



Niagara River Greenway Commission
Project Consultation & Review Submission

March 2019



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: Blueway to Greenway Connections
Location: multiple
Site Address: multiple
State: NY Zip Code:
Minor Civil Division(s): _____
County: Erie & Niagara
Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other): _____

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

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PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

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PROJECT NARRATIVE

1. IN A BRIEF PARAGRAPH, DESCRIBE THE PROJECT AND ITS PURPOSE, HOW AND WHEN IT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED, AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT.

PURPOSE/WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

The purpose of the Buffalo Blueway Project is to create a network of vibrant public access points to Western New York Waterways, specifically the Buffalo and Niagara Rivers and Lake Erie by designing and implementing an interconnected multi-modal water trail system. This water trail system will provide new and enhanced access to water recreation activities such as paddling, fishing, and boating by including fishing piers, scenic overlooks, paddle sport launches and other amenities.

The Buffalo Blueway will link the Niagara River Greenway to our waterfront in an expanded network of public access and recreation points. This Blueway-to-Greenway network forges together history, culture and nature. By connecting these prized assets, the Buffalo Blueway will spur tourism and revitalization, bring together communities, and improve the social well-being and health of local residents. Through continued community partnerships and engagement, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper envisions the creation of opportunities for universal and equitable access through the connection of the Blueway Trail system to the Niagara River Greenway and Shoreline Trails and the improvement of water-based recreation while expanding regional eco-tourism.

Many of our region's most prominent tourism destinations, historical sites, cultural institutions, and natural spaces are located along waterways. The Buffalo Blueway project will strategically connect existing assets and attractions, in addition to establishing new access points. Depending on the current condition and amenities existing at each site, improvements geared towards promoting access to, and utilization of the site, for waterfront access and recreation will be identified. These improvements may include water-based trail connections between access points, parking areas, boat docks, paddlesport launches, fishing piers, and waterfront observation platforms. All sites will feature wayfinding signs, beacons, and/or public art installations to guide and attract visitors. The project will also work to improve water quality, remove physical barriers, enhance the natural environment and improve safety.

The Buffalo Blueway will be promoted through a coordinated marketing program, including the development of a brand, a Buffalo Blueway Trail Guide, website and digital applications. This outreach strategy will feature user-friendly tools and resources and will be expandable south along the Lake Erie shoreline and north along the Niagara River to reach Lake Ontario and the Erie Canalway system, to increase the impact and connectivity of the Buffalo Blueway as a regional recreational asset and tourist attraction. The coordinated marketing and promotion can further extend east to link New York State's entire "north shore" and Empire State Trail system.

An effective and well-designed Buffalo Blueway has the ability to serve the needs and desires of paddlers, recreational motorized watercraft, anglers, tourists and other waterfront users. Waterkeeper will also seek to leverage the Blueway investments to enhance riparian habitat, ecological functions and services, and environmental sustainability principles wherever possible. Ultimately, the Buffalo Blueway will connect and transform our community to promote healthy living, catalyze commercial activity, enhance our quality of life, and sustain our natural resources. The Buffalo Blueway system will be designed to allow for expansion and enhancement into the foreseeable future.

PROGRESS TO DATE/HOW AND WHEN IT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED:

With funding from Empire State Development, Waterkeeper has launched the initial phase of the Buffalo Blueway creation and development, with a focus on the Buffalo River and areas along the Lake. The goal within the first three years is to create or enhance up to ten public sites to allow for universal access to the waterway. The first site enhancement began in 2018 with the installation of Buffalo River’s first fully accessible kayak launch at Buffalo RiverWorks, which allows users of all abilities to launch and retrieve their kayaks. Within the next several years, Waterkeeper will utilize the tools, strategies, and partnerships developed in the first phase to expand the initiative to encompass other locations within and connected to the Niagara River Greenway. Waterkeeper will lead efforts to advance the creation of the Buffalo Blueway, and eventual expansion to the entire Niagara region with help from local stakeholders, communities, and businesses.

