



**Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Greenway Related Projects and Programs**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**PROJECT CONSULTATION and PROJECT REVIEW**

**Effective October 2021**

**Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Consultation and Review Form**

Date of Submittal:  Project Registration Number (*office use only*):

Type of Review Required (please check one):

- Mandatory Consultation for proposals seeking Greenway Funding  
 Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement for proposals not seeking Greenway Funding

**PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION**

Name:	Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. (Donald F. Miller Park) See attached IRS 501 (c) 3 Public Charity Tax Exempt Status Below
Mailing Address:	1601 Sweeney Street, North Tonawanda
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14120
Federal ID#:	16-1334605
Charities Registration #:	05-66-72

**PROJECT TYPE** (Please check only ONE)

- Trail Development / Improvement                       Interpretation / Cultural Monuments  
 Ecosystem / Riparian Habitat Restoration               Stewardship  
 Niagara River Greenway Placemaking / Public Access / Wayfinding

**FUNDING COMMITTEE**

- Host Community Standing Committee                       Ecological Standing Committee  
 Buffalo and Erie County Standing Committee               State Parks Standing Committee  
 Unsure at this time / N/A

**TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED**     

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES**

Source	Amount
<u>Kelly for Kids Foundation</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
<u>Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Name:	<u>Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. Increasing Accessibility with Comfort Station Additions and an Autism Trail</u>
Location (include GPS coordinates if possible):	Addition to Thelma Walter Cabin 43.03348 78.82739 Addition to Uncle John Cabin 43.03428 78.82680 Autism Trail 43.034181 78.827453
Project Site Address:	1601 Sweeney Street, North Tonawanda, NY 14120
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14120
Minor Civil Division(s):	City of North Tonawanda
County:	Niagara
Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other):	Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. is the Property Owner

**AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL**

Name:	<u>John Jones</u>
Title:	Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. - President
Business Address:	1601 Sweeney Street, North Tonawanda
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14120
Work Number:	Same
Cell Number:	716-848-9384
E-Mail Address:	ntrjc1@gmail.com

**PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT**

Name:	<u>Karl Heilemann</u>
Title:	Board Member
Organization / Firm:	Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club Inc. (Donald F. Miller Park)
Business Address:	1601 Sweeney Street, North Tonawanda
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14120
Work Number:	same
Cell Number:	716-523-9696
E-Mail Address:	ntrjc1@gmail.com

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Planning	\$10,000
Construction	\$238,609 (\$205,109 Bathrooms + \$25,000 Trail + \$8,500 Signage)
Acquisition	\$0
Administration	\$0
Operation and Maintenance / Year	\$1,000 x 5 years = 5,000
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$253,609</b>

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.

### Funding:

Kelly for Kids Foundation:

Comfort Station Conceptual Drawings & Estimates – \$5,000 received

Trail Planning & Construction – \$6,000 received

East Hill Foundation:

Trail Construction – \$25,000 committed

Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Legacy Fund:

Comfort Stations – \$100,000 applied for

Trail Construction – \$25,000 applied for

Niagara River Greenway Fund:

Comfort Stations – \$205,109 applied for

Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.:

Maintenance, Cleaning, Miscellaneous – \$5,000 on hand budgeted

**PROOF OF TAX-EXEMPT STATUS AS A 501(c)3 PUBLIC CHARITY PURSUANT TO THE  
UNITED STATES INTERNAL REVENUE CODE**

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
DISTRICT DIRECTOR  
G.P.O. BOX 1680  
BROOKLYN, NY 11202

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **AUG 22 1996**

NOR-TON RED JACKET CLUB INC  
C/O LAURICE A. GHOUGASIAN  
MAGAVERN, MAGAVERN & GRIMM, LLP  
1100 RAND BUILDING  
BUFFALO, NY 14203

Employer Identification Number:  
16-1334603  
Case Number:  
116200021  
Contact Person:  
OLATUNDE H. ONIYIDE  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(718) 488-2318  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Form 990 Required:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

We have further determined that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code, because you are an organization described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

If your sources of support, or your purposes, character, or method of operation change, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status and foundation status. In the case of an amendment to your organizational document or bylaws, please send us a copy of the amended document or bylaws. Also, you should inform us of all changes in your name or address.

As of January 1, 1984, you are liable for taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (social security taxes) on remuneration of \$100 or more you pay to each of your employees during a calendar year. You are not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Since you are not a private foundation, you are not subject to the excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. However, you are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other federal taxes, please let us know.

Grantors and contributors may rely on this determination unless the Internal Revenue Service publishes notice to the contrary. However, if you lose your section 509(a)(1) status, a grantor or contributor may not rely on this determination if he or she was in part responsible for, or was aware of, the act or failure to act, or the substantial or material change on the part of the organization that resulted in your loss of such status, or if he or she acquired knowledge that the Internal Revenue Service had given notice that you would no longer be classified as a section 509(a)(1) organization.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the

Letter 947 (EO/CG)

NOR-TON RED JACKET CLUB INC

Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of Code sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

Contribution deductions are allowable to donors only to the extent that their contributions are gifts, with no consideration received. Ticket purchases and similar payments in conjunction with fundraising events may not necessarily qualify as deductible contributions, depending on the circumstances. See Revenue Ruling 67-246, published in Cumulative Bulletin 1967-2, on page 104, which sets forth guidelines regarding the deductibility, as charitable contributions, of payments made by taxpayers for admission to or other participation in fundraising activities for charity.

