



**NIAGARA
PARKS**

Business Highlights Presentation

Niagara Parks Commission – Public Meeting

Thursday, May 8, 2025



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, Culture and Gaming
- 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



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.





Funding & Operations

- One of the region's largest employers; 2,000 headcount in peak season; \$70 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:**
 - *New flying theatre attraction*
 - *Repairs and maintenance*





Mother's Day at Niagara Parks

- Mother's Day Brunch at Legends on the Niagara
 - May 11: Seatings at 11:00 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
- (Sold-out) Mother's Day Tea at McFarland House
 - May 10 & 11
- (Sold-out) Mother's Day Brunch at Queenston Heights Restaurant
 - May 10 & 11
- (Sold-out) Whispering Strings: Celtic Melodies for Mom
 - May 10 - 2:30 p.m. at Queenston Chapel at Laura Secord Homestead



Earth Day Celebration Event, Tuesday April 22

- Third anniversary of the Niagara Parks Foundation at the Butterfly Conservatory and Botanical Gardens
- Speakers: Debbie Whitehouse (Foundation Chair), Bob Gale, Nokomis (Grandmother) Cindilee, Julia Murray (Royal Oak Community School)
- Updates on:
 - Foundation 2024 Impact Report
 - Foundation Projects: Dufferin Islands Visitor Experience and Ecological Enhancement Initiative; Indigenous Audio Tour at Niagara Glen; Tree planting initiatives, including the Toonies for Trees program (raised over \$40,000, planted 7,351 trees in 2024)
 - Plans for Children's Garden

(From left) Chair of the Niagara Parks Foundation, Debbie Whitehouse, Niagara Parks Chair Bob Gale, Nokomis (Grandmother) Cindilee, and Michele-Elise Burnett participated in a ceremonial tree planting during the Earth Day Celebration Event on April 22 at the Butterfly Conservatory.



Earth Day Celebration Event

- Nokomis (Grandmother) Cindilee led a ceremonial tree planting in the conservatory plaza space
- Optional walking tours of the proposed location of the Children's Garden Space
- Students from Royal Oak Community School attended and visited the Butterfly Conservatory and took part in a seed ball making workshop
 - Seed balls will be used for an upcoming restoration project supported by the Foundation
 - Guests took home complimentary tree saplings to plant
- Media Coverage included [YourTV](#); [St. Catharines Standard](#) and [Niagara-on-the-Lake Local](#)



Business Development

Retail and Attractions

- Whirlpool Aero Car and White Water Walk now open for the season
- Director of Retail and Attractions and Buying Team have attended Souvenir Gift trade shows to source new products for Niagara Parks retail
- Table Rock and Butterfly Conservatory have done excellent job merchandising Niagara Parks Foundation products



Business Development

Communications and Marketing

- 2025 spring/summer passes launched on April 19
- Supporting collateral pieces delivered for Curiosity is Calling seasonal campaign including passports and brochures
- Domestic campaigns underway in domestic, American and international markets in partnership with Destination Ontario
- New interpretative content and screens installed to refresh visitor experience at White Water Walk
- New digital content added to video wall at Butterfly Conservatory
- Briefings executed with key partners/stakeholders (Destination Ontario, Tourism Partnership Ontario, Niagara Falls Tourism) on announcement/launch plans for new attraction



Business Development

Culinary

- Table Rock hosted a full building buyout for Labatt at in March, featuring various food stations, canapés, and a live performance by country star Owen Reigling
- Culinary Services held sold-out Easter brunches at Legends on the Niagara (over 400 guests) and Queenston Heights Restaurant (250 guests).
- Table Rock House Restaurant hosted a sold-out Chef's Signature Dinner with a unique 5-course meal
- Culinary Services is recruiting for the 2025 season
 - Attending local job fairs
 - Participated in the "Feast On Mixer" at the Hamilton Visitor Experience Centre in preparation for hosting their own mixer next February.



Golf Season Launch April 18

- Whirlpool Golf Course and Legends on the Niagara (Chippawa and Ussher's Creek courses) opened on April 18.
- The practice facility and golf academy are also open with various spring and summer programs.
- Legends Battlefield golf course will open on May 16 with new cart paths spanning over 11 kilometres, including drainage support.
- All Access packages for championship courses are sold out
 - Limited quantities of the Chippawa 9-hole short course packages are still available but expected to sell out soon.



