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Introduction

The Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) was founded in 1885 as a self-funding Agency of the Ontario Government. The Commission is an “operational enterprise” reporting to the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, & Sport that operates at “no cost to the taxpayers”.

When first established, the Commission was known as ‘The Commissioners for the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park’ and only controlled land adjacent to the Horseshoe Falls, which is on the Canadian side of the Niagara River. In 1927 the Commission was renamed ‘The Niagara Parks Commission’ and today this public park system totals 1,325 hectares (3,274 acres), plus 56 km (35 miles) of roadway & recreation trail adjacent to the Niagara River, connecting the Town of Fort Erie south of the Falls & the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake north of the Falls.

The Commission is governed by a provincially-appointed board of 12 individuals (Commissioners) who meet on a bi-monthly basis. Four of these appointees have been nominated to serve on the board from the local municipalities of: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls and the Region of Niagara.

The Niagara Parks Commission’s Mission

“Preserving and promoting the natural and cultural heritage along the Niagara River corridor.”

The Niagara Parks Commission’s Vision Statement

“By 2028, Ontario's Niagara Parks will be:

- An innovative example of sustainability as the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River corridor
- A welcoming, accessible and inspiring place offering world-class natural, historical, and authentic experiences
- A source of national pride and identity
- One of the most spectacular Parks in the world”
As an operational enterprise agency of the provincial government, the Commission is self-funded and must generate income from the operation of its own attractions, restaurants, retail shops, parking lots, heritage sites and golf courses. Every dollar spent within the NPC helps preserve the nature & heritage of the falls and the Niagara River corridor.

The revenues that are generated must support: a police force, garbage collection, engineering & horticulture staff as well as a transportation system. Revenues must also support numerous activities and facilities which are available to the public for FREE, such as:

- Floral displays throughout the Park, including the Botanical Gardens, Centennial Lilac Gardens, the Floral Clock and Oakes Garden Theatre.
- Regular Falls Fireworks, concerts and entertainment
- Dufferin Islands Nature Area
- Hundreds of hectares of lawn and shade trees, playgrounds and park benches
- Boat launching areas
- Maintenance of the Niagara Parkway to which British Prime Minister Winston Churchill referred to as “the prettiest Sunday Drive in the world” - featuring benches to relax and enjoy the view or picnic along the route.
- The Niagara River Recreation Trail for jogging, biking, walking or wheelchairs
- Over 100 historic plaques and monuments, highlighting events and persons of local and national importance
Facts & Figures

Niagara River Corridor

- The Niagara River is 58 kilometres (36 miles) long
- Flows from south to north from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario
- Is technically a ‘strait’ (a narrow waterway connecting two large bodies of water)
- The elevation difference between the two lakes is about 99 metres (326 ft.), with half of the drop occurring at the Falls
- Water entering the Niagara River represents about 20% of the world's fresh water & comes from the Upper Great Lakes drainage basin: Lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, & Erie
- The Niagara River has numerous environmental designations, such as the globally significant “Important Bird Area”
- The Canadian or Horseshoe Falls is 57 metres (188 feet) high
- The Bridal Veil Falls in 24 metres (78ft) high
- The American Falls ranges from 21 - 34 metres (70 - 110 ft.) high
- The Niagara Gorge extends north from the Falls for 11 kilometres (7 miles) downstream to the foot of the escarpment at Queenston
- Over 169,000 cubic metres (6 million cubic ft.) of water go over the brink every minute during peak daytime hours, enough to fill 1 million bathtubs
- The Horseshoe Falls is separated from the American Falls by Luna Island and the small Bridal Veil Falls and Goat Island
- Niagara Falls is NOT the tallest, widest, or fastest - it also is NOT listed as any of the Seven Wonders of the World - it is the combination of height and volume that make it so unique
- Approximate width of each crest:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Horseshoe Falls</td>
<td>670m (2,200 ft.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Falls</td>
<td>260m (850 ft.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridal Veil Falls</td>
<td>15m (50 ft.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna Island</td>
<td>30.5m (100 ft.)</td>
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Erosion of the Falls

• The falls recedes or moves back each year
• Before 1950 the falls receded an estimated 3 to 4 feet per year
• In 1950 the “Niagara River Water Diversion” Treaty was created between Canada and the United States to control the amount of water that could be diverted for industrial and power generating purposes.

  • Combined total volume of water flowing over all the falls during “tourist hours” (daylight hours) would be 2,832 cubic m/sec (100,000 cubic ft./sec.) or 37.4 million Imperial gallons per minute.
  • After the treaty the erosion has slowed to an estimated 1 ft. or 30 cm every 10 years
  • It is estimated to have taken 10,000-12,000 years for the Falls to recede through the gorge, from its original position 11 km (7 mi) downstream at the Queenston Heights escarpment, to its current position at Table Rock.