Potential Buffalo Blueway sites include, but are not limited to:

- Buffalo RiverWorks
- Heritage Discovery Center/Buffalo Color A
- Ohio Street Boat Launch/BSRA: Promenade and Overlook
- Mutual Riverfront Park
- Wilkeson Pointe
- LaSalle Park
- Red Jacket Park
- Seneca Bluffs
- Inner Harbor – Canalside
- Inner Harbor – Erie Basin Marina
- Michigan Street Pier
- Broderick Park
- Harlem Road Fishing Access Point
- Riverfest Park
- South End Marina
- South Buffalo Charter School
- Silo City

NOTE: Over 100 sites have been identified as potential future Blueway sites and it is anticipated that potential sites from the larger list may rise in priority.

2. REFERRING TO THE NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY PLAN, CLEARLY DOCUMENT AND DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL ADVANCE THE NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY VISION INCLUDING THE GOALS, PRINCIPLES, AND CRITERIA THAT DEFINE THAT VISION.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The proposal meets all eleven principles as defined by the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

Excellence: Waterkeeper is committed to ensuring that this project is completed with excellence. Connecting the Buffalo Blueway to the Niagara River Greenway will promote the globally significant water resources, recreational fishery, and cultural/heritage assets and connect and enhance them in order to create a world class network of universally accessible sites and attractions.

Sustainability: The Buffalo Blueway projects will be designed to be sustainable and we will work with individual landowners on maintenance and operation. In addition, leveraging efforts of local stakeholders and community groups will provide additional resources to achieve long-term sustainability. Economic sustainability within the Greenway will be advanced through the Buffalo Blueway as well. Studies throughout the country about the economic impact of Blueways share a common theme regarding both their direct and indirect economic impact: *“Increased tourism around water trails could bring new money to circulate in the community to aid population growth and lead to increased amenities and standard of living.”*

Accessibility: The Buffalo Blueway will generate vast improvements towards this guiding principle by strategically increasing physical and visual waterfront access to a wide range of users including paddlers, boaters, bikers, anglers, tourists, and local residents. An important component of the Buffalo Blueway is the identification of access points to fill existing gaps and connect communities that have been disproportionately cut off from the waterfront. All the Buffalo Blueway sites will be designed to provide universal access where possible. The Blueway project is committed to incorporating adaptive sport access to the public network. The expanding network of safe and visible public access opportunities along the waterways will be a direct physical connection to the Greenway and Shoreline Trails providing the community with opportunities to recreate both on and off the water.

Ecological Integrity: Each site targeted for inclusion in the Buffalo Blueway network will incorporate the protection and restoration of natural resources and wildlife habitats to the greatest extent possible. This includes aquatic, riparian, and upland habitat opportunities.

Public Well-Being: A major focus of the Buffalo Blueway is to promote community health and wellness. The project will bring together communities and promote healthy lifestyles by enhancing and expanding universal access to a variety of recreational opportunities and existing local attractions related to history, culture, and nature.

Connectivity: Strategically tying into existing trails, parks, and access points within the Greenway, the Buffalo Blueway will advance the creation of a well-connected and easily identified system of waterfront access points, open spaces, and trails. Application of easily recognizable wayfinding signage will further help to promote the continuity of Blueway assets within and to the Niagara River Greenway. In addition to integrating Buffalo Blueway planning into the Niagara River Greenway Vision, other local and regional trail systems will be considered in this effort including: The Great Lakes Seaway Trail, the Erie Canal Heritage Corridor, the Industrial Heritage Trail, the Underground Railroad, and historical Native American heritage corridors.

Restoration: In addition to the recreational services and economic benefits generated from the Buffalo Blueway system, clean and healthy waterways provide critically important habitat connectors for fish and wildlife allowing them access to key forage, breeding, and refuge areas. Revitalization, restoration, and connectivity of environmental resources are another key element of the Buffalo Blueway plan, and the state investment can be leveraged to incorporate multiple ecological benefits.