Business Development

Sales and Events

April Sales activities included:

Hosted:

- 17 Business event groups
- Nine client site inspections
- Two virtual meetings
- Eight familiarization tours
- Two virtual trainings
- NPC Educator Open House (April 10)
- Five wedding ceremonies and three wedding receptions

Attended:

- Niagara Falls Tourism Sales Mission (April 29 – 30)



Business Development

Human Resources

- In April: 705 seasonal bargaining unit and seasonal students hired/rehired with 55% of the total representing Bargaining unit recalls
 - Recruitment remains ongoing for front line operations.



Planning, Environment and Culture

Heritage and Legacy

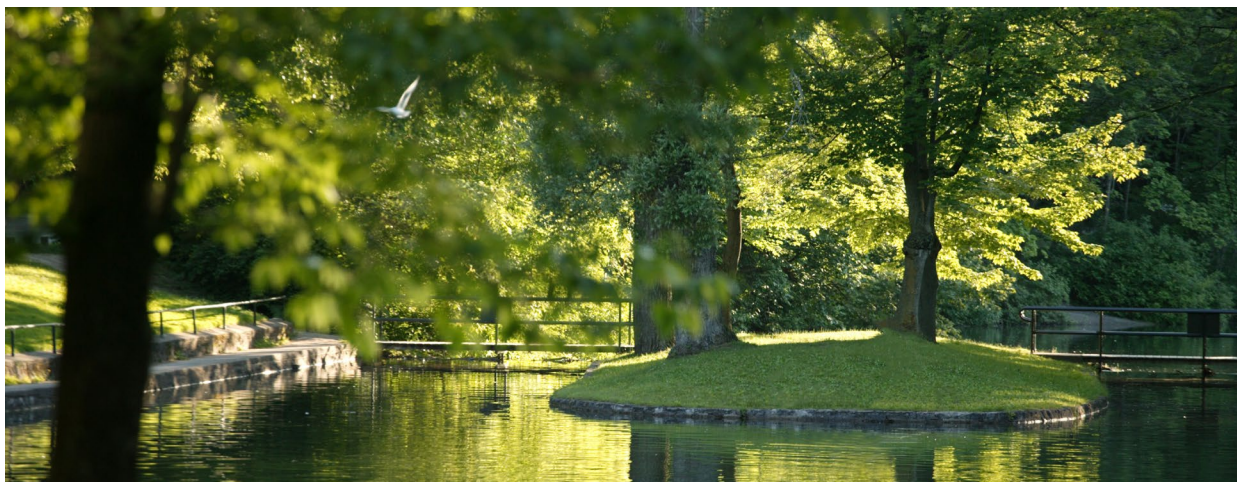
- Niagara Parks attended Brock University's 2024 Co-op Career and Experiential Education Department Award Ceremony
- Awards included:
 - Co-op Employer of the Year (both Large Organization Category and Social Sciences Faculty Category)
 - Experiential Education Community Partner of the Year
 - Outstanding Co-Op Supervisors: Melissa Bottomley and Janice Spino
 - Recognition for longstanding work with co-op students (Rebecca Pascoe and Jim Hill)
- Attended the Museums Canada Conference
- Work has begun to open all Heritage Sites on May 10



Engineering and Parks Operations

Engineering and Project Management

- **Annual Rock Scaling:** Inspections of multiple areas complete. Scaling at Table Rock completed on April 17 to allow for the Journey Behind the Falls to open for the Easter weekend
- **White Water Walk:** Geotechnical and boardwalk inspections and boardwalk repairs completed on April 17 to allow for Easter weekend operation
- **Table Rock Elevators and Escalators:** Annual repairs and maintenance have been completed at Table Rock
- **Flying Theatre Update:** All containers of Brogent equipment have arrived on-site. Facility structural work is complete; structure is close to completion and ride assembly is ready to be installed. Retail and theming areas are well underway



Engineering and Parks Operations

Engineering and Project Management

- **Niagara Parkway Asphalt Resurfacing from Clifton Hill to Fraser Hill:** The Central Parks resurfacing project will begin April 22 and is expected to be complete by May 9, weather permitting.
- **Dufferin Islands Loop Resurfacing:** Schedule TBD
- **Pedestrian Bridge #35 Replacement in NOTL:** Scheduled to be completed May 23 and 24
- **WEGO Bus Stop Improvements;** Reconstruction of two southbound bus stops have been completed, at White Water Walk attraction and Queen Victoria Park near Grand View Marketplace.
- **Exploratory work at Journey Behind the Falls:** Additional tunnel being cleared and rock anchors being installed over the next couple of weeks.



