



**NIAGARA
PARKS**

Business Highlights Presentation

Niagara Parks Commission - Public Meeting

June 13, 2024



Niagara Parks

- Founded in 1885
- Operates under the Niagara Parks Act
- Two founding principles:
 - i. Niagara Parks would never be a burden to the taxpayers of Ontario
 - ii. Niagara Parks would as much as possible, be free to enjoy
- Board-governed operational enterprise under the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and Culture
 - 12-member Board of Commissioners

Mandate: To be the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River Corridor

Vision: To be one of the most spectacular parks in the world



Funding and Operations

- One of the region's largest employers; 1,800 headcount in peak season; \$60 million payroll.
- Operating budget covers payroll, operating expenses to run its revenue-producing operations and key operational projects.
- Capital budget covers investments into deferred maintenance and strategic projects to enhance Niagara Parks' visitor experiences
 - \$175 million worth of deferred maintenance across Niagara Parks sites
 - **Major capital projects for 2024-25:**
 - *Replacement of Niagara's Fury*
 - *Repairs and maintenance*

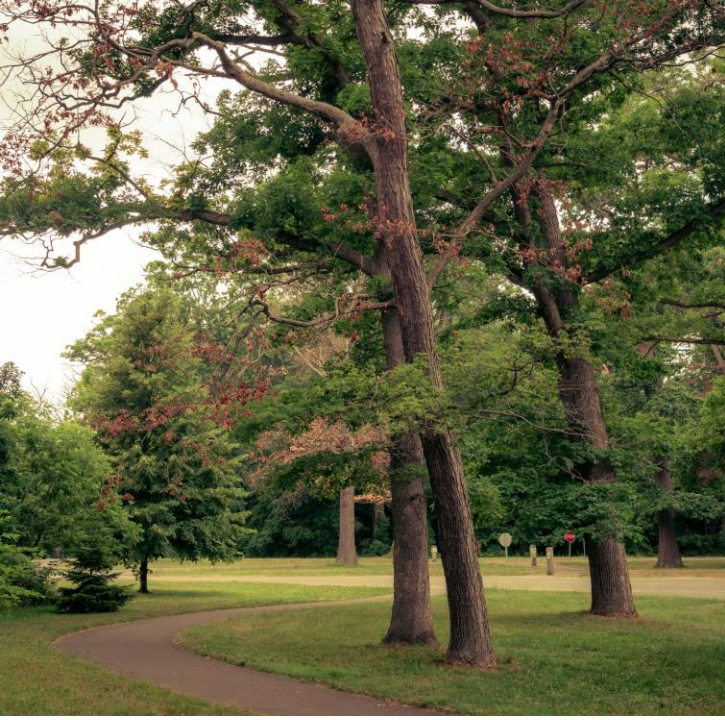




Stewards of the Niagara River Corridor

- Niagara Parks is a key demand generator, driving visitation and tourism to Niagara and Ontario.
- Responsible for maintaining 56km Niagara Parkway and 53km recreation trail, numerous parks, gardens and natural areas.
- Breadth of services include Niagara Parks Police Service, School of Horticulture.
- Re-established Niagara Parks Foundation focuses on raising funds to support additional environmental and cultural stewardship projects.
- As a self-funded organization, investments into enhancing our guest experiences that in turn, drive visitation and grow revenue, directly benefit our ability to deliver on our mandate of environmental and cultural stewardship.





Environmental Stewardship

- Environmental Stewardship Action Plan 2020-2030
- Coastal Wetland Restoration Project
- Chippawa Grassland Bird Habitat Project
- Gonder's Flats Restoration
- Partnership with Brock University's Environmental Sustainability and Research Centre
- Urban Forestry Management Strategy
 - Annual goal of planting 5,000 trees
- Annual Prescribed Burn Program
- Invasive Species Management Strategy
- Pollinator Garden Route
- Improvements to Niagara River Recreation Trail
- Dufferin Islands Visitor Experience and Ecological Enhancement Initiative



Environmental Spotlight: Gonder's Flats

- Project partners: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA), Ducks Unlimited Canada and Land Care Niagara.
- Niagara region's largest wetland restoration site, adjacent to the Niagara River in Fort Erie.
- Work includes wildlife habitat conservation, trail upgrades and educational signage.
- Restored area will continue to naturalize gradually over time and serve to improve water quality, support local biodiversity and protect species at risk.