Meaning of the Word Niagara

• The word “Onguiahra” (pronounced on-ge-a-ra) appears on maps as early as 1641
• “Onguiahra” and the later version “Ongiara” are Aboriginal words usually interpreted as “The Strait” or “Great Throat”; although “Thunder of Waters” is sometimes given.
When Have the Falls Stopped?

March 1848
- High winds forced millions of tons of ice to clog the source of the river
- Locals, walked or rode horses over the exposed basin
- The self-made dam held the water back until a shift allowed the pent-up weight of water to break through approximately 30 hours after it stopped

Summer 1969
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Dam built at Goat Island to de-water the American Falls
- Clean/reshape American Falls

Proposed 2019
- Bridges on the U.S. side of the Falls need to be replaced
- Seen as the easiest and safest way to complete the work
- De-watering only affects the American/Bridal-veil Falls

Ice Boom
- Placed in the river between the Town of Fort Erie, Ontario and City of Buffalo, New York
- 2.7 km (1.7 mi.) long made up by steel pontoons - each pontoon is 30 feet long
- Prevents ice from Lake Erie flowing down the river and damaging the shoreline and bridges
- Also prevents damming of the river which caused the falls to be stopped in 1848 and may slow down or stop power production on both sides of the river
- Placement is usually when the Lake Erie water temperature drops to 4 degrees Celsius (39 degrees Fahrenheit) & removed when the ice covers less than 650 sq. km (250 sq. mi.) of the eastern end of Lake Erie.
Ice Bridge

- Ice which forms down-river from the Ice Boom breaks up and flows over the falls
- When the ice emerges at the base of the falls it is forced to the surface where it re-freezes
- Can build up to 10 stories
- Until 1912 entertainment & refreshments would be set up on the frozen lower river; however, a mild spell caused the ice to break up and 3 people were carried down-river and died
- Since 1912 access to this area is forbidden for safety purposes

Whirlpool

- There are other waterfalls in the world – but there is only one Whirlpool
- Class 6 Rapids – 40km (25 miles) per hour
- Created by the water rushing through the sharp 90° turn
- Flows counter-clockwise
- The diversion of water at night slows the flow of water enough to cease this effect

Old Scow

- Summer 1918
- A steel barge, loaded with rock and with three men aboard
- Being towed by a Hydro tug when its tow line broke
- One man swam ashore; two other men remained on board and opened the hatches in the bottom of the barge to let water in, grounding the barge on the river bottom
- A line was shot from the roof of the Toronto Hydro Powerhouse and then rigged to a buoy
- The line became tangled with the buoy
- Red Hill Sr., volunteered to swing himself out to the obstruction, he clung from the line by his legs while he straightened the lines
- Will Celebrate 100th anniversary in 2018 – if it doesn’t break free before then
Rainbow Bridge

• Opened 1941
• 168 m (550ft) downstream of original site of Upper Steel Arch or Honeymoon Bridge which was pushed off its moorings and destroyed by a massive ice jam in 1938
• Carillon Tower located on Canadian end of the Rainbow Bridge where recitals are performed on a regular basis during the summer & on special occasions

Nightly Illuminations

• Year-round – regardless of weather
• Starting at dusk
• Converted in the fall of 2016, to high-power, purpose designed and built multi-colour LED lights
• Lights are located on the Illumination Tower; on the roof of Table Rock Centre at the brink of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls; and in the Niagara Gorge across from the American Falls
• Special requests for colour illuminations can be made for charitable or non-profit purposes only
• Group tours can be booked with The Niagara Parks Commission which include a tour of the Illumination tower
• Paid for and controlled by the ‘Niagara Falls Illumination Board’ which consists of representatives from:
  • City of Niagara Falls, Ontario
  • City of Niagara Falls, New York
  • The Niagara Parks Commission
  • New York State Parks, Recreations & Historic Preservation
    • Niagara Falls State Park
  • Ontario Power Generation
  • New York Power Authority
Challenging the Falls
Stunting & Stunters
(or people who intentionally risked their lives)

**Going OVER the falls**
- Annie Edson Taylor was the first recorded person to go over the falls and survive
- David Munday and Steven Trotter went over twice surviving both attempts
- People have used barrels, inner-tubes, kayaks and jet-skis to go over the falls
- Of the 16 recorded trips over the falls by 14 people only 5 have died
- ‘Stunting’ in this form carries with it a fine of $10,000 CAD

**Tightrope walking above the gorge/rapids**
- Jean Francois Gravelet a.k.a ‘The Great Blondin’ was the first
  - Summer 1859
  - Made several crossings
    - On a bicycle
    - Blindfolded
    - Carrying his manager
    - And during one crossing he stopped part-way to cook an omelette
- Maria Spelterina
  - 1867
  - Only woman to tightrope walk over the gorge

**Tightrope walking over the falls**
- Nik Wallenda
  - Summer 2012
  - Broadcast on live television
  - Had to wear a tether for safety/insurance purposes

Similar professionals may submit proposals once every 20 years for consideration
‘The Miracle of Niagara’
(or someone who never planned to go over the falls but did anyway - and survived!)