In the heading of this letter we have indicated whether you must file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax. If Yes is indicated, you are required to file Form 990 only if your gross receipts each year are normally more than \$25,000. However, if you receive a Form 990 package in the mail, please file the return even if you do not exceed the gross receipts test. If you are not required to file, simply attach the label provided, check the box in the heading to indicate that your annual gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less, and sign the return.

If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. A penalty of \$10 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed \$5,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete, so please be sure your return is complete before you file it.

You are not required to file federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If an employer identification number was not entered on your application, a number will be assigned to you and you will be advised of it. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

In accordance with section 508(a) of the Code, the effective date of this determination letter is July 30, 1984.

This determination is based on evidence that your funds are dedicated to the purposes listed in section 501(c)(3) of the Code. To assure your continued exemption, you should keep records to show that funds are expended only for those purposes. If you distribute funds to other organizations, your

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NOR-TON RED JACKET CLUB INC

records should show whether they are exempt under section 501(c)(3). In cases where the recipient organization is not exempt under section 501(c)(3), there should be evidence that the funds will remain dedicated to the required purposes and that they will be used for those purposes by the recipient.

If distributions are made to individuals, case histories regarding the recipients should be kept showing names, addresses, purposes of awards, manner of selection, relationship (if any) to members, officers, trustees or donors of funds to you, so that any and all distributions made to individuals can be substantiated upon request by the Internal Revenue Service. (Revenue Ruling 56-304, C.B. 1956-2, page 306.)

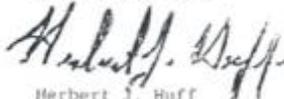
Since you have not indicated that you intend to finance your activities with the proceeds of tax exempt bond financing, in this letter, we have not determined the effect of such financing on your tax exempt status.

If we have indicated in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Herbert J. Huff  
District Director

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please attach material which responds to the following six items in the order that they are presented.

1. In a brief paragraph, describe the project and its purpose, how and when it will be accomplished, and why it is important.

The project, led by the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club Inc., is a two-part effort to expand outdoor programming along the New York State Barge Canal. The first part of the effort will see the addition of comfort stations to the cabin facilities at Donald F. Miller Park. The second part will be the creation of a walking trail within the 23-acre park, available to all individuals within the park. The trail will be designed to provide a safe and sensory-friendly outdoor experience for all persons, including those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), or people with other disabilities.

As an example of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.'s commitment to expanding public access to the Niagara River Greenway, the Club donated approximately 2.4 acres of property to the city of North Tonawanda to assist them in completing a new bike trail last year. This bike trail will run along Sweeney Street near the front entrance of Donald F. Miller Park and provide an additional link between the park and the Niagara River Greenway. The proposed project will further the vision of the Niagara River Greenway by creating outdoor experiences in the Niagara River corridor for all persons.

The project will proceed along both phases simultaneously. During the first phase, the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. will construct private bathroom and changing room additions to the two cabins at Donald F. Miller Park. The current bathroom facility is in its own building, approximately 150 ft. from the cabins where all other activities take place. Connecting bathroom and changing facilities to each cabin will improve safety during nighttime use and provide accessible spaces for individuals, either staying in the cabins, when reserved, or open to the persons within the park when the cabins are not reserved.

The second phase of the project will result in the construction of a nature trail along the New York State Barge Canal designed to provide a safe, inclusive, and sensory-friendly outdoor experience for all individuals, including those with developmental differences. The Greenway Plan states that all persons should be able to enjoy the Greenway, including those with disabilities. The trail will be made available to all persons, regardless of age or disability. This unique sensory experience will be created by altering the walking terrain, providing natural materials that enhance tactile sensations, and offering unique sound experiences. These specific sensory features can be enjoyed by everyone.

Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 Public Charity. The Park is a unique place on the Niagara River Greenway because it provides safe and secure outdoor experiences including camping overnight in cabins and tents, for thousands of youths and adults annually. The Club offers free programs and activities for people to explore. Currently, there are 19 different activities such as canoeing, kayaking, archery, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc. Through these activities the Club educates people on taking good care of the environment. The activities, all maintained and provided by trained certified volunteers, have a large reach. In 2025, 65 different groups benefited from the offerings of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Please attach the proposed project timeline, identify any relevant milestones, and provide an estimated date for project completion/opening. If funded, it is expected that the project sponsor or point of contact will notify the Commission of the project opening date as it nears completion.

- Spring of 2026 begin both phases
- June of 2026 completion of the Thelma & Walter Balling addition
- August of 2026 completion of the Uncle John’s Cabin addition
- October 2026 completion of the trail

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.