Cultural Stewardship

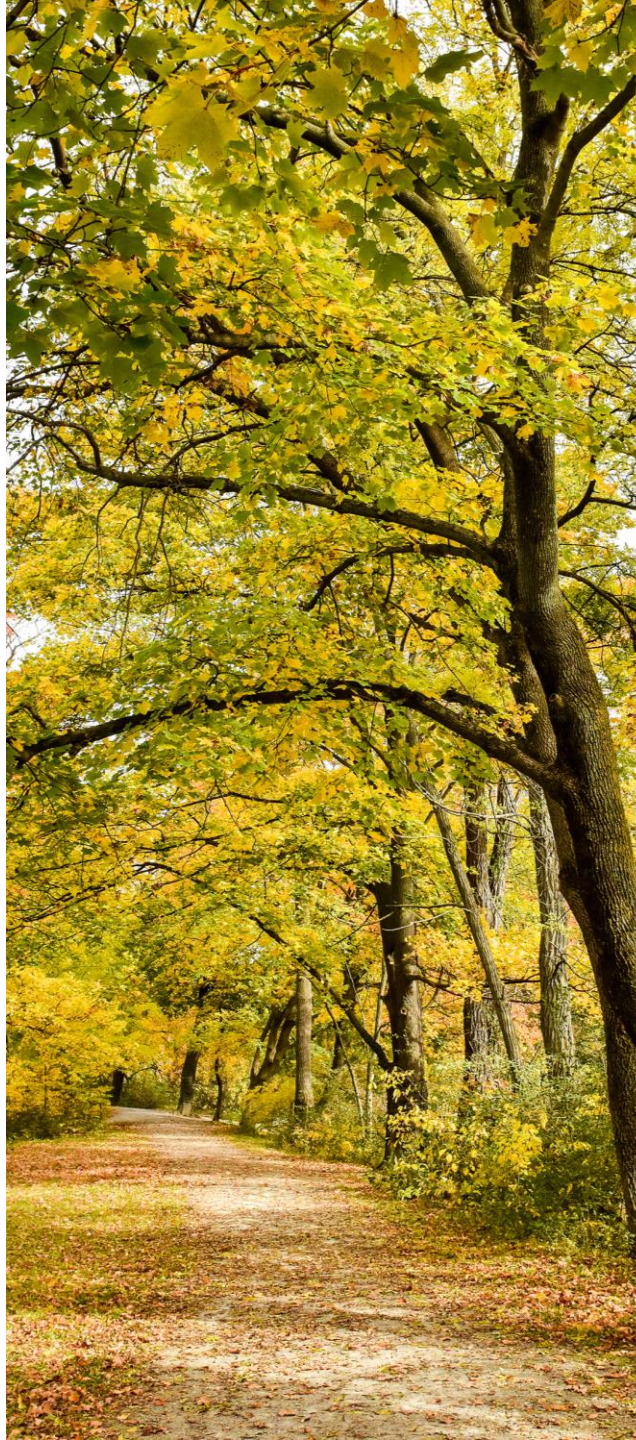
- Heritage Sites
 - Old Fort Erie
 - Mackenzie Printery
 - Laura Secord Homestead
 - McFarland House
 - Landscape of Nations Memorial
- Special events (Valour and Victory Indigenous Veterans Ceremony, Chippawa Battlefield Ceremony, Programming for Truth and Reconciliation)
- Explore the Niagara collaborative initiative with Parks Canada and bordering municipalities
 - Highlight sites, experiences, events related to themes of Black History, Indigenous culture, nation-building, nature & gardens, active living
- Hundreds of plaques, markers, monuments all along 56-kilometre Niagara River corridor
 - Recently announced new federal plaque on NPC lands honouring Chloe Cooley





Cultural Spotlight: Rekindling All Our Relations

- Aligning with National Indigenous History Month, Niagara Parks has launched a new audio tour experience created by Indigenous community member and Niagara Parks partner Michele-Elise Burnett, *Rekindling All our Relations*.
 - Supported by the Niagara Parks Foundation, Indigenous Tourism Ontario and Federal Economic Development Agency of Ontario
- Self-guided hiking tour that invites participants on an immersive journey through the breathtaking landscapes of the Niagara Glen in a profound exploration of Indigenous wisdom and connection.
- The first of its kind in Canada, the audio tour combines bespoke and traditional Indigenous music compositions along with rich narratives rooted in Indigenous teachings and wisdom.
- Guests can download the free app or use one of the handheld audio devices available at the Niagara Glen Nature Centre.



Niagara Parks Foundation

- The Niagara Parks Foundation was relaunched in the spring of 2022.
- A registered charity governed by a Board of Directors established to support and advance the environmental and cultural stewardship initiatives of Niagara Parks.

2023 Highlights

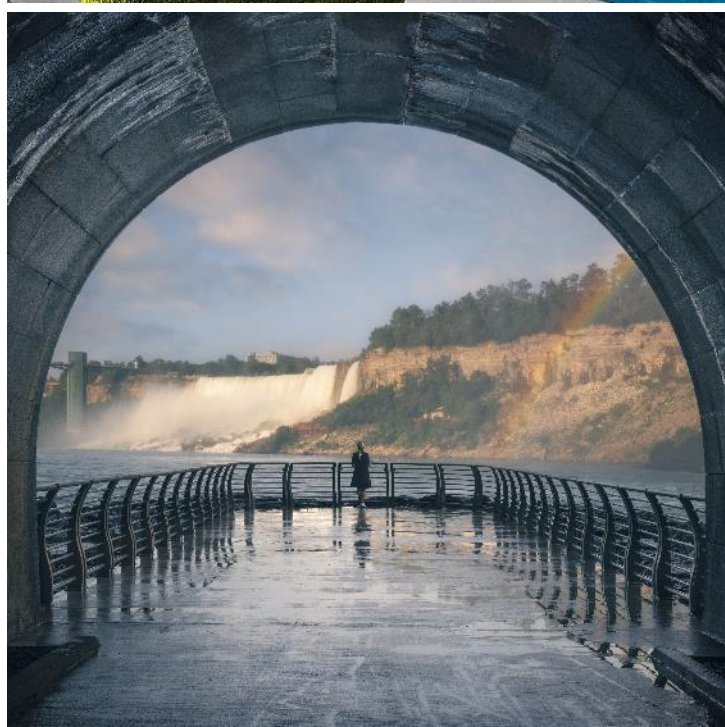
- Completed year one of three-year project to support stewardship work at Dufferin Islands (\$400,000 investment by TD Bank).
- Over \$32,000 raised through Toonies for Trees program for tree planting (7,500 trees planted across Niagara Parks).
 - Community Tree Planting event held near Old Fort Erie with over 100 volunteers who planted 400 trees as part of the reforestation project.
- Facilitated a day of workshops and hands-on learning for local students with Indigenous community members at the Niagara Glen.

[“A caring commitment to priceless parklands”](#)



Attraction Spotlight: Niagara Parks Power Station + Tunnel

- Successful adaptive reuse of the former Canadian Niagara Power Generating Station (built in 1905), opened as a brand-new attraction in 2021.
- Heritage restoration was the foremost consideration throughout the redevelopment.
- Generator Hall now features exhibits, restored artifacts, and interactive storytelling that tells the fascinating history of the power station.
- The Tunnel brings guests 180 feet below ground to the original 2,200-foot tailrace tunnel, built when the station was first constructed in 1905.