- Summer 1960
- Jim Honeycutt took his co-workers children for a boat ride in the upper Niagara River
  - Deanne (17 years old)
  - Roger Woodward (7 years old)
- A mechanical failure left the boat drifting toward the brink of the falls
- The boat capsized throwing the three into the water
- Deanne and Roger were wearing life-jackets, Jim Honeycutt was not
- Deanne was rescued in the shallows on the U.S. side of the Horseshoe Falls
- Roger and Jim Honeycutt were swept over the falls – Honeycutt died
- Roger was rescued by a Maid of the Mist tour boat
- Roger Woodward is the first and only person known to have gone over the falls unintentionally and without any protective capsule or equipment and survive
- Roger visits regularly and was here to mark the 50th anniversary of his trip over the falls
Hydroelectric Power Stations in Niagara Parks

Retired Generating Stations

**Canadian Niagara Powerhouse**
- Located near the Floral Showhouse
- Built in the early 1900s
- It was the first powerhouse to produce hydroelectric power for transmission and sale outside of Niagara Falls, Canada
- It housed 11 generating units
- The discharge outlet for this plant can be seen at river level just to the north of the Journey Behind the Falls observation platform

**Toronto Powerhouse**
- Located across from the Floral Showhouse
- Completed in 1906
- Built right into the riverbed
- Is 3 times as deep as it is high
- Supplied electricity exclusively for the City of Toronto
- Ceased producing electricity in 1974

**Ontario Power Station**
- Located across from the American Falls
- Built in 1904
- Visible from the Observation Platform at Journey Behind the Falls or from the Hornblower Niagara Cruises Boat Tours
- The Illumination Tower in Queen Victoria Park was the surge tank for this power station

All of the above sites are currently owned and maintained by The Niagara Parks Commission and are currently undergoing assessments to be considered for refurbishment and reuse in the future.
Current Generating Stations

Sir Adam Beck Generating Stations 1 and 2

- Located in Queenston
- Sir Adam Beck 1 built in 1917
- Sir Adam Beck 2 built in 1950
- As per the Niagara River Water Diversion Treaty - water that is diverted for hydroelectric power generating purposes is shared equally between Canada and the United States
- Owned/operated by Ontario Power Generation (OPG)
Nature Areas

Dufferin Islands

- Created from rock excavated from the river for the Ontario Power Building
- Named for the Governor General Lord Dufferin, who encouraged the creation of a Niagara Parks system.
- Trails through 11 islands connected by foot bridges
- Used for picnics, bird watching and fishing

Recreational Trails

- Paved trial parallel to the Niagara River
- Covers 53km (33 mi.) passing through Fort Erie, Niagara Falls & Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Walking, jogging, biking and wheelchairs
- Intersects with the Bruce Trail at Queenston Heights Parking lot
Niagara Glen ("The Gorge")

- North of the Whirlpool
- Created by the erosive power of the Falls over 10,000 years ago
- The age of the rock (limestone) down into the gorge ranges from approximately 415-440 million years old and contains fossilized coral and other sea creatures
- Large boulders are scattered throughout the Glen, the result of the riverbed and tablelands collapsing into the gorge as the river eroded south
- Boulders are now used for climbing (Bouldering); permits are required for a fee
- Property was acquired by NPC starting in 1894
- Home of the potholes, large holes naturally carved through boulders
- Climbing of the gorge wall, camping, and fires are prohibited
- Used for hiking, picnicking, birding and observing unique plants and wildlife found within the Carolinian forest zone
- Approximately 4km of marked rugged nature trails
- Visitors to this area should be advised:
  - Wear appropriate clothing and footwear
  - Remain on the marked trails; watch for Poison Ivy
  - Have a reliable means of communication
  - Let someone know where they are going
  - Leave No Trace principles apply – Take only photographs, leave only footprints
  - Trails are rugged, have steep elevation changes, and can be slippery
  - The removal or damage of plants is strictly prohibited
- Metered Parking
- Niagara Glen Nature Centre
  - Constructed in 1923 as the Niagara Glen Inn, a restaurant along the Great Gorge Railway. Also used as the caretaker’s residence, temporary student residence, drive-in restaurant, and Christmas shop.
  - Home of the Niagara Glen Nature Exchange; where specimens from nature can be brought in to earn points towards other unique natural items based on rarity, condition, and knowledge about the item. Ethical collecting principles apply.
  - Also contains interpretive materials and a small gift shop
  - Centre is equipped with a bike rack, bicycle fix-it station, water-bottle filling station, and washrooms. Accessible washroom located inside centre.
  - Bouldering permits can be purchased at the Nature Centre or Butterfly Conservatory
- Guided nature hikes available during the summer for a fee
- Open seasonally
Heritage Sites