**Goals**

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Excellence           | Restoration     |
| Sustainability       | Authenticity    |
| Accessibility        | Celebration     |
| Ecological Integrity | Partnerships    |
| Public Well-Being    | Community Based |
| Connectivity         |                 |

**Principals**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Improve Access                            | Promote Long Term Sustainability          |
| Make Connections                          | Extend the Legacy of Fredrick Law Olmsted |
| Spark Revitalization and Renewal          | Celebrate History and Heritage            |
| Protect and Restore Environmental Systems |   |

## Criteria

Consistency with Greenway Principles	Economic Viability
Priority Status	Availability of Local Sponsor or Partner
Focus Area	Ability to Match or Leverage Funds
Environmental Soundness	Consideration of Other Planning Efforts
Implementable	Clear Benefits

The proposed project will advance local and regional agendas for community livability, recreation, public health, tourism and economic development. Driven by community engagement and assistance of City officials, this project is a community-based initiative that aims to enhance public well-being and provide a much-needed community asset for the growing City of North Tonawanda, and Niagara County. The project will facilitate tourist opportunities for residents and visitors that it will attract, causing a positive economic impact in the City and Niagara County. This project incorporates several of the goals, principals and criteria of the Niagara River Greenway Commission, as it will support an attractive, accessible, unified, environmentally friendly, and revitalized corridor of the Niagara River and Erie Canal.

## Goals:

- **Excellence** – The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. continues to become a destination site drawing thousands of people for low-cost outdoor educational opportunities. This project will further support the growing popularity of this park by providing an upgrade in bathroom facilities and the addition of a trail, purposely set up to also accommodate people with disabilities. Greater exposure to our facility will increase appreciation for this world-class greenspace network.
- **Sustainability** – Increased attendance at the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. facility will enhance participants understanding of the natural environment. Increased understanding of the natural environment, through outdoor program activities at Donald F. Miller Park, will help ensure the long-term health of the Niagara River.
- **Accessibility** – By bringing new amenities to the park, this project will attract a wider demographic of all visitors, and public access for all. It will specifically make a natural area along the New York State Barge Canal more accessible for individuals with physical disabilities that limit their ability to move between facilities to change clothes or use the restroom. Donald F. Miller Park is set up for all persons; that is to preclude none; but is arranged to support people with special needs, including ASD, to enjoy the outdoors in

the same manner as every other person. The park does not exclude any person, and provides access to those that may ordinarily be denied using or experiencing the same.

- **Ecological Integrity** – The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. purchased the property at Donald F. Miller Park this past year to ensure the preservation of this vital area of the Niagara River ecosystem. The project will allow more people to access the area for outdoor educational purposes, while maintaining the natural ecosystem.
- **Public Well-Being** – The utilization of the proposed project will promote both active and passive recreation, promoting the physical and emotional well-being of the public. New bathrooms will further enhance the experience of the public with clean usable, handicap accessible restroom areas that also provide room for changing stations for infants and toddlers which presently is not available with the current bathroom structure.
- **Connectivity** – This project will update access to the network of natural greenspaces along the Niagara River Corridor. The park recently donated 2.4 acres of property to the City of North Tonawanda to complete their bike trail that runs along the front of their property on Sweeney Street.
- **Restoration** – Having a formal, updated, private bathroom facility is a significant physical improvement over what is presently available at this park. This is needed to handle the projected increase in use of the park with the new trail and additional activity that it will bring. Updated facilities encourage public access and a subsequent increase in public understanding of ecological issues.
- **Authenticity** – This project will help preserve and enhance a portion of the natural resources in the Niagara River Greenway.
- **Celebration** – This project further promotes social interactions and shared experiences as a space to gather for events. The addition of the bathroom facilities and the trail encourage more people to recognize and honor our natural environment.
- **Partnerships** – As a non-profit organization the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. is partnering with Niagara County, the City of North Tonawanda, as well as other funding sources such as the Kelly for Kids Foundation, the Ralph Wilson Jr. Legacy fund, and many other community stakeholders to plan, fund, implement and manage this project and Donald F. Miller Park. This allows the organization to continue the partnership of the use of the facilities between the University at Buffalo, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls,

various churches, public and private schools, as well as places like Casey House in Niagara Falls and the Youth Mentoring Association of Lockport and People Inc. among others.

- **Community Based** – The Board of Directors and Members of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. live in the surrounding community. The City of North Tonawanda Planning Commission, Mayor, and Common Council have included these plans in their recently approved Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045. The Niagara County Planning Commission has approved the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. Accessibility Improvement Plans as well.