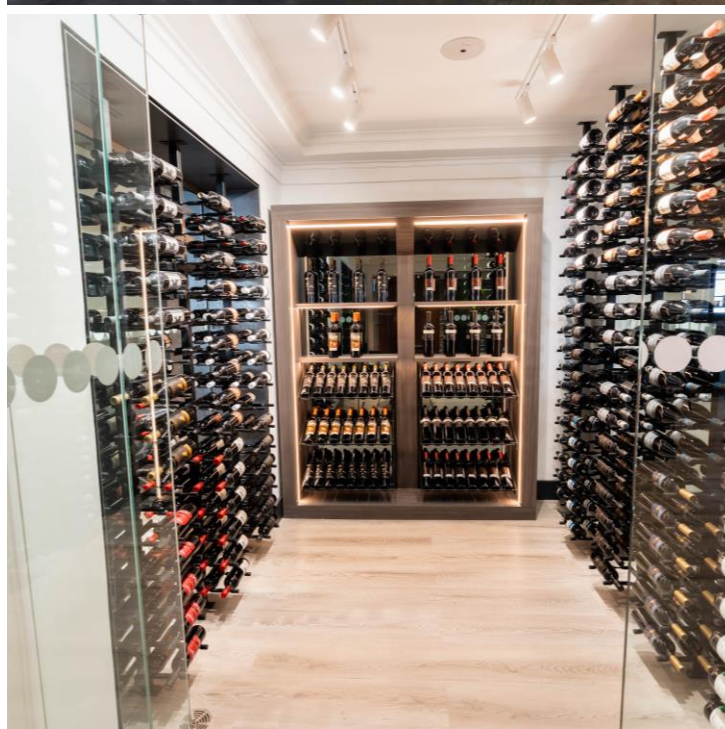
Awards and Recognition

- In 2022, Niagara Parks was awarded the Lieutenant-Governor's Awards of Excellence in Conservation for the preservation of the Station.
- The opening of the Tunnel in 2022 was CNN's best performing and most viral travel story that year.
 - Total earned media value for coverage of the power station opening estimated at over \$100 million dollars, over 2,000 pieces of unique coverage and 4 billion impressions.
- In 2023, the power station was awarded the Grand Prize for design excellence in the category of interior public spaces at the Niagara Biennial Design Awards.
- Venue for the Cool As Ice Icewine Gala in 2023 and 2024.
- Lundy's Lane Historical Society Heritage Award recipient.



Key Projects 2024-25

- Redevelopment of Power Stations
- Table Rock Centre
 - Table Rock Bistro + Wine Bar
 - Replacement of Niagara's Fury with new Flying Theatre attraction
- Updates to the Niagara Parks Power Station
 - New nighttime experience; bilingual audio tour and Tesla coil installation
- Redevelopment of the Niagara Parks Marina
- Restoration at Whirlpool Golf Course and reopening of Whirlpool Bar + Lounge
- New Indigenous Audio Tour at the Niagara Glen
- Refresh of signage and interpretation at White Water Walk





Toronto Power

We are currently in the due diligence phase for the Toronto Power Station Redevelopment. Pearle Hospitality's successful proposal for the redevelopment outlines a \$200+ million private sector investment that will fully restore Toronto Power. Some of the key features include:

- Multiple free indoor and outdoor public viewing areas
- Niagara Falls' first and only five-star boutique accommodation
- A variety of culinary offerings
- Craft brewery
- Wellness and social spa
- Event and programming space
- Museum and Art Gallery
- Theatre





Capital Projects 2024-25

North Niagara Parkway

- Queenston Dock Replacement (Bottom Image)
- Queenston Heights Park Recreational Stair Replacement the final set of 9 total recently completed (Top Right Image)
- Paving work (Smeaton's Cove (Top Left Image), Lilac Garden and River Road/Service Road parkettes, parking lots at Queenston Heights Park, Queenston Hill)
- Parking Lot Refresh at the Butterfly Conservatory
- Land management plan for Brown's Point (in collaboration with Niagara College)
- Culvert replacement (Service Road 70)
- Recreational trail bridge replacement





Capital Projects 2024-25

Central Niagara Parkway

- Grandview railing replacements
- Repairs to curb and WEGO Bus Stop within Queen Victoria Park (Top Left Image)
- NPPS Platform Heating (Bottom Right Image)
- Burning Springs Road – Traffic management to create one-way. (Top Right Image)
- Curb and Drainage Work on Upper Rapids Blvd (Bottom Right Image)



Capital Projects 2024-25

South Niagara Parkway

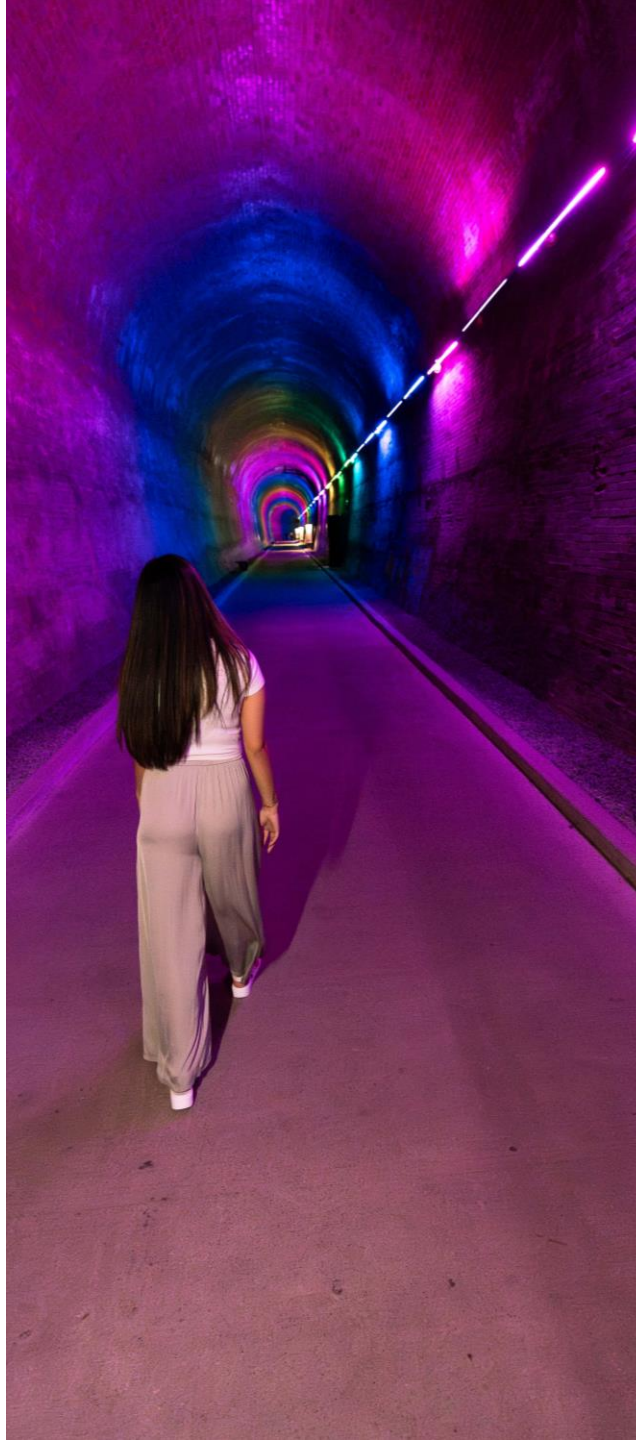
- Black Creek Bridge Replacement (Left Images)
- Repairs to Fort Erie Breakwall and consultation on alternative shoreline solution
- Paving work (south Niagara Parkway – Service Roads 2 & 3 (Image Bottom Right) , Service Roads 8 - 18)
- Niagara River Recreation Trail Resurfacing –College Road and Townline Road (Top Right Image)
- Gonder's Flats wetland restoration and enhancement project with partners including the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Land Care Niagara, and the Niagara Community Foundation.