The War of 1812 was fought and won on various sites within the Niagara Peninsula and the GTA. The Commission currently owns and maintains several of these sites located in the Village of Queenston:

Queenston Heights Park

- The site where British Major General Sir Isaac Brock was killed
- ‘Brock’s Monument’ located at this park
  - Owned and maintained by Parks Canada
  - Parks Canada charges a small fee to enter/climb the monument
  - Built in 1856
  - 50 metres (164 ft.) tall
  - Observatory at the top is accessed using a spiral staircase
  - Has tennis courts, a concert shell, hiking trails, a baseball diamond and a restaurant
- Summer concerts are held each year
- Parking is free – Parks Canada charges a small fee to enter/climb the monument
- Open June to September

Queenston Heights is also the site of the Landscape of Nations Native Memorial, which was officially dedicated in the Fall of 2016. The memorial pays tribute to the significant sacrifices and contributions made by first nations during the War of 1812.
Laura Secord Homestead

- Heroine of the War of 1812; American soldiers occupied her home
- Laura Secord made a 32km (20mile) journey through the American battle lines to warn the British forces of an imminent American attack
- Her warning helped the British and Allied forces win the Battle of Beaverdams in June 1813
- In 1913 the Laura Secord Chocolate Company was created to honour the 100th anniversary of her journey
- The Laura Secord Chocolate Company bought and restored this site and transferred ownership to the NPC
- Laura Secord has been recognized as “a person of national historic significance” by the Ministry of Canadian Heritage & ranked 35th of the Top 100 “Greatest Canadians”
- Today, guides in period costumes recount the story during tours of this site
- It has an interactive learning centre which was created in a “village” atmosphere that includes the Queenston Chapel
- Open June to September
- Free Parking; Nominal Admission Fee

Mackenzie Printery

- Canada’s largest working print museum dedicated to the preservation of hot lead and letterpress equipment
- Former home of William Lyon Mackenzie a newspaper editor and former mayor of the City of Toronto who led a failed rebellion in 1837
- Today, features a hands-on environment with a working Linotype & operation heritage press
- Open June to September
- Free Parking; Nominal Admission Fee
Other locations are located in different areas within the grounds of the Commission:

**Old Fort Erie**

- Located in the Town of Fort Erie, Ontario at the south end of the Commission and peninsula
- Scene of the bloodiest battles of the War of 1812
- United States occupied the Fort twice
- Today, British garrison life is recreated by authentically dressed guards and interpreters who guide visitors through period rooms and a museum
- Interpretive Centre has a welcome centre featuring interactive & entertaining displays plus a theatre
- The ‘Siege of Fort Erie’ takes place on the second weekend of August
- Open June – October
- Free parking; Nominal Admission Fee

**Chippawa Battlefield Park**

- Located just north of the Legends on Niagara Golf Course
- The battle took place on July 5th, 1814
- Commemorates the British and American forces who died during the battle
- Today, a free self-guided tour that uses plaques which describe the battle is available
- Open year-round
- Free Parking and Admission

**McFarland House & Park**

- Located in McFarland Point Park, just south of Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Restored circa 1800 Georgian-style home
- Used as a hospital by the British and American forces
- Today, interpreters in period costumes provide guided tours and serve tea and baked goods in the newly expanded Tea Room.
- Also features a Period herb garden
- Open June to September
- Metered Parking; nominal admission fee
Attractions

Attractions within The Niagara Parks Commission can be purchased individually or as part of an Adventure Pass package available on-line, through various travel agencies and consignment partners or at a Niagara Parks Welcome Centre. Whether purchased as part of an Adventure Pass or individually each of these attractions can be time-ticketed.