### Principals

- **Improve Access** – The project encourages a diverse group of residents and visitors to access and use the park. The project will further encourage waterfront access and enhance the public experience at the park. This project will contribute to the function and enjoyment of a park in the immediate area of the Greenway Trail and the adjacent communities. It will provide a private, more easily accessible facility for personal needs.
- **Make Connections** – The groups can arrange to come and stay in the park while they utilize the attractions along the Greenway, including the new trail. They could also kayak and canoe, using the canal to visit North Tonawanda or Lockport, enjoying the beauty and history of the canal.
- **Protect and Restore Environmental Systems** – The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. has operated Donald F. Miller Park since 1986. The Club oversees all maintenance and upkeep and will dedicate the necessary resources to ensuring the proposed property remains well-kept and environmentally sound.
- **Spark Revitalization and Renewal** – The livability of a place, including the natural environment, the built environment, the culture and recreational offerings all contribute to attracting residents, visitors and investment. This is a beautiful natural environment where recreational opportunities are available and will be more accessible for people, improving residents' quality of life. Making Donald F. Miller Park a more accessible facility will introduce land and water recreational activities to new groups of people, which will serve as an entry point toward the expanded use of other offerings along the Niagara River Gateway.
- **Promote Long Term Sustainability** –The additions of the bathroom facilities will help ensure that the facilities at the park remain modern and functional, and that the park remains relevant for continued use by future generations. After holding a long-term, 40-

year lease on the property the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club completed the purchase of the property in 2025. Through all those years, and into the future, all operations, maintenance and programs have been and will continue to be performed by members of the organization. The activity will in turn promote a greater understanding and interest in ecological issues.

- **Extend the Legacy of Frederick Law Olmstead** – Olmsted believed in implementing contemporary plans to make green space more accessible for everyone to enjoy outdoor recreation, and community gathering. This in turn creates a healthier population. The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. comfort station additions and trail make Olmstead’s vision possible for more people in our community.
- **Celebrate History & Heritage** – The project, located along the Erie Canal, will enhance the waterfront as a destination and support the local economy, particularly when tourists participate in activities at Donald F. Miller Park. They will also be able to think about and enjoy the heritage and history of the Erie Barge Canal, and how it was instrumental in starting the industrialization of Western New York.

#### Criteria:

- **Consistency with Greenway Principles** – The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. strives to make improvements within the Greenway boundaries which are consistent with the vision, goals, and principles of the Greenway Master Plan. Continued development of recreational activities at its waterfront park, with free activities such as canoeing and kayaking in the warmer months and snowshoeing and cross-country skiing along the water’s edge in colder months, encourages people to enjoy the waterfront year-round. Increased public access to enjoy outdoor recreational activities encourages people to respect and protect our natural resources.
- **Priority Status** – This project significantly improves and sustains access to waterfront resources by bringing new opportunities for recreation and leisure usage at the park to further attract more people, and in this case, particularly those with special needs, to the location.
- **Focus Area** – This project is located directly on the New York State Canal within the Greenway focus area. Donald F. Miller Park provides a unique, safe and secure outdoor experience, including camping overnight in cabins and tents, to thousands of youths and adults annually. This is a unique opportunity within the Niagara River Greenway.

- **Environmental Soundness** – This project does not infringe on any forested shrub areas of the property. The existence of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc – Donald F. Miller Park, and their recent purchase of the property has helped protect an important natural habitat. Continued support of this organization will help protect an important environmental area along the Niagara River Greenway. This project takes into consideration the environmental impact.
- **Implementable** – The City of North Tonawanda Planning Commission declared themselves Lead Agency and conducted a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) and approved a negative declaration because there is no significant impact on the environment. The Niagara County Planning Commission also approved the project. The New York State Department of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation reviewed the project and stated that archeological and/or historic resources will not be impacted. The City of North Tonawanda Building Department approved the additions. The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. has the capacity to implement this project without significantly adding new operations or maintenance burden. Existing members have the expertise and capacity to assist in implementation of this project.
- **Economic Viability** – Recently groups from Massachusetts, Ohio, Indiana, Delaware, Fort Ashby NY, Kings Park NY, and Appalachian NY visited Donald F. Miller Park. With the addition of improved facilities more out-of-area people will participate in activities with the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. This activity will also bring income to stores, restaurants, and other local area businesses.
- **Availability of Local Sponsor or Partner** – This project’s long-term sponsor is the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc., a 501(c)3 Public Charity who has committed to the long-term oversight, maintenance and funding of the bathroom additions and autism trail.
- **Ability to Match or Leverage Funds** – The Greenway funds will assist in leveraging funds for the trail phase of the project. The mere application to the Greenway has helped to leverage \$15,000 for use in conceptual drawings, permit and filing fees. In addition, the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. has applied to the Ralph C. Wilson Junior Foundation for \$25,000 in funding for the trail construction, and an additional application for \$100,000 to be used to supplement the funding from the Greenway Host Community Standing Committee that may fall short of the request.
- **Consideration of Other Planning Efforts** – Enhancing Donald F. Miller Park and increasing accessibility to recreation opportunities along the New York State Barge Canal and the Niagara River is consistent with the North Tonawanda’s Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045.

In addition, the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. has recently collaborated with the neighboring Botanical Gardens Association to provide programs.

- **Clear Benefits** – This project will clearly benefit the City of North Tonawanda and the Niagara region who are looking for waterfront recreation activities. This project is a quality-of-life improvement for those who use Donald F. Miller Park, giving more people, more waterfront recreation opportunities. The construction of bathroom additions and an accessible trail are action oriented and will provide clear improvements.