Operational Highlights

March – June 2024





New Updates at the Niagara Parks Power Station + Tunnel

Daytime Experience

- Professionally produced audio tour, complimentary with regular admission
- New Tesla Coil installation adds further interest to the guest experience and helps activate the storytelling

Power Station at Night

- Updates to the Currents sound and light show – now plays on a continuous loop, opening up more of the generator floor
- Integration of the Tunnel and viewing platform to view the Falls illumination and fireworks



Weddings

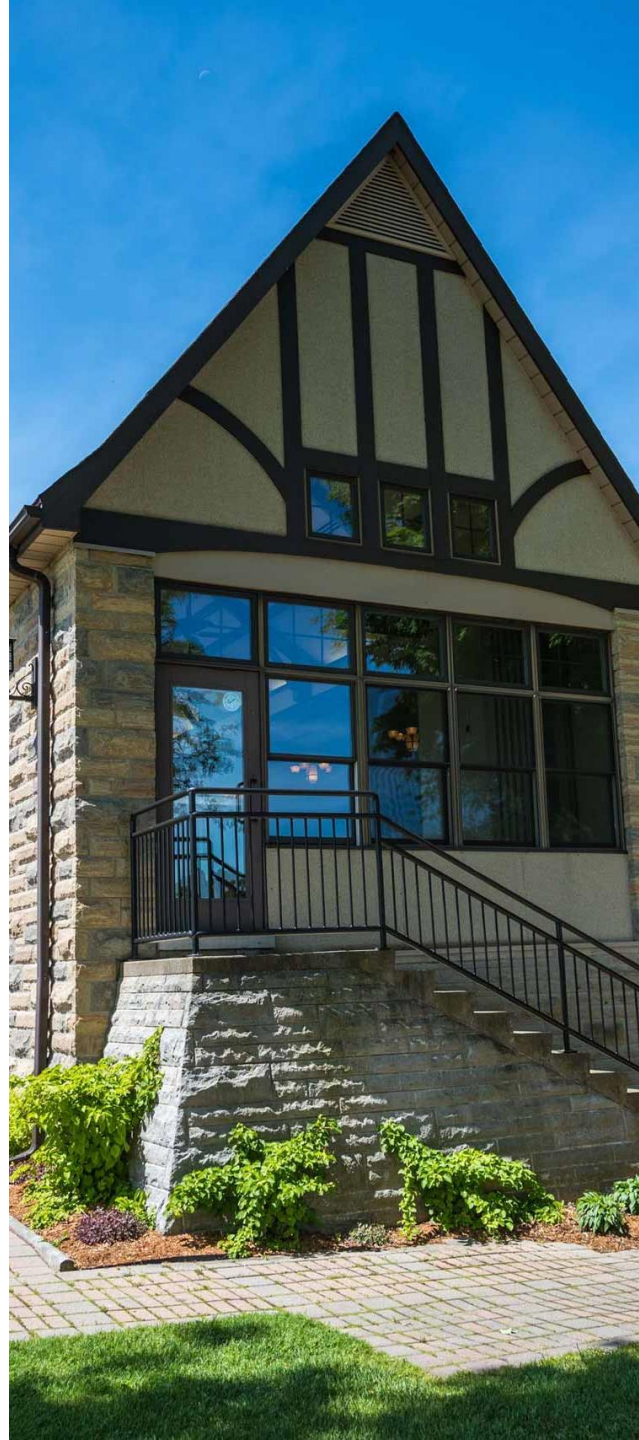
- Niagara Parks Weddings is introducing the Niagara Parks Power Station as a new wedding venue product this year.
- Couples will be able to hold their wedding ceremony on-site during the day or host an evening stand-up reception with exclusive use of the power station.





Culinary Services

- Niagara Parks has now certified its four quick-service restaurants, bringing the total of Feast ON-certified restaurants to nine. Feast ON is a program offered by the Culinary Tourism Alliance, which certifies that restaurants source their food and beverage locally in Ontario.
- Table Rock Market opened its Slice outlet for the first time since its renovation, offering pizza by the slice, whole pizzas and chicken wings. It was a very successful opening weekend during the eclipse.
- Aero Car Snack Bar reopened in May, offering quick grab-and-go items and soft-serve ice cream to visitors at the attraction.



New Restaurant Openings

Table Rock Bistro + Wine Bar

- Brand-new restaurant on the top floor of Table Rock Centre incorporating the outdoor covered patio space.
- Extensive beverage list featuring 64 local VQA wines, 22 Niagara craft beers and 20 local spirits.
- Bistro + Wine Bar will bring the story of Niagara's wine industry to the millions of guests that visit Table Rock.

Whirlpool Bar + Lounge

- Newly renovated Whirlpool Bar and Lounge now open at Whirlpool Golf Course.
- A modern sports bar open to golfers and the public.
- The renovations include new bar and lounge furniture, new paint and fixtures, a refurbished bar and a new menu – all designed to make it a more welcoming and exciting venue.