Authenticity: “Water defined our region’s history, and it will define its future.” Western New York’s character and heritage is directly linked to our prime location within the Great Lakes. With 85% of North America’s fresh water flowing past our community, Niagara Falls, internationally significant birding areas, world-class fishing opportunities, and vast cultural resources to name a few; there is much to be celebrated within the Greenway. The development of a Western New York Blueway system is envisioned to become a backbone and connector of the region’s unique historical, cultural, and ecological assets- all critical components in establishing a sense of ‘place’ for both residents and visitors.

Celebration: The Buffalo Blueway will enhance and promote access to our region’s prized historical, cultural, and unique natural resources. The Buffalo Blueway will bring communities together and attract visitors to create shared experiences that celebrate the valuable regional assets that have both shaped our heritage and sparked recent revitalization.

Partnerships: Waterkeeper has a record of successfully collaborating with over 200 partners, and coordinating diverse stakeholder groups in the region in order to advance some of the region’s most complex environmental problems. The development of the Buffalo Blueway will be closely coordinated with a number of partners to leverage knowledge, expertise, and resources to engender united regional progress towards revitalization in the Western New York region.

Community Based: Building off the communal vision of the Niagara River Greenway and our local municipalities/communities is another important factor in the planning and implementation of the Buffalo Blueway. The Blueway is envisioned as a network and catalyst that can bring vibrancy and waterfront access and engagement to many diverse neighborhoods and communities. A coordinated effort that is supported by local stakeholders and communities is necessary for the successful implementation of improvements connected to our shared resources.

GOALS

The proposal meets all of the goals defined by the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

Improve Access and Make Connections: Strategically tying into existing trails, parks, and access points within the Niagara River Greenway, the Buffalo Blueway will advance the creation of a well-connected and easily identified system of waterfront access points, open spaces, and trails. Integration with land-based trails and corridors will also guide and encourage access to the waterfront by communities and neighborhoods that have been disproportionately affected by physical, social, and economic barriers. Application of easily recognizable wayfinding signage will further help to promote the continuity of assets within the Niagara River Greenway. In addition, other local and regional trail systems will be considered in this effort including: The Great Lakes Seaway Trail, the Erie Canal Heritage Corridor, the Industrial Heritage Trail, the Underground Railroad, and historical Native American heritage corridors.

Promote Long Term Sustainability: In addition to leveraging community resources and workforce development opportunities, fostering long-term investments in the cultural, historic, and natural assets that comprise the Niagara River Greenway and Buffalo Blueway is important to sustainability of these resources for years to come. An economic development report commissioned by the North Forest Canoe Trail, and supported by USDA, found that water trails (aka Blueways) encourage local entrepreneurship, foster regional destination tourism, catalyze collaboration, and bring new visitor spending to a region. These positive impacts on the regional economy can then be invested into maintaining the Buffalo Blueway system for future generations.

Extend the Legacy of Fredrick Law Olmsted: Olmsted's vision of a 'necklace of parks and open spaces along the length of the River' perfectly aligns with the Buffalo Blueway vision. Building a legacy for future generations that provides access to open space, greenery, and a diversity of resources is exactly what the Buffalo Blueway will achieve.

Protect and Restore Environmental Systems: Each site targeted for inclusion in the Buffalo Blueway network will incorporate the protection and restoration of natural resources and wildlife habitats to the greatest extent possible. This includes aquatic, riparian, and upland habitat opportunities.

Celebrate History and Heritage: Promoting access to the cultural and historical assets our region has to offer is an important aspect of the Buffalo Blueway. Our region's history is closely linked to our vast and significant water resources. Developing a Western New York Blueway celebrates our area's rich history and its connection to clean and accessible water. Interpretive and educational features incorporated into Buffalo Blueway sites will promote the stories of our regional heritage including our strategic international location, lakes and rivers, bridges and locks, navigation channels, industrial heritage, our grain elevator history, canalway systems and burgeoning waterfront history.