**3. Define the budget for the total proposed project and include costs for the following:**

Planning	\$10,000
Construction	\$238,609 <small>(\$205,109 Bathrooms + \$25,000 Trail + \$8,500 Signage)</small>
Acquisition	\$0
Administration	\$0
Operation and Maintenance / Year	\$1,000 x 5 years = \$5,000
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$253,609</b>

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.

Funding:

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Trail Planning & Construction – \$6,000 received

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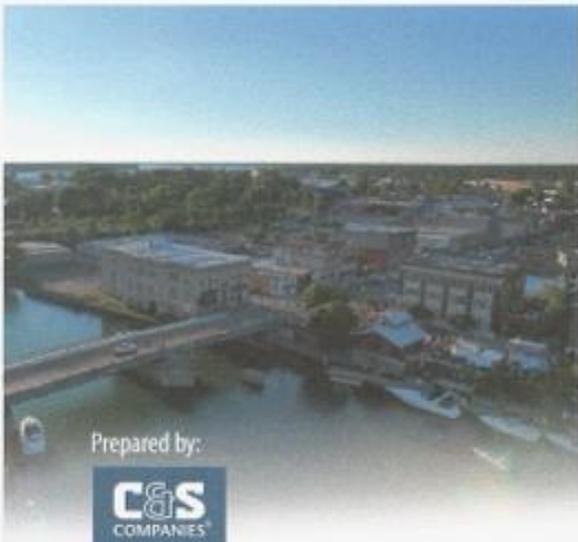
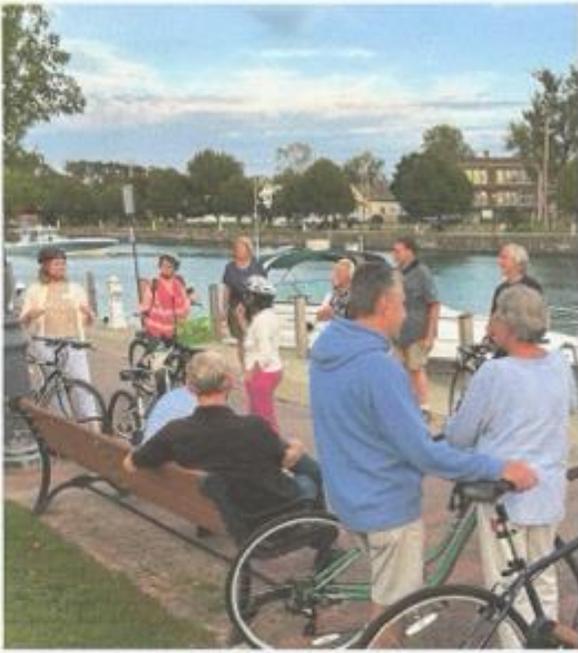
Trail – \$25,000 applied for

Niagara River Greenway Fund:  
Comfort Station Construction \$205,109 – applied for

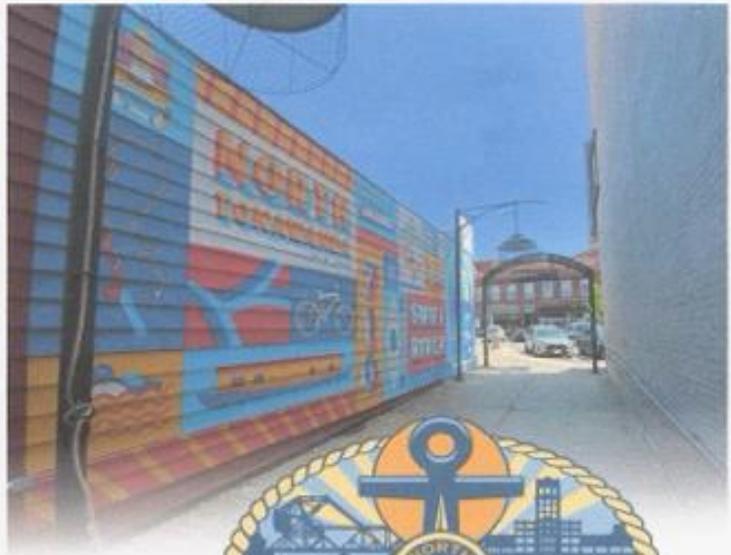
Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.  
Maintenance, Cleaning, Miscellaneous \$5,000 – on hand budgeted

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.

The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. - Donald F. Miller Park is cited in the City of North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan 2025 - 2045, for providing social gathering spaces, low cost outdoor educational & recreational opportunities, and important environmental benefits to thousands of people each year. The City of North Tonawanda supports future facility improvements that will promote environmental education, personal fitness and quality of life. These improvements include such things as creating an accessible trail that will be designed and modified to accommodate individuals on the autism spectrum, and to further improving accessibility by adding private bathrooms & changing areas to each of their cabins. A copy of the City of North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045 citing the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. – Donald F. Miller Park is attached below. See also letters of support from various government officials and individual groups that have used the park.



Prepared by:



# CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025-2045



### Youth Center

The North Tonawanda Youth Center is a branch of the North Tonawanda Department of Youth, Recreation & Parks Department and is located at 383 Vandervoort Street. The Youth Center serves residents in grades K-12. The Youth Center offers American Sign Language and chess programs, a babysitting course, cheer, dance, theatre, and STEM Clubs, junior hikers, RECscape room, and snack attack. The Youth Center utilizes Payne Park for outdoor programming starting in June and through September.