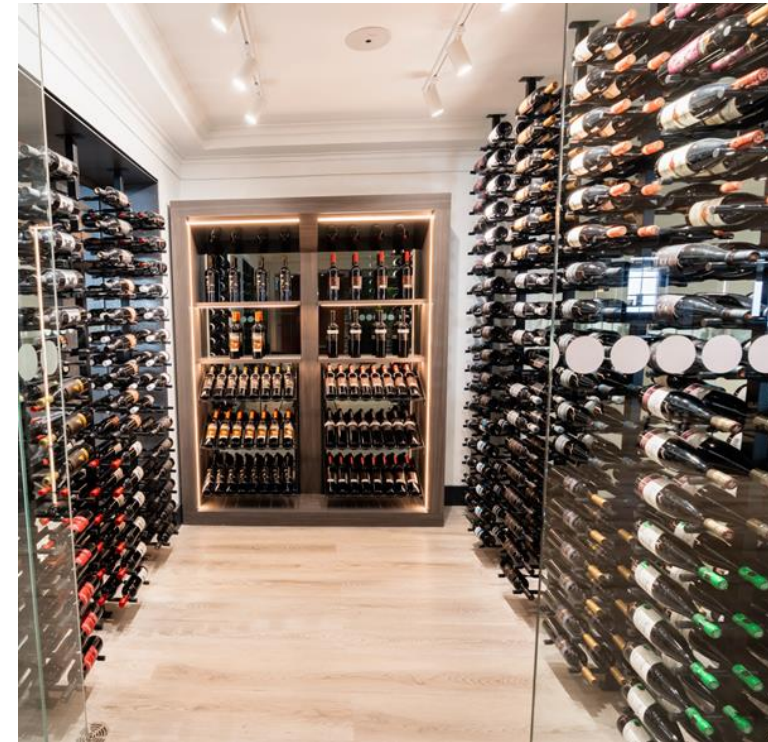
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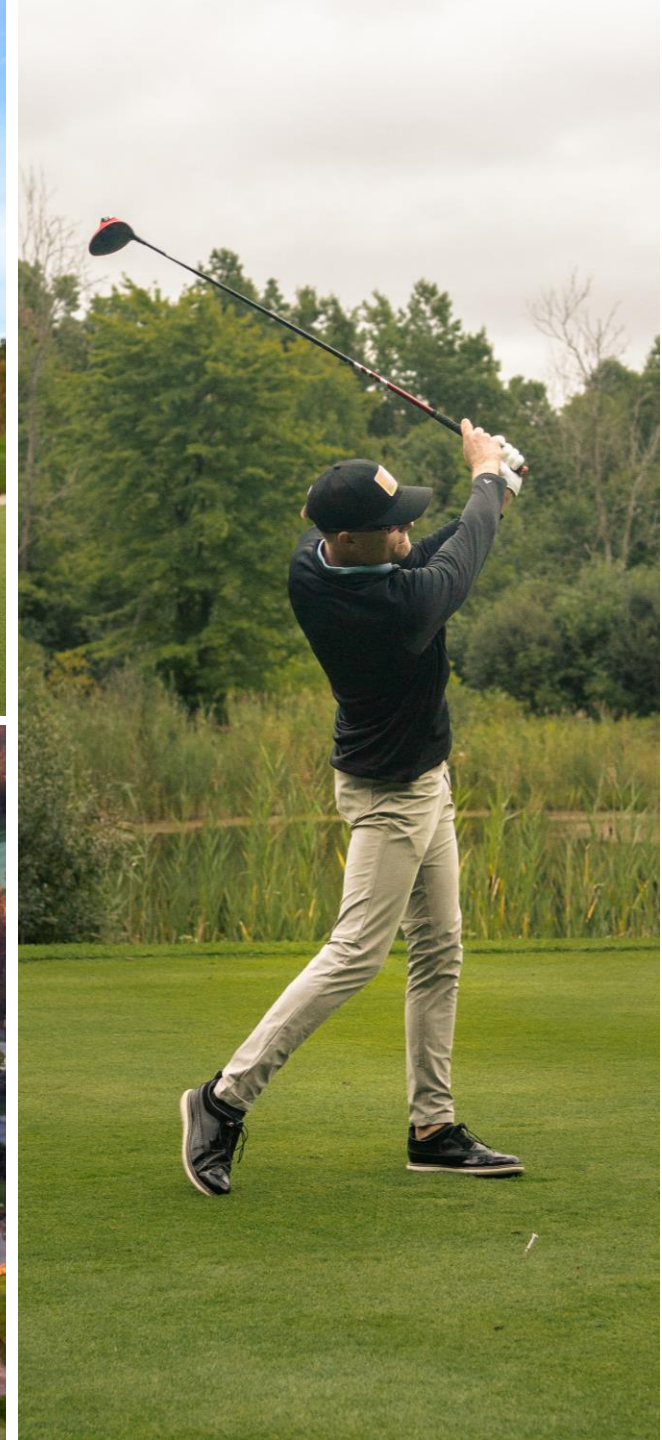
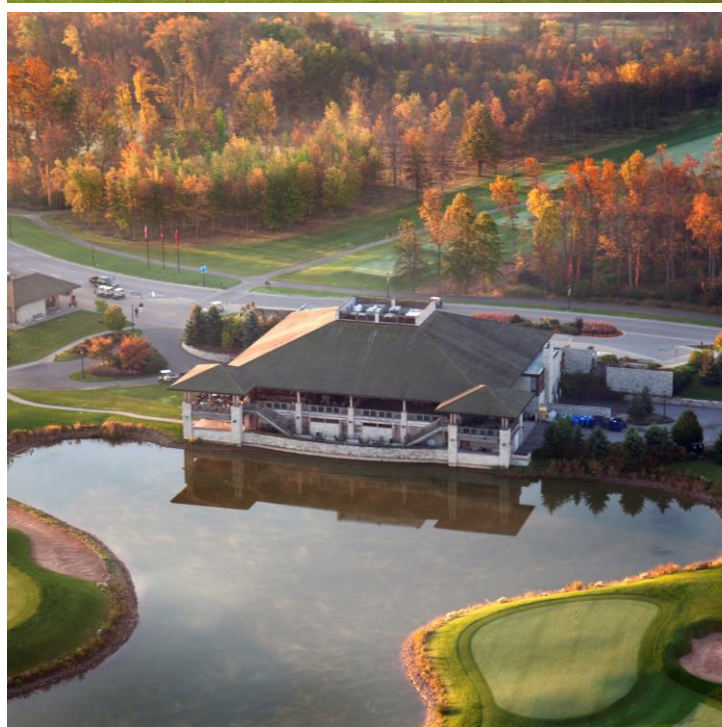
Table Rock Bistro + Wine Bar