Spark Revitalization and Renewal: Supporting common assets, such as the "public trust" resources of our local waterways can be a great "equalizer" in terms of health, recreation and quality of life improvements for all. Sustainable design and complementary restoration benefits natural resources as well as people, and the recent

success of the Buffalo River corridor demonstrates that these goals can be accomplished through public-private-nonprofit partnerships, a story that is now globally recognized. Integration with land-based trails and corridors will also guide and encourage access to the waterfront by communities and neighborhoods that have been disproportionately affected by physical, social, and economic barriers.

CRITERIA

The proposal meets all of the criteria as defined by the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

Consistency with Principles: As detailed earlier, the Buffalo Blueway aligns with all of the principles outlined in the Greenway Plan. The Buffalo Blueway vision has particularly strong connections to promoting accessibility, public well-being, developing partnerships and are community-based, and authentically celebrating our significant regional assets.

Priority Status: While the Buffalo Blueway directly advances the priorities defined in the Greenway Plan, it also brings significant additional financial resources into the Greenway corridor. It fully encompasses the first two priorities listed: improved access to waterfront resources and development of an integrated trail and park system.

Focus Area: Nearly 100 potential sites and linkages have been identified within the Greenway focus area. Current efforts are underway to prioritize, secure access, and long term commitment to the blue-to-green connections.

Environmental Soundness: All of Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's work is closely tied to enhancing environmental quality. This will remain a priority consideration in the planning and implementation of the Buffalo Blueway.

Implementable: Strategic planning and partnership building will ensure that all work implemented through this initiative will be realistic and implementable. Factors that will be taken into consideration in the planning phase include costs, constructability, timelines, permitting, and integration into past, current, and future plans within each community.

Economic Viability: In addition to leveraging community resources and workforce development opportunities, fostering long-term investments in the cultural, historic, and natural assets that comprise the Niagara River Greenway and Buffalo Blueway is important to sustainability of these resources for years to come. An economic development report commissioned by the North Forest Canoe Trail, and supported by USDA, found that water trails (aka Blueways) encourage local entrepreneurship, foster regional destination tourism, catalyze collaboration, and bring new visitor spending to a region. These positive impacts on the regional economy can then be invested into maintaining the Buffalo Blueway system for future generations.

Local Sponsors or Partners: The development and expansion of the Blueway to Greenway connections will be closely coordinated with a number of partners to leverage knowledge, expertise, and resources to engender united regional progress towards revitalization in the Western New York region. Entities and resources to champion the improvements will be identified upfront for all work to be implemented through this initiative. Having an established sponsor will help to coordinate stewardship and maintenance long-term.

Consideration of Other Planning Efforts: The strategic planning of the Blueway will incorporate priorities and recommendations from the Niagara River Greenway Plan and other local and regional documents to advance a shared vision and build off of already completed work.

Clear Benefits: Enhanced public access and experiences through the establishment of the Blueway will connect the community to the unique ecological, historical, and cultural assets that the Niagara River Greenway has to

offer. The Blueway also shares the Niagara River Greenway vision of creating a world-class corridor that maximizes benefits to our economy and environment while promoting our regional heritage.

3. IDENTIFY ALL SOURCES OF FUNDING AND THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING EXPECTED FROM EACH SOURCE. IDENTIFY AND QUANTIFY FUNDS THAT ARE ALREADY ON HAND OR HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT. EXPLAIN HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE OPERATED AND MAINTAINED.

Waterkeeper has received \$10 Million from Empire State Development to help implement the first phases of the Buffalo section of the Blueway. Opportunities for leveraging the impact of this investment at up to 19 short listed sites is underway. The potential Greenway budget requests will be determined once feasibility analysis and conceptual design is completed for the priority sites.