Engineering and Parks Operations

Parks Operations

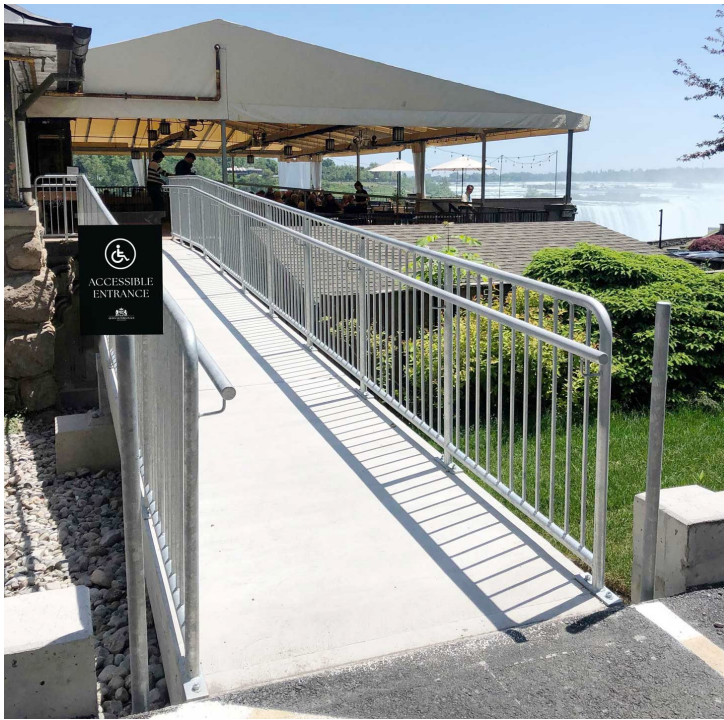
- Launch dock replaced at the Niagara Parks Marina
- Waste and recycle compound at the Whirlpool Aero Car updated with the installation of new fencing and a retaining wall
- Tree pruning of Aerial Adventure Course at Thompson's Point
- Inspection of Niagara Parks urban forest conducted prior to each long weekend
- Spring trail inspection underway to identify potential hazards
- Management of vegetation along Queenston Hill for improved viewpoint and public safety
- Supporting environmental services with litter picking in high-risk areas over Parapet Wall
- Removal of aged willows prior to bridge restoration at Miller's Creek
- WFOL final cleanup and beginning the restoration of displays in preparation for 2025/26 season



Engineering and Parks Operations

Information Technology

- Onboarding of new Director of Information complete
- New self-serve Culinary kiosk at Table Rock Quick serve installed and fully operational
- Whirlpool Aero Car IT infrastructure enhancements completed
- Queenston Heights Courts wireless solution installed and activated
- New switches and networking enhancements of Queen Victoria Place data room



Engineering and Parks Operations

Health, Safety & Compliance

- April 3: Bi-Annual All JHSC meeting at Legends on the Niagara.
- New Field Safety Specialist starts April 28; Health and Safety Co-op Student starts May 5
- Conducted Health and Safety training for current and returning employees in April
- Offered external training in April (Elevated Work Platform, First Aid, Forklift, Working at Heights); Chainsaw, Chipper, and JHSC Basic Certification training scheduled for May
- Reviewed accessibility requirements ahead of parking lot paving; Accessibility Audit submitted to the Ministry
- Completed fire panel upgrades at White Water Walk and Old Fort Erie; Butterfly Conservatory upgrade to finish before May



Niagara Parks Police Service

Niagara Parks Police Service representatives attended:

- Planning meetings for NG-911 implementation with the Niagara Regional Police Service, the St. Catharines Fire Department, and involved contractors
- Leadership meetings with municipal, provincial and federal law enforcement agencies concerning border security issues
- Meeting with Niagara Falls Fire Department to discuss operational matters
- Administered the PIN physical fitness testing for the Provincial Offences Officer selection process in cooperation with Niagara College
- The Canadian American Law Enforcement Organization (CALEO) Annual Symposium
- Members of the High Angle River Team participated in monthly skills training
- Operator training with the Niagara Regional Police Service
- St. Anthony Catholic Elementary School for community engagement with Early Years, Kindergarten students