Golf Operations

- The golf courses have wintered very well, and the playing conditions are favorable. Tee time reservations can be made online at niagaraparksgolf.com
- The restaurants at both Whirlpool and Legends are open to the public for lunch and dinner daily, reservations are not required.
- A Bio Blitz golf event took place Whirlpool on May 28.
 - Free species-counting competition and community-led event designed to showcase environmental value of natural habitats while tracking biodiversity growth and invasive species.
 - Golfers can enjoy a round of golf while recording as many species as possible.
- Legends hosted and celebrated Women's Golf Day on May 29. Women's Golf Day goal is to create awareness to grow the game of golf among women while engaging participants with a global impact.





Golf Operations

- The Legends Golf Academy will be conducting a variety of children summer golf camps for girls and boys ages 5-12 in July / August.
 - Half-day camps are structured to introduce the fundamentals of golf, from swing techniques to the rules of the game, in a supportive and exciting environment. More information can be found at Niagara Parks Golf / Junior Golf Camps.
- Whirlpool Golf Course renovations have commenced to restore the original Stanley Thompson design. The renovations will be done in phases and take place over time, in 2024 the focus will be on making changes to the eighteen hole to improve safety and include planting 65 new trees along the Niagara River Parkway. The 18th hole will remain in play to the public while renovations are in progress with minimal disruption to golfers while playing.



Retail

- Niagara Parks' retail stores were seasonally merchandised with various spring and eclipse-themed displays.
- \$5,000 was raised to support the Niagara Health Foundation through the sale of eclipse-themed stickers (initiative led by Mayor Diodati)



Total Solar Eclipse – April 8, 2024

- The total solar eclipse in Niagara Falls generated over 45,000 unique pieces of media coverage with an estimated value of \$5.7 billion worldwide
- Niagara Parks hosted live broadcasts from all major Canadian television networks on-site for the celestial event along with journalists from leading publications, including The New York Times and Globe and Mail
- Significant attention was directed towards complementary programming hosted at Niagara Parks and across the destination, including free public events featuring Canadian Astronaut Jeremy Hansen and NASA scientists, held across several Niagara Parks sites



Niagara Jazz Festival – The POWER of Music Friday, June 21

- Niagara Parks in partnership with the Niagara Jazz Festival presented by TD Ready Commitment will host the kick-off to the Niagara Jazz Festival 2024 Summer Festival Series with The POWER of MUSIC at Oakes Garden Theatre.
- The multi-media concert will feature 2024 JUNO Award nominated, award-winning musical group, Blackburn Brothers and the Sean Stanley Quartet
- Tickets start at \$40 per person, with discounted rates available for select groups





Volunteering with the NPC

Niagara Parks nominated six volunteers to be recognized by the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards; an initiative by the Province of Ontario to celebrate volunteers. The following volunteers were recognized at a formal event on May 30th with Chair Gale in attendance.

- **Pat Essex:** 20 Year Award (Ms. Essex received this posthumously as she lost her battle with cancer 2 days before the event)
- **Stephen Priddle:** 10 Year Award
- **Dennis and Laurie Cheredar:** 10 Year Award
- **Margaret Woodhead:** 5 Year Award
- **Rebecca Belashov:** Youth Award

Niagara Parks and the Niagara Parks Foundation has a dedicated group of volunteers that provided over 2,413 hours of service in 2023.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please visit Niagara Parks website for details regarding Volunteer Opportunities. Volunteers are the Ambassadors of Niagara Parks who put their heart and soul into making the Niagara Parks experience memorable.



Engineering, Parking and Transportation

25 public electric vehicle charging stations have been installed across the park including:

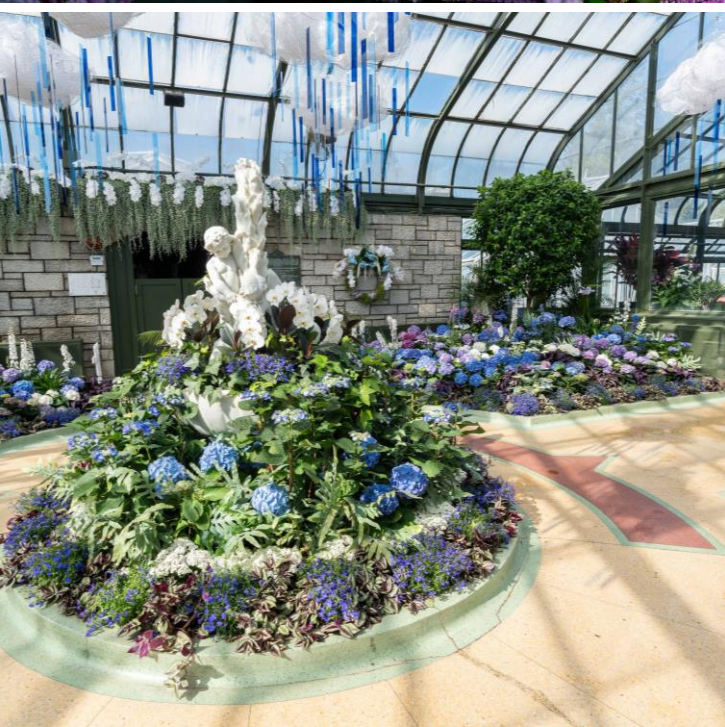
Site	Brand	# Of EV Chargers	Charger Types
Maintenance Centre	Leviton	1	1 Leviton
Queen Victoria Place	Tesla	4	2 Tesla, 2 Generic
Falls Parking Lot	Tesla	8	4 Tesla, 4 Generic
Laura Secord Homestead	Tesla	2	1 Tesla, 1 Generic
Old Fort Erie	Tesla	2	1 Tesla, 1 Generic
Kingsbridge Park	Tesla	4	2 Tesla, 2 Generic
Legends Golf Parking Lot	Porsche	2	2 Porsche
Whirlpool Golf Parking Lot	Porsche	2	2 Porsche





