of Tonawanda, Kenmore Rotary and Niagara River Greenway, Aqua Lane Park is now home to beautifully designed signs about Strawberry, Tern, and Motor Islands with viewfinders and a student-made bench, allowing guests to observe the bird species that inhabit them. Scanning a QR code on the Island Life sign will direct viewers to this webpage (<https://www.niagararivergreenway.com/the-corridor>) providing much more information about the history of the islands.

All of our environmental summit teams have made us so proud with the work they have done to improve their communities, environment, and school settings. We are so impressed with the ideas that stemmed in the fall of 2023 and have become successful realities today. We are excited to see what the 2025 Environmental Ambassador Summit will bring!



Paddles Up Niagara

Our 18th annual Paddles Up event was a success! On July 27th, participants came from as far as New Hampshire and Pennsylvania to join in on a day full of sun & fun. People of all ages participated, from the youngest of 4 years old to 82 years young! Eco-kayak tours & an eco-hike kicked off the day, followed by a Learn to Kayak session.

At 10:30, the famous “Fun Paddle” launched from Beaver Island Beach, with hundreds of paddlers joining together in a two mile loop around Little Beaver Island. Everyone was able to join in the fun, thanks to a Mobi-Mat, members of WNY Adaptive sports were able to cross the sand in their wheelchairs and launch from the beach.



Twenty exhibitors, including WNY Land Conservancy, US Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and Buffalo Maritime Center, to name just a few, provided interactive activities and handed out many cool giveaways! Eastern Monarch Butterfly Farm stole the show with a monarch butterfly release, capturing both kids and adult’s hearts. The day finished off with a newly instated basket raffle that was free to all registrants! We couldn’t have made this event such a success without help from our sponsors, West Herr, Rotary

Club of Grand Island, Wegmans, C&S Companies and WellNow Urgent Care, thank you!