Matching Funds:

Specifically, for the potential Blueway site at LaSalle Park in the City of Buffalo, Waterkeeper has received matching funds from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr Foundation to determine the hydrologic feasibility of water access, as well as potential for in-water and riparian habitat restoration.

Operation and Maintenance Plan: Long-term operation and maintenance of each Blueway site will be dependent upon, and designed to meet, several factors including landowner abilities and desires, existing resources within adjacent communities, and long term maintenance scope and operational needs.

4. DESCRIBE THE MEASURES TAKEN AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO GAIN COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT (HEARINGS, PETITIONS, PUBLIC SURVEYS, RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT OR OTHER METHODS). IF THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN CITED OR DESCRIBED IN A LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENT OR SOME EQUIVALENT THEREOF, ATTACH COPIES OF THAT DOCUMENTATION HIGHLIGHTING THE SECTIONS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT. DESCRIBE THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL AGENCIES, STAKEHOLDER GROUPS, CONSULTANTS, VOLUNTEERS OR OTHERS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT.

Measures taken to gain community/government support:

From the inception of the Blueway, Waterkeeper has worked closely with the State of New York (via Empire State Development and the office of Governor Andrew Cuomo), the City of Buffalo, Erie County, and Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation to ensure that the goals of the project reflect that of the community. Numerous meetings have occurred with regulatory agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to gather information and support of the projects and site locations. Several of the proposed Blueway access sites are located on property owned by the City or County and they have agreed to provide access agreements and letters of support for the projects.

Waterkeeper will continue to work closely with NYSDEC and the Army Corps of Engineers during the design and construction phases of all of the projects to ensure consistency with state and federal regulations. Waterkeeper has also already received a permit from the NYSDEC to develop designs for public access enhancements at their Ohio Street Boat Launch site on the Buffalo River.

Relevant Local Planning Documents:

Development of the WNY Blueway system delivers upon the strategies outlined in the REDC's Strategy for Prosperity and Buffalo Billion that emphasizes a region in transition. Additionally, the goals of the Blueway

advance priorities outlined in the Great Lakes Action Agenda, Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy, Niagara River Greenway Plan, New York State Open Space Plan, and New York Statewide Trails Plan.

Role of municipalities/stakeholders/consultants/volunteers/others involved:

The support of numerous local, state, and federal partners will be critical to the success of this initiative. Within the Greenway, municipalities and other waterfront landowners will be engaged in the initial identification of potential sites. Landowners of final selected sites will be involved in all aspects of site planning, design, implementation, and long-term maintenance. Groups like Visit Buffalo Niagara, the Niagara River Greenway, Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, and the Niagara Falls National Heritage Corridor will be involved in promoting Blueway sites. The Center for Employment Opportunities, PUSH Buffalo, Vision Niagara, Western New York Land Conservancy and other community-based organizations and groups are potential resources to help develop stewardship and maintenance programs, which will be implemented by volunteers as well as individuals involved in workforce development trainings. Consultants and contractors will be hired as needed for the planning and implementation of Buffalo Blueway improvements.

- 5. DESCRIBE AND DOCUMENT THE ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND EXISTING CONDITIONS AT THE PROPOSED PROJECT SITE. IF YOU ARE NOT THE OWNER OF THE PROPERTY INCLUDE A LETTER(S) OR RESOLUTION(S) EVIDENCING SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT BY THE OWNER. PROVIDE PHOTOGRAPHS, CONCEPTUAL PLANS AND DRAWINGS THAT SHOW THE SITE AS IT PRESENTLY EXISTS AND HOW THE SITE WILL CHANGE WITH THE ADDITION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR PROJECT WILL COMPLY WITH THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT (SEQRA). THE EXISTENCE OF WETLANDS, SIGNIFICANT UPLAND AND AQUATIC HABITATS, AND PLANT OR ANIMAL SPECIES THAT ARE CLASSIFIED AS RARE, THREATENED, OR ENDANGERED SHOULD BE NOTED. EXPLAIN HOW SUCH NATURAL RESOURCES WILL BE PROTECTED AND/OR ENHANCED. CITE ANY RELEVANT PROJECT-RELATED STUDIES.**