Butterfly Conservatory

- Located just north of Niagara Glen on the grounds of the Botanical Gardens
- Opened in 1996
- The attraction starts with a short information video that is close captioned for the hearing impaired
- The main attraction is a rain forest setting which has a network of paths through exotic greenery, plants and a 20-foot waterfall
- Over 2,000 tropical butterflies made up of 45 different species fly freely through this area
- Newly emerged butterflies are released every day at 9:30 a.m.
- Self-guided; typical time to see everything is about 30 minutes
- Open year-round; Closed December 25
- Parking & admission fees

Hornblower Niagara Cruises

- Located at the bottom of Clifton Hill
- Took over boat-tour operations on the Canadian side in 2014 – the Maid of the Mist still operates but only from the U.S. side of the Niagara River
- 700 passenger catamaran-style boats
- View of the American, Bridal Veil and Canadian Horseshoe Falls
- Souvenir biodegradable rain-coats provided
- Boats sail every 15 minutes
- Cruises last 20 minutes
- Open April/May until November/December
- Operating season depends upon weather conditions
  - High wind/water levels may close the attraction unexpectedly
- Limited metered parking nearby – bus transportation recommended
Journey Behind the Falls

- Located at the brink of the Horseshoe Falls on the first floor of the Table Rock Complex
- Elevators take visitors down 38.1 m (125 ft.) to the tunnels which lead to an observation deck and viewing portals
- The first tunnels were blasted in 1889 and visitors were escorted by guides carrying lanterns
- Originally called “Behind the Sheets”, then changed to “Under the Falls, then “Scenic Tunnels”
- Visitors originally had to descend a spiral staircase to reach the tunnels
- In 1887 the staircase was replaced with a hydraulic lift
- In 1944 a new tunnel was constructed with concrete lining and electric lights
- In 1951 the observation deck was constructed
- Name changed to Journey Behind the Falls to more accurately describe the attraction
- Souvenir biodegradable rain-coats provided
- Self-guided; typical time spent in the tunnels is 30 minutes
- Open year-round; Closed December 25

Niagara’s Fury

- Opened June 2008
- Located at the Brink of the Horseshoe Falls on the Second Floor of the Table Rock Complex
- Starts with an 8-minute animated pre-show explaining how the Ice Age formed Niagara Falls
- Visitors are then moved into a specially designed 360-degree theatre where they experience the creation of the falls – the temperature drops, water sprays & bubbles and snow falls. The platform also tilts and shakes.
- The entire experience takes about 15 minutes to complete
- Souvenir biodegradable rain-coats provided
- Open year-round; Closed December 25
Whirlpool Aero Car

- 6 Cables suspended 76.2 m (250 ft.) about the Whirlpool Rapids
- Spans 539 m (1,770 ft.) between Colt’s Point and Thompson Point both on the Canadian side
- Designed by a Spanish Engineer
- Opened August 8, 1916
- Takes 35 standing passengers
- Crossing in both directions takes about 10 minutes
- Open late spring – autumn; high-winds may close the attraction unexpectedly
- Free Parking

White Water Walk

- In 1876 the river bank along the Whirlpool Rapids was leased to John Drew by the Ontario Government
- John Drew sub-leased it to Dr. W. H. Ferguson M.P. who developed the tourist potential and built a steam-powered incline railway to transport visitors from street-level to the rivers edge
- In 1935 the Parks Commission entered into an agreement with Robertson Construction & Engineering Company of Niagara Falls who would lease the lands formerly occupied by the incline railway & boardwalk along the rapids for 30 years
- Originally called the ‘Great Gorge Adventure’
- Lease extended for 3 more years until the NPC took over in 1967
- An elevator takes visitors down 70 m (230 ft.) to an observation and a 300m (1,000 ft.) boardwalk along the Class 6 rapids in the lower gorge
- Visitors can see the layers of rock on the steep walls that show the geological history as the Falls eroded through the gorge over 10,000 years ago
- Entertaining and educational information is presented on signs through the attraction
- Open late spring – November; Varies according to weather conditions
- Free Parking if attending attraction – speak to staff at the attraction for details
Zipline & Whirlpool Adventure Course

- Operated by WildPlay Niagara Falls
- Open seasonal; Closes for thunderstorms/other hazardous weather conditions
- Two locations

**Mistrider Zipline to the Falls**
- Located at the Grand View Marketplace
- Four parallel ziplines, 670 m (2,200 ft.) in length
- Ages 7 and up
- Must weigh 29 – 115 kg (65 – 300 lbs)
- Signed waiver form required
- Report to WildPlay Ticketing Office
- Guided from check-in to Grand View Observation Tower/Launch Platform
- Once at the bottom, accessible shuttle vans transport visitors back to the top
- The zipline itself takes about 60 seconds and reaches 60 km/h
- The entire experience from check-in to drop-off back at the top is about 1 hour
Zipline & Whirlpool Adventure Course