The City has numerous public spaces that are dedicated to serving as community assets. Direct access to the water from the public boat and kayak launches help to activate the water as a recreational resource. The preservation and expansion of parks, trails, and open space is of paramount importance throughout the planning process.

Although not owned or leased by the City of North Tonawanda, Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc - Donald F. Miller Park is recognized as a major recreational asset within the city and along Tonawanda Creek. The Park provides opportunities for social gatherings, as well as outdoor education and recreation. The organization is planning to implement an accessible sensory trail and cabin capital improvements to ensure the property continues to be utilized by those of all ages.



### Historic Resources

Once home to a portion of the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy, the City of North Tonawanda was a unique opportunity for land development in the mid-19th century. The "Swift Running Water" of the Tonawanda Creek became the namesake of the newly forming city. Navigable water and fertile soil were catalysts for development and gave way to the construction of the Erie Canal. After the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, investors saw potential for development within the City. By the turn of the century, lumber was being shipped eastward through the port of Tonawanda via the Erie Canal. The boom of the lumber industry brought boats carrying settlers looking to continue their journey westward. However, the rich farming soil allowed these settlers to shorten their journey and begin their new lives along the Erie Canal. The increase in population and access to the Erie Canal quickly brought about the expansion of produce markets for the new residents to sell their crops.

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.

The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc owns the 22.98 acres of property known as Donald F. Miller Park. The additions are relatively small, being added to currently existing structures. There are no endangered plants or animals on the property. No unique geological features exist. There is no historical significance located on the property. The existing trees and shrubs will not be disturbed. The City of North Tonawanda Planning Commission declared themselves Lead Agency and conducted a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) and approved a negative declaration because there is no significant impact on the environment. The Niagara County Planning Commission also approved the project. The New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation has approved the project. The City of North Tonawanda Building Department approved the additions. With the approvals in place, we expect construction can begin as soon as funding is received.

#### Description of the Reservation System

The reservation system at the park is exactly that – first come first served. This is the same as would exist in other parks for reserving pavilions, cabins or the use of other areas that would be requested by a person or organization. When a person calls in, they ask for an available date. A check is made to see if that date, cabin, pavilion or area is available. If the area, cabin or pavilion is not available, the person is asked if they would like to book it for a different area, cabin, pavilion or date. The reservation system does not preclude any individuals, family or organization from making a reservation.

Sophie the Fierce is a group that provides service to pediatric cancer warriors and their families at the park. That group needs to be cautious interacting with other people because their cancer treatment compromises their immunity. When they book, they need to book the entire camp. If a person called for an additional booking on the Sophie the Fierce date, that date is of course unavailable. The same would be true if any person had booked the entire park, (not just those with an immunity concern).

The park, while being approximately 23 acres, has a limited amount of space because the woods take up a considerable portion of the park. The reservation system only works to be able to track the number of people who are in the park, participating in experiences and activities at any given time. Activities such as canoeing, kayaking, archery and other activities, require assistance, and the park staff is limited. Again, I repeat, it does not preclude any person, entity or organization that is looking to utilize the facilities at Donald F. Miller Park.

The Greenway Plan indicates that it is to assist in making parks, the area of the Greenway, and activities accessible to all persons, including those with disabilities. Donald F. Miller Park does not preclude any part of the public from utilizing the park through its reservation system.

This project has two parts. First, the trail with new enhanced experiences and activities, that can be used by all persons – will increase the number of persons who will be utilizing the park. Second, the addition of comfort station bathrooms being attached to existing cabins are an effort to accommodate that increased use. The bathrooms can be used two-fold. It provides an attached handicapped bathroom and shower for those people who reserve the cabins. This alleviates having them to use the existing main bathrooms; accommodating the additional persons that will be using the park due to the new trail. The new bathrooms can be opened to all persons that will be using the Park when one or both cabins have not been reserved.

It should be further noted concerning the reservation system that there have been times when up to six groups are in the park at one time; at times a mixture of families