At this time, 19 potential sites have been identified for the focus of the first phase of the Buffalo Blueway development and implementation (see Map 1 below). A Full Environmental Assessment Form and narrative for these 19 sites has been completed and submitted in accordance with SEQRA requirements. This process will be repeated for all additional sites included in the development of an expanded Blueway.

All work performed for Waterkeeper must be accomplished with the protection of water resources and the environment in mind. In addition to the recreational services and economic benefits generated from a Blueway system, clean and healthy waterways provide critically important habitat connectors for fish and wildlife allowing them access to key forage, breeding, and refuge areas. Each site identified within the Greenway will be assessed for opportunities linked to habitat enhancement and/or creation as well as green infrastructure techniques. Additionally, each site pursued will undergo a comprehensive analysis of existing wetlands/other significant habitats and potential or confirmed RTE species presence. These factors will be considered in planning enhancements and features for each site, and will avoid any impacts to important natural resources, meeting all requirements under SEQRA and other relevant state, federal, and local requirements.



MAP & GUIDE 2 0 1 9 EDITION

NEW BUFFALO BLUEWAY SITE
Buffalo RiverWorks

EXISTING PUBLIC ACCESS LAUNCHES

- ▲ Wilkeson Pointe
- ▲ Union Ship Canal
- ▲ Ohio Street Boat Launch
- ▲ Mutual Riverfront Park
- ▲ Red Jacket Riverfront Park
- ▲ Seneca Bluffs
- ▲ Harlem Road

PARKS

- 1 Delaware Park
- 2 Unity Island Park
- 3 Front Park
- 4 LaSalle Park
- 5 Bird Island Pier
- 6 Veterans Park
- 7 Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park
- 8 River Fest Park
- 9 Conway Park
- 10 Mutual Riverfront Park
- 11 Red Jacket Riverfront Park
- 12 Bailey Peninsula
- 13 Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Area
- 14 Houghton Park
- 15 Times Beach Nature Preserve
- 16 Wilkeson Pointe
- 17 Tift Nature Preserve
- 18 Buffalo Harbor State Park
- 19 Cazenovia Park

GRAIN ELEVATORS

- 1 Connecting Terminal
- 2 Great Northern
- 3 General Mills
- 4 St. Mary's (Kelllogg)
- 5 G.F. Agway
- 6 LaFarge (Huron Portland) Cement
- 7 Standard
- 8 Cargill Electric Annex
- 9 American (Peavy) Exchange
- 10 Perot Malting
- 11 Lake and Rail
- 12 Marine A
- 13 Cargill Superior
- 14 Concrete Central
- 15 Cargill Pool

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1 Black Rock Lock
- 2 Mouth of Scajaquada Creek
- 3 Frank Lloyd Wright's Fontana Boathouse
- 4 Colonel Ward Pumping Station
- 5 Bell Aircraft Amphibious Hovercraft Launching Site
- 6 Commercial Slip
- 7 Edward M. Cotter Fireboat
- 8 Buffalo Main Lighthouse

BRIDGES

- 1 International Railway Swing Bridge
- 2 Ferry Street Lift Bridge
- 3 Peace Bridge
- 4 Michigan Avenue Vertical Lift Bridge
- 5 Ohio Street Vertical Lift Bridge
- 6 Conrail Bridge
- 7 Twin Bridges: Conrail Bridge and Norfolk Southern Bridge
- 8 South Park Avenue Bridge
- 9 Bailey Avenue Bridge
- 10 Seneca Street Bridge
- 11 Ogden Street Bridge
- 12 Mouth of Scajaquada Creek