**Whirlpool Adventure Course**
- Paid parking is available but offered free for visitors of the Whirlpool Adventure Course
- Three courses
  - 'Classic'
    - Ages 7 and up
    - Must weigh 20 - 129 kgs (44 - 285 lbs)
    - Minimum reach from feet to reach above head is 180 cm (5’ 11”)
    - Takes 60 - 90 minutes to complete
    - Signed waiver form
  - 'Extreme'
    - Available as an add-on to the 'Classic' course
    - Same weight and reach restrictions
    - Takes an additional 30 - 60 minutes to complete
    - Signed waiver form
  - Kids Course
    - Ages 5 - 12
    - A responsible adult must be on-site
    - Minimum reach from feet to reach above head is 140 cm (4’ 7”)
    - Takes 45 - 90 minutes to complete
    - Parent/guardian signed waiver form

**Wildplay’s What’s to Fear Jump**
- Loose line leap from 40 feet
- Can be booked separately or as an add-on to the ‘Classic’ & ‘Extreme’ Courses
- Ages 7 and up
- Must weigh 20 - 129 kgs (44 - 285 lbs)
- Signed waiver form
Gardens

Botanical Gardens

- Located at the same location as the Butterfly Conservatory (Just north of Niagara Glen)
- 40 hectares (100 acres)
- Diverse collection of formal and informal gardens
- Feature many annuals, perennials, bulbs, trees shrubs and a collection of roses
- Open from dawn – dusk year-round
- Parking fees; Free Admission

School of Horticulture

- Established in 1936
- Located at the same location as the Butterfly Conservatory (Just north of Niagara Glen)
- Unique horticultural education experience
- Students maintain the ground of the Botanical Gardens as part of their curriculum
- Legacy Garden as a tribute to graduates and past and present members of the Ontario Parks Association

Centennial Lilac Garden

- Created in 1967 to Commemorate Canada's Centennial Year
- Located just north of the Floral Clock
- 1,200 plants of over 200 varieties
- The Rotary Clubs of New York State originally donated the trees to establish the garden
- Free Parking & Admission
- Best experienced in May and early June
Floral Clock

- Built in 1950
- Largest in the world: 12 m (40 ft.) in diameter
- Face is filled with 15,000 - 18,000 small plants in elaborate designs which change twice each year
- Also features a wishing pond & tower with Westminster chimes that sound every quarter hour
- Free Parking & Admission

Floral Showhouse

- Originally built in 1894; Reconstructed in 1945 and visitors centre added in 1980
- Located just north of Dufferin Islands
- Floral displays are changed 8 times each year coinciding with seasons or holidays
- Collection of orchids, succulents and other tropical plant species
- The ‘Titan Arum’, the worlds tallest flower blooms regularly
- Outside there is a rose garden and fragrance garden with signs in Braille
- Open year-round; except December 25
- Paid parking & admission
Oakes Garden Theatre

- Located at the bottom of Clifton Hill
- Opened in 1938; former site of the Clifton Hotel which was destroyed by fire
- Named after Sir Harry Oaks who donated the property
- Curved pergola overlooking a central amphitheater
- Rock gardens, lily ponds and shrub borders
- Iron gates and Queenston limestone around the perimeter
- Open year-round
- Limited metered parking

Queen Victoria Park

- Encompasses the area from Dufferin Island in the south to Clifton Hill in the North
- Named after the reigning British monarch at the time
- North entrance marked by the Mowat Gate at the intersection of Falls Avenue and Clifton Hill
- Mowat Gate named for Sir Oliver Mowat a former premier of the province of Ontario and one of the fathers of confederation who advocated the establishment of the Niagara Parks
Transportation

Parking

**Daily rate; attendant lots**
- Falls Parking Lot; located next to Table Rock at the Brink of the Horseshoe Falls
- Rapidsview Parking Lot; located just south of Dufferin Islands and parking fee includes free shuttle service to and from Table Rock (summer months only)
- Queen Victoria Park; located at the bottom of Murray Hill
- Kingsbridge Park (summer months only)
- Butterfly Conservatory

**Hourly; pay-and-display metered parking**
- Floral Showhouse Parking Lot
- Police Loop; located at the Niagara Parks Police Station in Queen Victoria Park
- Across from the WildPlay Niagara Ticketing Office
- Rainbow Bridge Parking Lot; located just north of the Rainbow Bridge
- White Water Walk; free for visitors to the attraction
- McFarland House; free for visitors to the attraction
- Thompson Point; located opposite Whirlpool Golf Course
- School of Horticulture; opposite the Butterfly Conservatory attendant lot
- Niagara Glen

**Parking Passes**
- Daily Parking Passes are available for purchase at attendant or metered parking lots
- Annual Parking Passes are available for purchase at attendant parking lots, online or metered parking lots except Police Loop and Mistrider
- Passes valid for two vehicles and are valid at all parking lots except the Police Loop and Mistrider pay-and-display lots
WEGO