Queenston Heights Tennis and Pickleball Courts

- Removal of the existing courts in the fall of 2024 to build four tennis courts and four pickleball courts ready for use in the spring of 2025
- Work at Queenston Heights Park has also included repaving portions of the parking lots and the replacement of nine sets of recreational staircases



Parks, Environment and Culture

The Annual Hydrangea Display

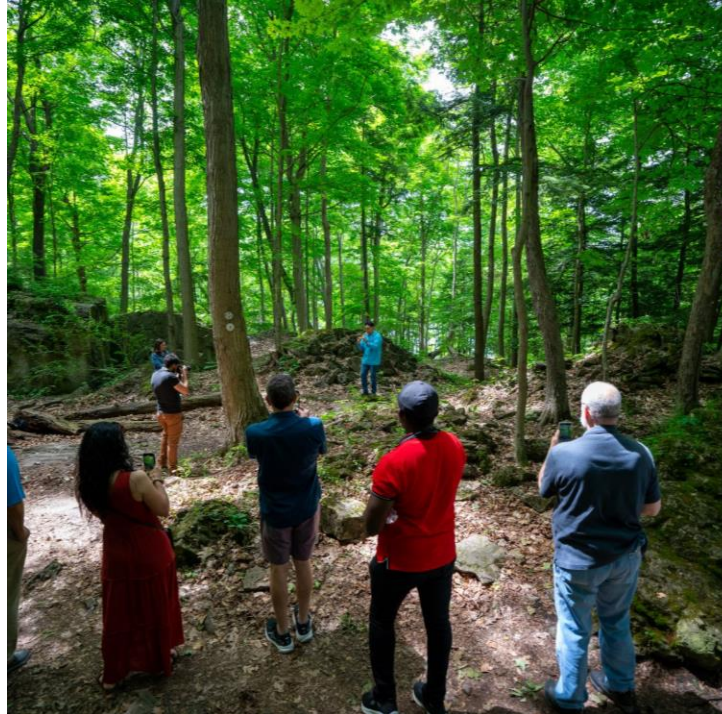
May 4 – May 26 at Niagara Parks Floral Showhouse.

- This year's theme of "Spring Showers" featured blue, purple, pink and white Hydrangeas accented by Delphiniums, Fox Gloves and Martha Washington Geraniums.
- The Niagara Parks Floral Showhouse is a lush oasis featuring collections of orchids, succulents and other tropical plant species that are on display throughout the year along with floral shows that reflect the changing seasons. With seven shows per year, something new is always in bloom.



Rekindling All Our Relations Launch Ceremony

- Aligning with National Indigenous History Month, a ceremony was held at the Niagara Glen on June 1st, to officially launch the new audio tour experience created by Indigenous community member and Niagara Parks partner Michele-Elise Burnett, *Rekindling All our Relations*.
- The ceremony included guest speakers, musical performances and guided tours of the new experience featuring live music and storytelling.
- Chair Bob Gale, Foundation Director Sylvie Chartrand-Rafi, tour curator and producer Michele-Elise Burnett along with special guests were in attendance.
- Self-guided hiking tour that invites participants on an immersive journey through the breathtaking landscapes of the Niagara Glen in a profound exploration of Indigenous wisdom and connection.





Prescribed Burns Program

- 2024 was the earliest and one of the most successful seasons for the prescribed burn program.
- Five burn sites covering over 120 acres were burned by NPC's prescribed burn team, including both the Chippawa Battlefield and south plains were completely burned for the first time; also burned Legacy Garden, were very large key areas for the restoration of prairie grass lands and Oak Savanna.





Partnerships

- In collaboration with Brock University's Earth Science Department, a student researcher has been hired to develop interpretive and educational materials related to Niagara Parks geological formations and natural history
- In collaboration with Brock University and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA), a research grant has been secured to study and build connections to nature. This year-long research project will assist NPC and NPCA to develop messaging and programs for visitors to natural areas to build support and appreciation for environmental protection.
- A group of Niagara College Restoration students recently completed a land management plan for the Chinquapin Oak Savannah, located between the Botanical Gardens Arboretum and the Niagara Gorge
- Several Niagara College students participated in a tree hazard assessment along the trails in Queenston Heights. This assessment was helpful to proactively identify safety hazards due to tree defects





- As part of the new MOU with Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, a soil analysis program has been developed which will provide soil profiles for several areas across Niagara Parks.
 - Soil analysis is critical for guiding tree species selection, providing recommendations for soil amendments/improvements and identifying any issues that may inhibit tree growth (e.g. high salt concentrations).
- NPC continues to be a member of the Greening the Landscape Research Consortium in which we are participating in three case studies related to regreening and climate change, with a focus on canopy cover climate readiness, public perceptions of tree planting initiatives, and tools and techniques for successful tree planting survival.



School of Horticulture Mentorship Program

- The conclusion of the winter semester at the School of Horticulture signifies the culmination of the 3rd-year Capstone Course – The Mentorship Program.
- In this program, students are paired with industry mentors who align with their career aspirations. Together, they work to build the students' professional networks and complete their individual Student Development Plans, focusing on advancing the skills relevant to their career directions.





Dufferin Islands Visitor Experience and Ecological Enhancement Initiative

- SCHOLLEN & Company Inc. has prepared concepts and design considerations for improving pedestrian access throughout the Islands.
- Based on staff feedback and Commission approval, updated designs are in progress, to develop a pedestrian route around the outer loop of Dufferin Islands, redesign a sustainable picnic area along the outer loop of the Islands, and design an alternate accessible trailhead to the interior trail system across from the existing restroom facilities.