Upcoming Events

- May 3 – June 1: Hydrangea Display at the Floral Showhouse
- May 10: Heritage Sites Re-open
- May 10: Whispering Strings: Celtic Melodies for Mom Performance at Queenston Chapel (SOLD-OUT)
- May 10 –11: Mother's Day Tea at McFarland House
- May 11: Mother's Day Brunch at Niagara Parks Restaurants
- May 14: New Starbucks outlet opens at Grand View
- May 16: Victoria Day Long Weekend and Kick-off to Falls Fireworks Series
- May 28: Women's Golf Day – 10th Anniversary
- June 13: Music Trivia Night at Old Fort Erie
- June 15: Father's Day Special/Brunch at Niagara Parks restaurants
- June 16: Tennis and Pickleball courts to open at Queenston Heights Park
- June 20: Niagara Jazz Festival's 'Summer Mardi Gras' flagship event at Oakes Garden Theatre
- June 21: Dr. Rizal Plaque Unveiling

Questions & Comments





Parking at Niagara Parks

- As a self-funded agency, Niagara Parks uses the dollars generated from parking to fund repairs and improvements needed across the Park.
- Niagara Parks offers a wide variety of parking options across the park to fit every need and budget including:
 - Flat fee parking: 4 lots ranging between \$10 (Rapidsview) and \$36 (Falls Parking Lot)
 - Free parking: across 60 different parkette lots located along the 56km
- The Annual Parking Pass offers an exceptional value and is sold at \$50. Site specific annual passes are also available.
- Adventure Pass online purchasers receive free parking with their pass at Rapidsview, where they board the WEGO and leave the driving to us!





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Capital Projects Update

Property and Infrastructure Committee

May 1, 2025



Capital Spending Summary 2024-2025

YTD Spend: \$42,118,462
Committed: \$20,162,851
Carry Forward: \$2,806,902

\$65,109,726

Unallocated : \$3,634,906

Total: \$69,000,000



Recommendations

That the Property and Infrastructure Committee recommends that The Niagara Parks Commission:

1. Receive for information update on 2024-25 capital projects.
2. Approve completion of the projects contained in the fiscal 2024-25 capital budget.
3. Approve the allocation of an additional \$505K to CP1265-Fort Erie Breakwall from the 2025-26 unallocated capital account, bringing the project total to \$2.3M.



Refurbished Park Benches Oakes Garden Theatre



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WEGO Wrap Refresh



Parks Equipment





Parks Equipment





Culinary Equipment

- Walk-in Fridge at QVP (Right)
- Soup Kettles at Table Rock Restaurant (Top Left)
- Coffee Machines at Table Rock Quick Serve



WEGO Garage Expansion

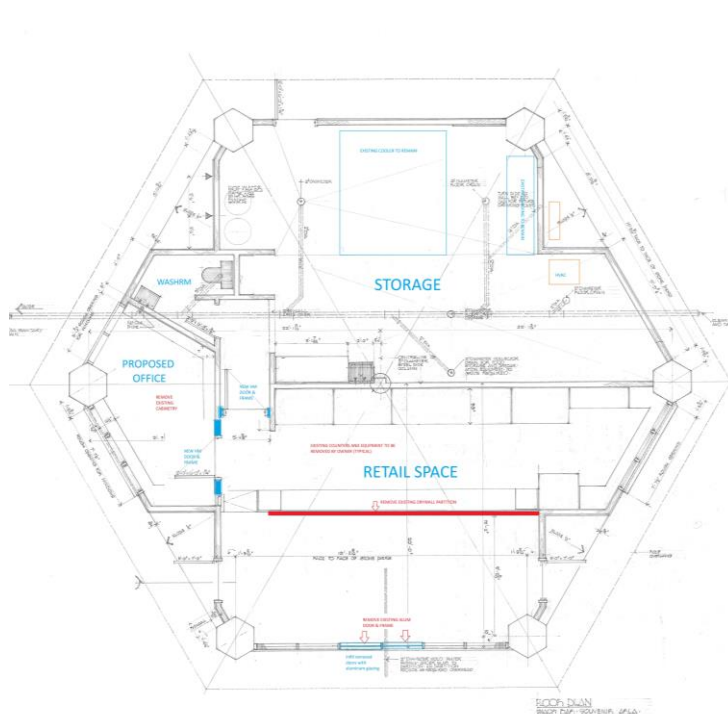
Contract has been awarded to Manorcove Construction Kicked off March 24th.