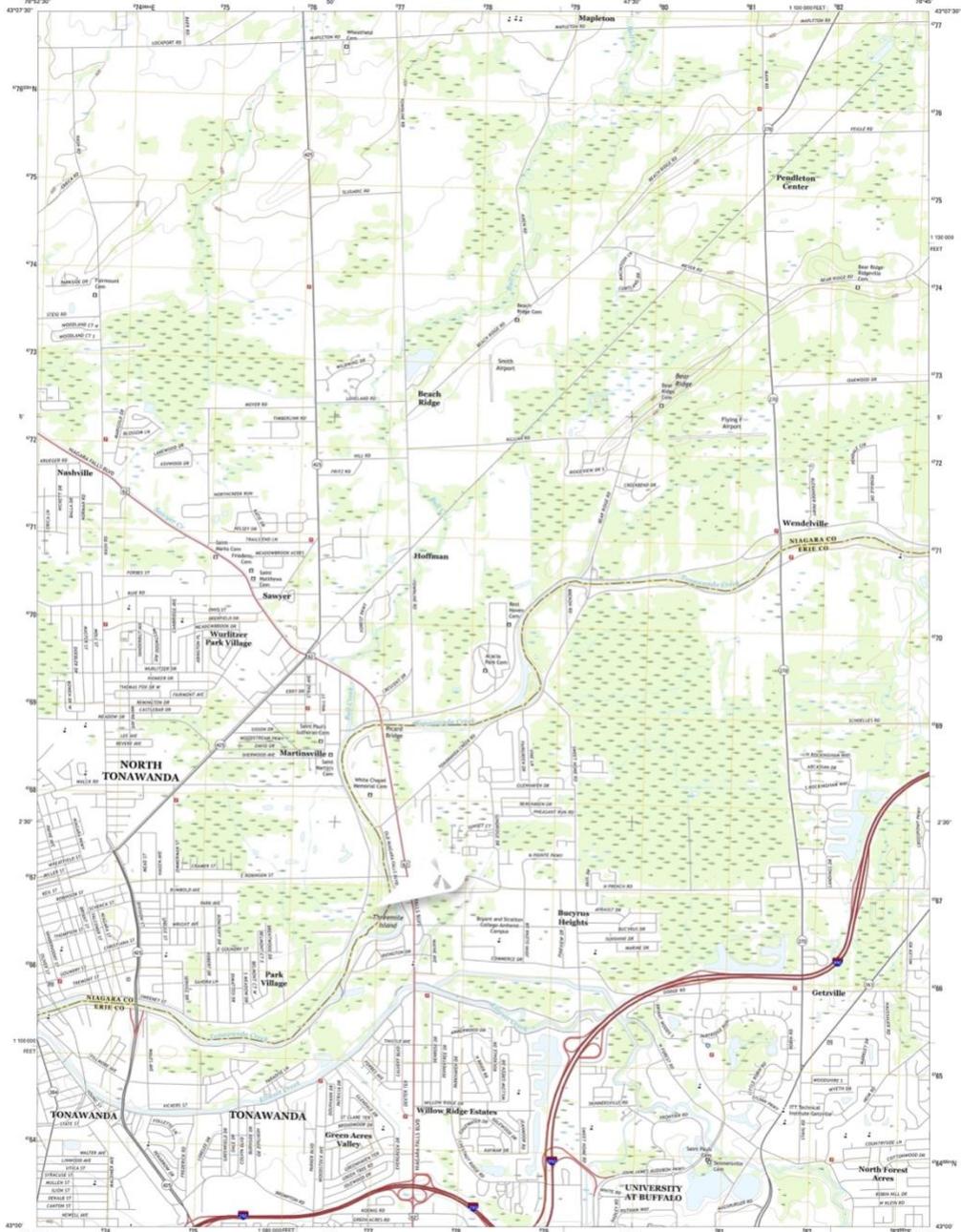
or organized groups such as those set forth in the main part of the application (scouts, schools, churches etc....) Recently, organizations have come in from distant places including Hobart, IN – Geneva, OH – Delaware, NY – Fort Ashby, NY – Kings Park, NY – Appalachian, NY – Massachusetts – Germany – and foreign exchange students. All these people eat at our local restaurants, and visit the local tourist destinations in and around the Niagara River Greenway.



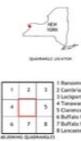
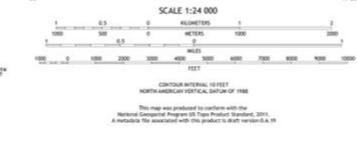
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



TONAWANDA EAST QUADRANGLE  
NEW YORK  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Map date: 2014  
Base map: 2014  
Projection: UTM  
Datum: NAD 83  
Scale: 1:24,000  
This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be generalized for this map only. Private land with government reservations may not be shown. Check permission before entering private lands.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010  
Hydrography: National Hydrography Dataset, 2010  
Contour: National Hydrography Dataset, 2010  
Roads: National Hydrography Dataset, 2010  
Waterbodies: National Hydrography Dataset, 2010  
Metadata: FWS National Wetlands Inventory, 2007, 2014