Questions and Comments



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Indigenous Programming Overview

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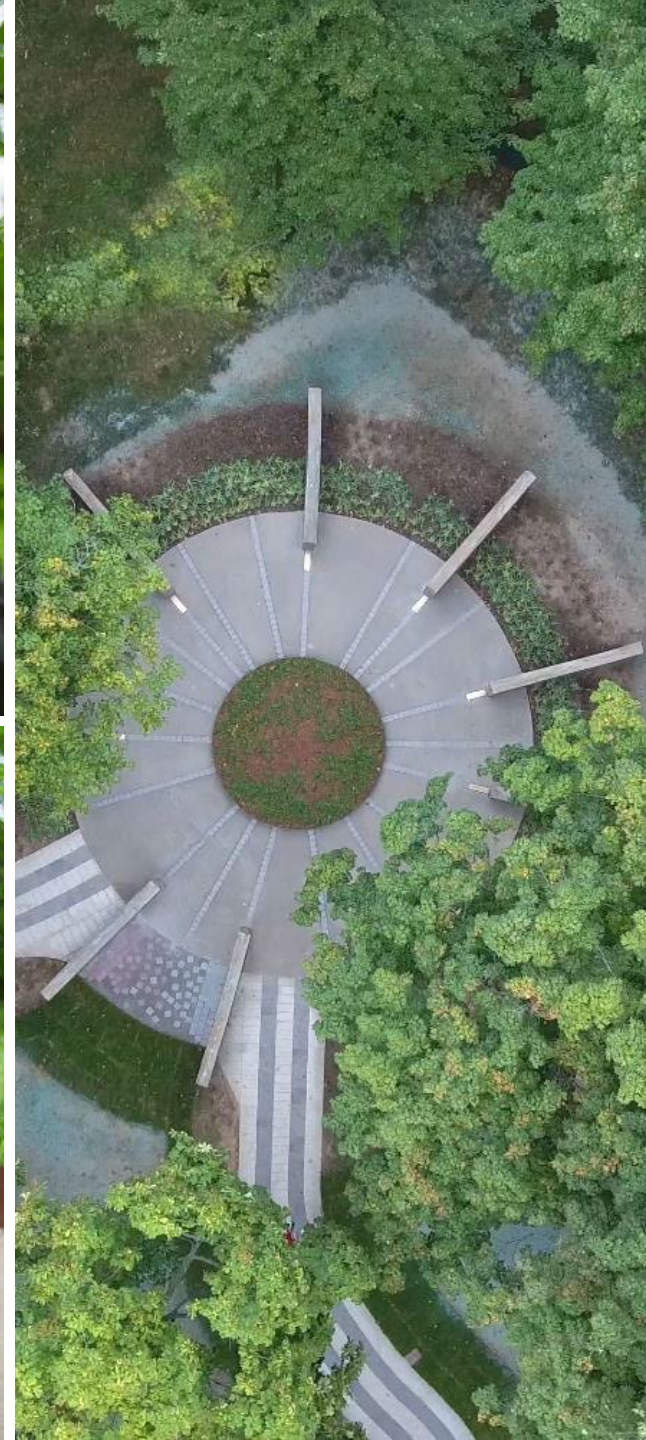
Key Interpretive Sites

1. Landscape of Nations
Commemorative Memorial
Queenston Heights Park

2. Niagara Parks Power Station
Queen Victoria Park

3. Journey Behind the Falls
Visitor Gallery





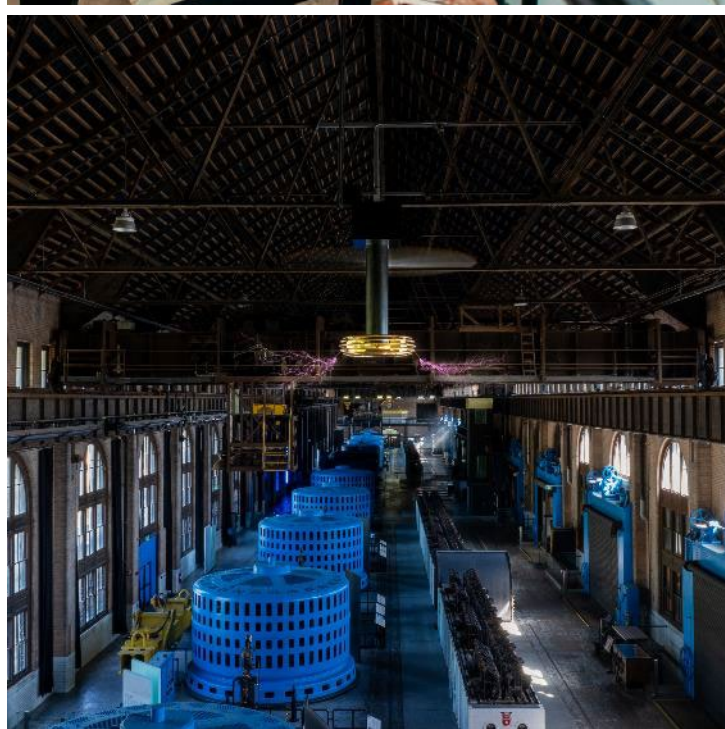
Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial

Opened to the public in 2016 on Queenston Heights, this site is the centrepiece of our Indigenous storytelling.



Niagara Parks Power Station

Highlighting the significance of the river and fresh water for the people living along the Niagara corridor for 13,000 years.





Journey Behind the Falls – Visitor Gallery

Display unveiled in 2023 with the Indigenous version of the 'Maid' story and the artwork of Oren Lyons.

Special Events

1. Indigenous Veterans Day
2. National Day for Truth & Reconciliation





Valour and Victory: Honouring Indigenous Veterans

November 8th is Indigenous Veterans Day in Canada and we have commemorated this day for the past seven years.



National Day for Truth & Reconciliation

September 30, 2023

The visit of the Prime Minister and Phyllis Webstad at the Niagara Parks Power Station plaza.





Tours & Programming

- Indigenous Niagara Heritage & Legacy Tour
- Rekindling All Our Relations
- The POWER of MUSIC Partnership with Niagara Jazz Festival



Interpretive Signage

- Self-Guided Tours
(e.g. Pollinator Gardens Route)
- Place-Based Learning
- Event Commemoration