Winter Festival of Lights Building Water Service



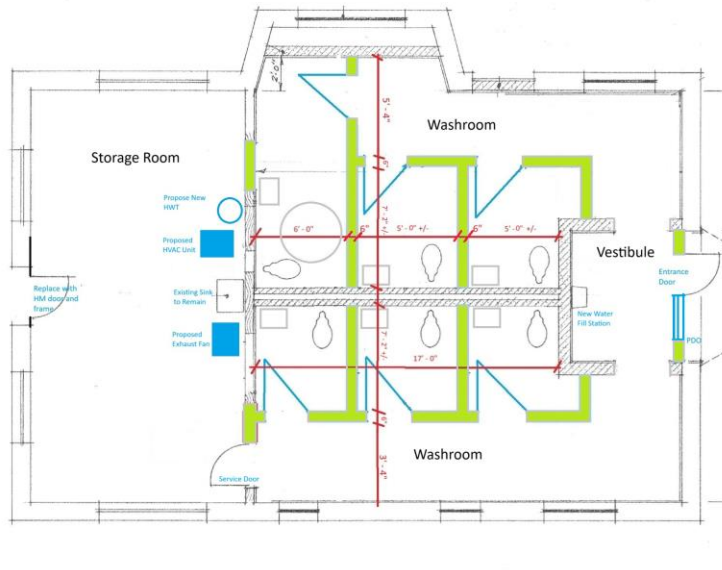


Queenston Courts Renovations

In preparation for the tennis and pickleball courts opening in Spring 2025.



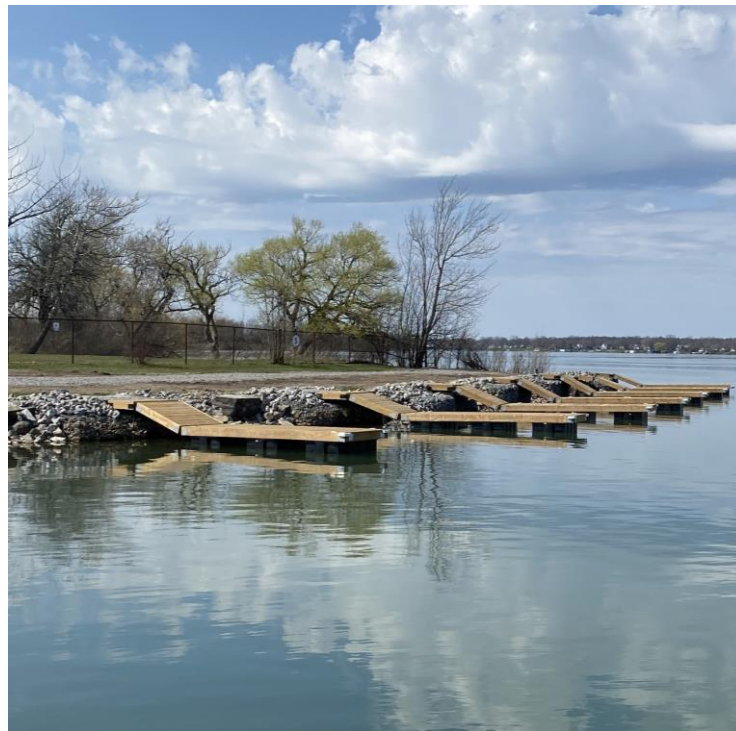
Creche Washroom
SK-2 Proposed Layout



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Queenston Heights Creche Washroom Renovations

Spring 2025. Updating to 6 All Gender
Washrooms.



Marina Improvements

Included;

- Dock and Float Repairs and Replacements where required (Right)
- New Boat Launch Dock System (Left)
- Shoreline and Pier Wall Repair
- Ongoing Electrical Upgrades