▲ OHIO STREET BOAT LAUNCH

The existing conditions at the NYSDEC Ohio Street Boat Launch consist of a concrete boat ramp adjacent to launch, paddlecraft or car-top motor boat. A small parking lot and on street parking are available. This site is in a medium traffic area of the channel. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible. Non-motorized watercraft should use caution and stay close to the shore.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ MUTUAL RIVERFRONT PARK

Mutual Riverfront Park is located on Harburg Street across from the historic Elevator Alley and highlights the region's deep connection to the grain industry. The existing conditions at Mutual Riverfront include a paddlecraft roller launch which provides easy access to the Buffalo River. On street parking is available, but limited. Portable toilets are available. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ RED JACKET RIVERFRONT NATURAL HABITAT PARK

Red Jacket Riverfront Natural Habitat Park is located south of busy South Park Avenue yet is one of the more remote Buffalo River parks. There is an informal launch site located at the western end of the park. There are no docks or concrete pad. There is ample parking available in the park. The site is in a low traffic area of the channel. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ SENECA BLUFFS NATURAL HABITAT PARK

Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park is located near the Seneca Street Bridge. There is an informal launch site with no docks or concrete pad. There is ample parking available in the park. The site is in a low traffic area of the channel. Water levels in the area may not be suitable for car-top motorized vessels. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ HARLEM ROAD FISHING ACCESS POINT

The NYSDEC Harlem Road Fishing Access Point offers a gravel launch pad with a stepped entry into the water, making it easier for launching paddlecrafts. Provides access to the forested section Buffalo River shoreline with abundant wildlife. Ample parking is available. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ WILKESON POINTE

Wilkeson Pointe currently provides a roller launch for easy access along with a paddlecraft drop-off area. There is ample on-street parking. Kayak and paddleboard rentals, restrooms and a snack shack are available. This launch facility provides access to paddling in the Outer Harbor. Paddling conditions in the Outer Harbor are expert level and may include exposure to wind and waves. Use caution and stay close to shore. There are very few emergency exits along the Outer Harbor. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

↓ This site is targeted for Blueway enhancement.

▲ UNION SHIP CANAL

Union Ship Canal anchors the southern end of Buffalo's Outer Harbor. Multi-use trails connect pedestrians and cyclists along the Outer Harbor. Tift Nature Preserve and the Niagara River Greenway. An existing paddlecraft launch exists on the northwest side of NYS Route 5. This paddlecraft launch is a steep set of stairs and extreme caution should be used when accessing the water. Launching of motorized vessels is not possible.

BLUEWAY SITE: BUFFALO RIVERWORKS

Newly enhanced under the Blueway project, the Buffalo RiverWorks site provides paddlers with multiple options for launching and getting out of the water safely and easily. This recently implemented Blueway site boasts a fully accessible paddle craft roller dock facility on the Buffalo River. There are additional direct entry docks and dock sections for transient power boat access. Kayaks, paddleboards, and hydrobikes are available for rent. In addition, parking access is provided for those who bring their own car-top watercraft. Multiple other entertainment options are available at this site and restrooms can be found inside the restaurant and bar area for patrons. This site is located in a high traffic area of the river so it is critical that paddlers should stay along the shore and yield to larger craft.



LEGEND

- Blue square: Buffalo Blueway Site
- Red triangle: Public Access Launch
- Green circle: Park
- Grey circle: Grain Elevator
- Orange circle: Point of Interest
- Yellow diamond: Bridges
- Yellow square: Restoration Sites
- Black line: Bike/walking trail
- Red line: High traffic areas - open water, high mixed use traffic, changing conditions.

NOTE: Buffalo River is a no-wake zone. 5 mph. 6 knots.

The identified Blueway sites are the Existing Public Access Sites. Within three years there will be improvements and additional sites added.