• GREEN Line replaced Peoplemover System which began operation in 1985
• Launched in 2012 joint venture between the Commission and City of Niagara Falls
• The GREEN Line is operated by the Commission and the BLUE and RED Lines are operated by the City of Niagara Falls
• GREEN Line follows the Niagara Parkway to transport visitors to most Niagara Parks attractions and connects to the main Niagara Falls Bus & Train Station
• BLUE Line connects Table Rock to the casino/hotel areas as well as the convention centre and during the summer months includes a stop at Marineland
• RED Line connects Table Rock to the Clifton Hill and Lundy’s Lane shopping and entertainment areas
• Fully accessible and are equipped with bike racks to carry 2 bicycles
• Operates year-round
• Fares: 1-Day (24 Hour) and 2-Day (48 Hour) passes – there are no single-ride fares
• An hourly shuttle service is available between Queenston and Niagara-on-the-Lake for an additional fee and operates from May - Late October (weather dependant)

Falls Incline Railway

• Links the Fallsview tourist area at the top to the Table Rock Complex at the bottom
• Carries a maximum of 40 passengers each trip
• Fully-accessible and climate-controlled
• Operates year-round; extreme weather may cause unexpected closures
Dining in Niagara Parks

Full Service

All full service restaurants at Niagara Parks have a Feast ON certification recognizing their use of local sourced - Ontario food and beverage purchases.

Elements on the Falls
• Located on the second floor of the Table Rock Complex

Queen Victoria Place Restaurant
• Located at the bottom of Murray Hill
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Queenston Heights Restaurant
• Located at the foot of Brock’s Monument
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Legends on the Niagara Clubhouse
• Located on the grounds of the Legends on the Niagara Golf Course south of Chippawa
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Whirlpool Restaurant
• Located on the grounds of the Whirlpool Golf Course north of the Whirlpool Aero Car
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall; can be booked in the off-season by request
Quick Service (Fast Food)

Butterfly Café
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Aero Car Café
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Grand View Restaurant
• Operates seasonally from Spring to Fall

Table Rock Food Court
• Open year-round; Closed December 25
  • Tim Hortons
  • Burger Town
• Open seasonally from Spring to Fall
  • Pizza Pizza
  • Ah So Sushi

Queen Victoria Place
• Tim Hortons

Picnicking

• Covered picnic pavilions at five locations: McFarland Point Park, Queenston Heights Park, Niagara Glen, Kingsbridge Park, and Old Fort Erie
• Groups may reserve these areas for a nominal permit fee
Niagara Parks Golf

Legends on the Niagara

- Located just south of the Chippawa Battlefield Park
- Two 18-hole golf courses
  - Battlefield
  - Ussher’s Creek
- 360° Driving Range
- 9-hole short course

Whirlpool Golf Course

- Located just north of the Whirlpool Aero Car
- Opened in 1951

Oak Hall Par 3

- Located on the grounds of the historic Oak Hall Estate
Niagara Parks Entertainment

The Niagara Parks Commission provides free, fun, family-oriented entertainment throughout the park all year.

Fireworks and Concert Evenings

- Concerts located in Queen Victoria Park at the Illumination Tower; Fireworks over the Falls
- Free Falls Fireworks annually during the summer season with the schedule of dates early spring. Concerts start at 8 p.m. and fireworks are fired off at 10 p.m.
- Fireworks and concerts are weather dependent and schedules are subject to change

Live Music

- Featured daily during the summer months at the Grand View Marketplace
- Free concerts at Queenston Heights during the summer

Winter Festival of Lights

- Light displays placed throughout Dufferin Islands and Queen Victoria Park
- Fireworks every Friday at 9 p.m.
- Runs from early November through the end of January

New Year’s Eve in Niagara Falls

- Free live entertainment at the bottom of Murray Hill with fireworks at 9 p.m. and midnight
Accessibility at Niagara Parks

The Niagara Parks Commission strives to promote accessibility for all of our visitors and is committed to ensuring all of our visitors have a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

Parking

- Accessible Parking is available at all Niagara Parks attractions and restaurants
- Accessible Parking permit holders who pay for parking at any attendant or pay-and-display lot can re-park at any attendant lot using their receipt from their initial payment

Admission Fees

- Where full-accessibility of a building/attraction is not possible, discounted admission is provided. This discount cannot be applied on Adventure Pass packages

Wheelchairs

- Limited rentals available at Table Rock, Floral Showhouse and the Butterfly Conservatory
- A valid credit card is required to rent a wheelchair

Service Animals

- Any service animal for any purpose is welcome in all areas open to the public

Support Persons

- Any support person accompanying a person with a condition or disability who specifically identifies themselves as a support person is admitted at no charge
Tour Guides, Tour Vehicles & Group Tours