Marina Pier Wall Repair



Marina Electrical Upgrades

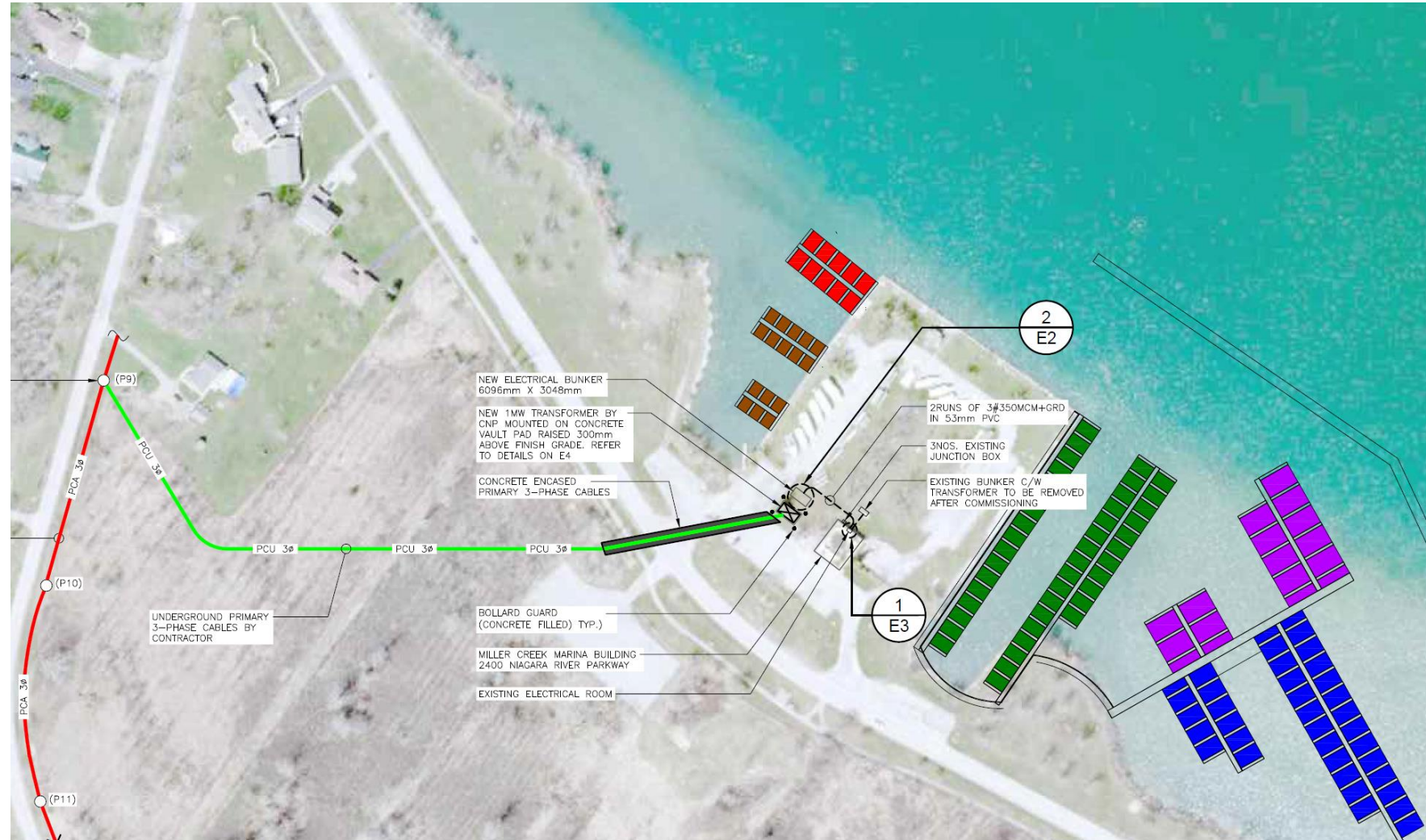
Design Complete.

Tendering early Summer for projected construction in early Fall.

Increasing compacity for current and future electrical requirements.

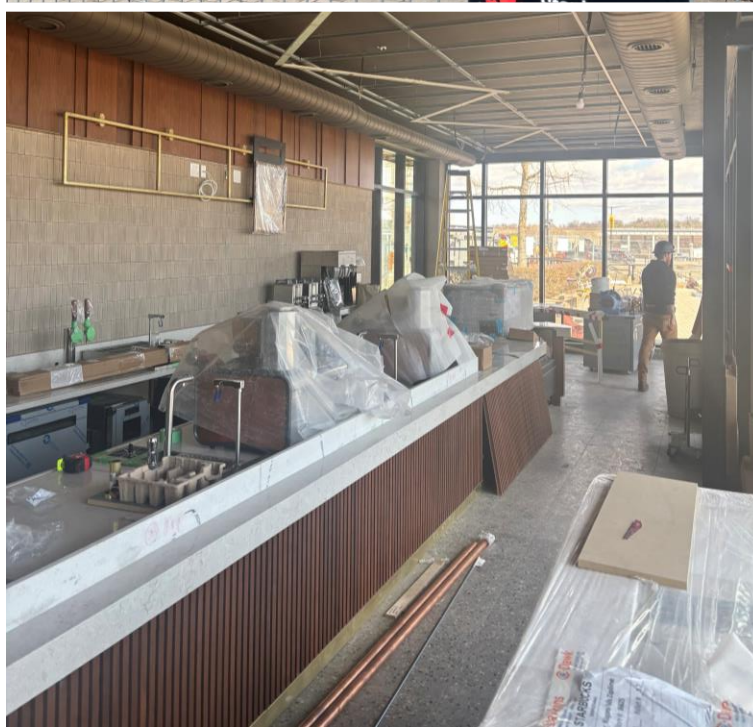
Work includes;

- Running new high-voltage lines to the Marina
- New Electrical Bunker
- New Transformer
- New Electrical Room at Marina



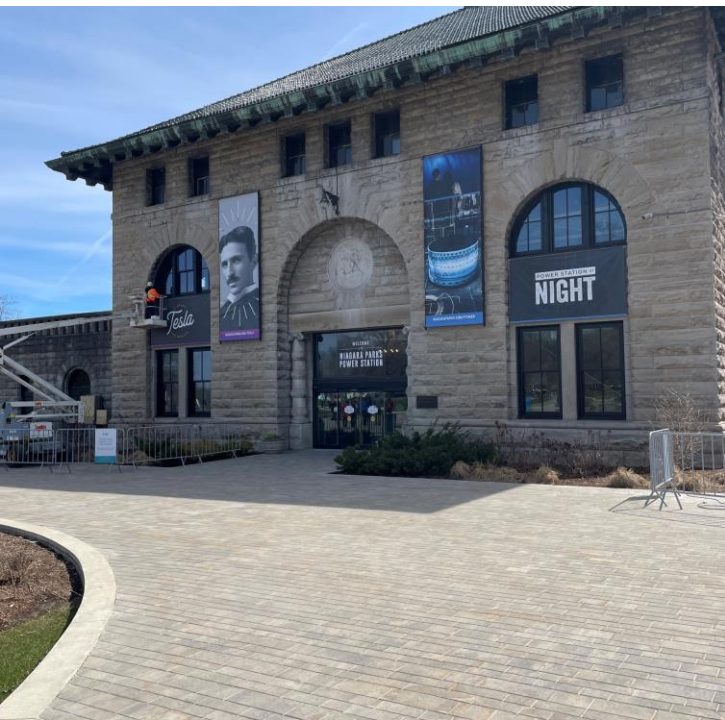


Grandview Updates





Lower Landing Queueing Area Expansion



NPPS Window Upgrades

Majority of North and South faces replaced in early spring. Two windows on the south to be completed in Fall after the Tesla Exhibit.



NPPS South Emergency Stairs





QVP Public Washroom

Expected completion in mid June.





Whirlpool Golf Cart Path and Parking Enhancements

- Asphalt restoration of 18th green cart path and cart storage area.





Legends Cart Path Paving

Total Length of Path System: 11km

Paving Kicked Off April 16th

Paving Expected Completion : May 2nd

Sod Restoration; Without the use of large vehicles will be on-going and the project is expected to have full completion by June 13th