Tour Guides

- Section 11 (1) of the Niagara Parks Act states: “No person shall guide visitors through the Parks for compensation without a guide licence from the Commission”
- Someone who is merely accompanying a group to an attraction, restaurant or gift shop does not require a license provided they are not giving out purported factual information about the falls or the Commission

Tour Vehicles

- Section 12 (1) of the Niagara Parks Act states: “No person shall operate or permit to be operated within the Parks any sight-seeing vehicle without a sight-seeing vehicle licence from the Commission”
- Commercial sight-seeing vehicles can take the form of any type of vehicle from a 2 passenger sedan to a 50+ passenger highway coach whether or not the vehicle is licensed as a commercial vehicle
- If the passengers are paying for the services of the driver and vehicle it is considered a commercial vehicle and must purchase a permit upon arrival within the parks
- Parking for tour vehicles is provided for at the Rapidsview Motor Coach Parking
- Parking at the Table Rock and Grand View Bus Management areas is generally prohibited during the summer months; however, the supervisor on site may – at their discretion – allow parking at these locations.
- If there are circumstances which require parking at these locations, drivers GUIDES must speak with the supervisor on site who may evaluate and permit such requests.
Tour Guides, Tour Vehicles & Group Tours

Ambassador Services

• For tour guides who are also drivers the Bus Management locations at Table Rock and Grand View Marketplace have ambassadors available to guide passengers from the tour vehicle to the check-in points of the attractions during the summer months.
• The availability of this service is subject to the available staff at each location and varies throughout the season and business day.
• There is a small service fee charged to the bus/tour company for this service.
• This guide service is available to the following attractions: Niagara’s Fury, Journey Behind the Falls and Hornblower Niagara Cruises.

Spare the Air

• The Niagara Parks Commission together with other regional partners promote a voluntary program called ‘Spare the Air’.
• The goal is to reduce noise and air pollution caused by vehicles idling unnecessarily.
• Passengers waiting on buses while loading or unloading may be uncomfortable – however operators are asked to be considerate of other visitors within the park.
Famous Visitors, VIPs & Dignitaries

The Niagara Parks Commission sees millions of visitors each year visit Niagara Falls and the attractions within the Niagara Parks. The NPC hosts many visiting foreign and domestic dignitaries and other VIPs. In addition, well known celebrities do pass through the NPC – sometimes without being recognized. Winston Churchill once described the Niagara Parkway as “the prettiest Sunday drive in the world”; he was not the only VIP to come see what Niagara Parks has to offer:

**Stargazing (Celebrities)**
- Brad Pitt
- Hugh Jackman
- Katy Perry
- One Direction
- Adam Sandler
- Regis Philbin
- Kathie Lee Gifford
- Kelly Ripa
- Ryan Seacrest

**Political Dignitaries**
- Princess Diana and sons William and Harry (1991)
- Former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau (1996)
- [Former] President Hu Jintao of China (2005)
- [Former] Prime Minister of Japan Junichiro Koizumi (2006)
Emergency Services

Niagara Parks Police

- Stationed in Queen Victoria Park, opposite the American Falls
- It is one of the oldest police services in Ontario, established in 1887
- Operate like any other police service and have several units/divisions:
  - K-9 Unit
  - HART (High-Angle Rescue Team)
  - Marine Unit
- Serve as the Lost & Found for the Commission

First-aid & Emergency Medical Response

- First-Aid station located at the Table Rock Complex, open seasonally from May to October
- Most buildings have a first-aid kit and staff trained and certified in first-aid, CPR & AED
- Trained and certified staff include:
  - Horticultural and Grounds keeping staff
  - Road maintenance crews
  - WEGO bus drivers
  - Most supervisors
- AEDs with trained & certified staff are located at the following areas:
  - Legends on the Niagara Golf Complex
  - Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens & Butterfly Conservatory
  - Table Rock Complex
  - Grand View Marketplace
  - Whirlpool Golf Complex
- The Niagara Emergency Medical Services provide a rapid-response service using paramedics on bicycle (Bike Medics) during the summer months
- The Bike Medics service area covers the Niagara Parks from Dufferin Islands in the south to the Rainbow Bridge in the north and up into the Clifton Hill area – places a tradition ambulance response may be delayed severely due to dense vehicle and pedestrian traffic
- The bike medics are active on-duty paramedics with the same training and certifications as the paramedics who respond by traditional ambulance
- In serious cases the emergency dispatch centres will send police and fire services to the scene
- Police and fire service members are trained & certified to provide basic medical care until the Bike Medics and/or a traditional ambulance can arrive to continue care and transport if needed