<Before Pictures

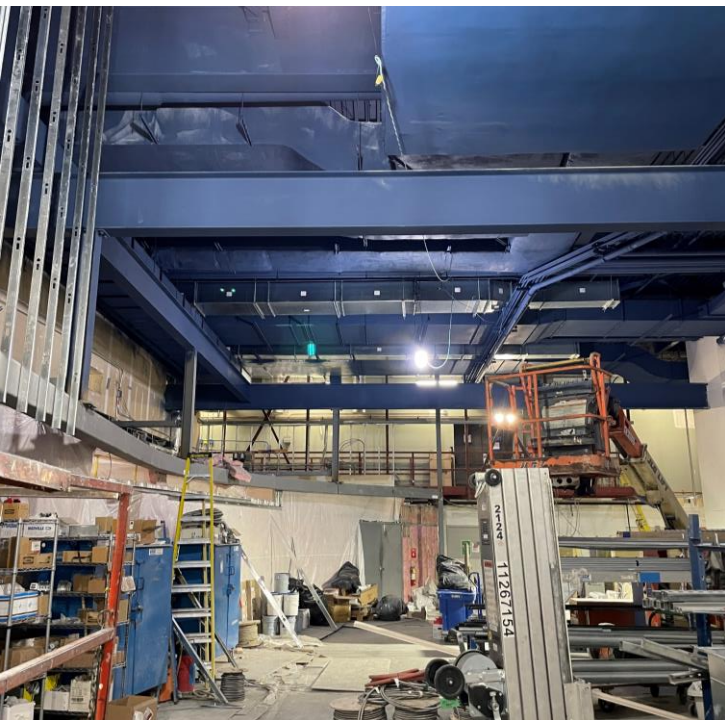


Legends Paving Preparations Complete





Legends Pathway Paving



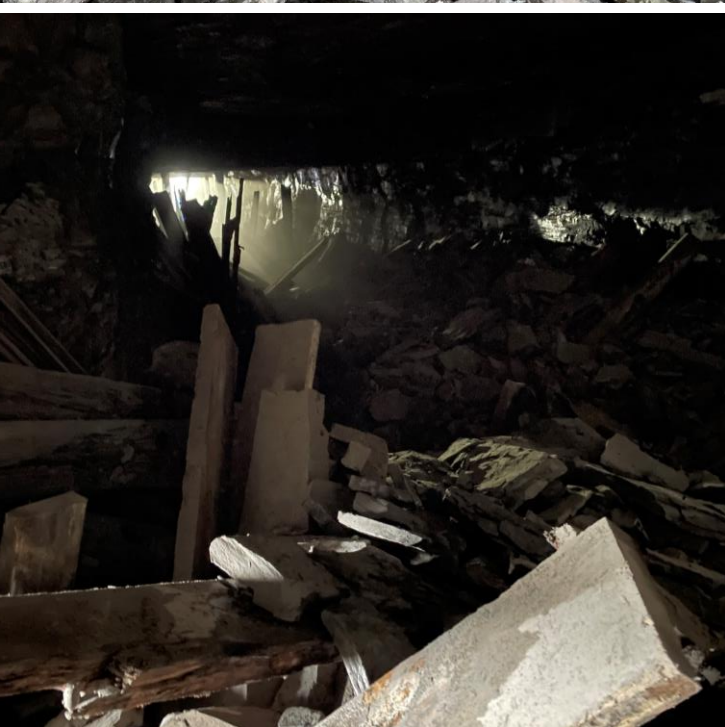
Flying Theatre Construction





Journey Behind the Falls New Tunnel





Journey Behind the Falls New Tunnel



Annual Scaling and Inspections

- Scaling over the JBTF has been completed.
- Ongoing inspections are in progress throughout the park.



Ice Boom Removal

- The Parks Team cleared the ice and debris early Monday morning and NPPS was able to reopen operations by 9am Easter Monday.



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2025-26 Capital Projects

Overnight High Voltage Electrical Inspections

Upcoming inspections with NPEI that require electrical shutdowns in QVP;

- **May 6th** Incline Railway Substation Maintenance 11pm-4am
- **May 8th** Illumination Tower & OPG Building 2am-7am
- **May 9th** QVP Refractory High Voltage Switchgear and Transformer Inside of Fenced Compound 2am- 6am

The next group of shutdown dates still to be determined based off requirements;

- Police building and Sys 9029
- Murray Hill and Bunker
- Oaks Garden





Asphalt Paving Clifton Hill – Fraser Hill (NPPS)



Week #1 – April 22nd – April 25th

- Mobilization and Layout
- Concrete curb removals

Week #2 – April 28th – May 2nd

- Milling of Southbound Lanes (April 28th – 30th)
- Milling of Northbound Lanes (April 30th – May 2nd)
- Base Repairs as required

Week #3- May 5th -May 9th

- Southbound Lane Paving (May 5th – May 7th)
- Northbound Lane Paving May 7th – May 9th)
- Line Painting will begin

Week #4 – May 13th – May 15th

- Placement of the new jersey barriers in the Northbound Lanes from Murray to Clifton Hill
- Cleanup and demobilization



Falls Avenue West Sidewalk Replacement Clifton Hill to Niagara River Parkway

From May 2nd to May 16th

- Niagara Parkway: The southbound curb lane will be closed south of Falls Ave.
- Falls Avenue: Closure of the southbound access lane between Niagara Parkway and Clifton Hill.
- Access from Niagara Parkway southbound lanes will remain open for traffic.



Dufferin Islands Paving

Projected for late May to Early June.
Dependent on Parkway Paving Completion.





Fort Erie Shoreline Protection and Breakwall Repairs

Proposed work tendered for 295 meters of;

- In-water Shoreline Protection
 - Breakwall Replacement
 - Sidewalk Replacement
-
- 1.8M 2025-26 approved budget.
 - 2.3M Winning bid.
 - Staff recommending approval of additional 505K from unallocated to complete all proposed work.





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