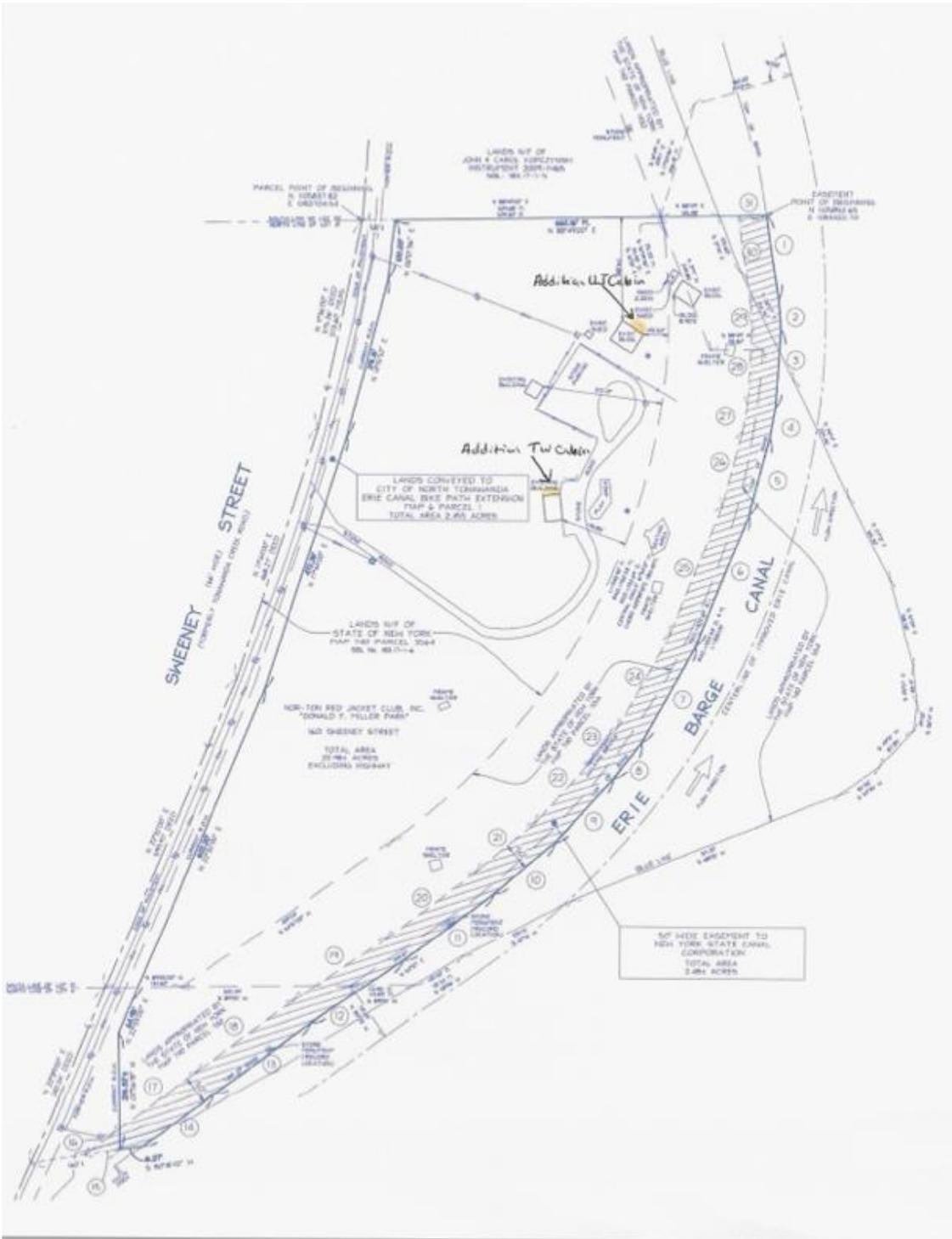
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Expressway	Local Connector
Interstate Hwy	Local Road
Ramp	4RD
Interstate Route	US Route
	State Route

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

TONAWANDA EAST, NY  
2016







Uncle John's Cabin



Current condition of Uncle John's Cabin Addition Site.

# Uncle John's Cabin Conceptual Plan

The architectural drawing consists of a large floor plan on the left and four exterior renderings on the right. The floor plan shows a rectangular building with a smaller structure attached to the top. A yellow highlight is placed on the top structure, with a callout circle '1' pointing to it. The renderings show the building from different angles: top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right. Each rendering has a callout circle '1' pointing to it. The title block on the right contains the following information:

**ARCHITECT**  
 1234 Main Street  
 Anytown, TN 37000  
 Phone: 615-555-1234

**PROJECT**  
 Uncle John's Cabin

**DATE**  
 10/26/2023

**SCALE**  
 1/4" = 1'-0"

**PROJECT LOCATION**  
 1234 Main Street, Anytown, TN

**ARCHITECT'S SEAL**  
 (Seal of the Architect)

**PROJECT NAME**  
 Uncle John's Cabin

**PROJECT NUMBER**  
 A-10

**DATE**  
 10/26/2023

**SCALE**  
 1/4" = 1'-0"

**PROJECT LOCATION**  
 1234 Main Street, Anytown, TN



Uncle John's Cabin N. Tonawanda, NY <b>2025 Addition</b> <b>Capital Budget</b> <b>6/18/2025</b>	280 sf
	<b>Total Cost</b>
General Conditions / Demo	\$ 10,000
Concrete Block Foundations	\$ 21,000
Rough Framing	\$ 16,000
Doors / Windows	\$ 1,500
Roofing	\$ 3,400
Drywall / Finishing	\$ 6,800
Flooring	\$ 3,500
Exterior Finishes	\$ 5,000
Plumbing	\$ 9,000
Electrical	\$ 3,000
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$ 79,200</b>
Project Contingency / unforeseen conditions	\$ 6,336
<b>General Contractor Fee</b>	<b>\$ 8,554</b>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$ 94,090</b>



Thelma & Walter Balling Cabin



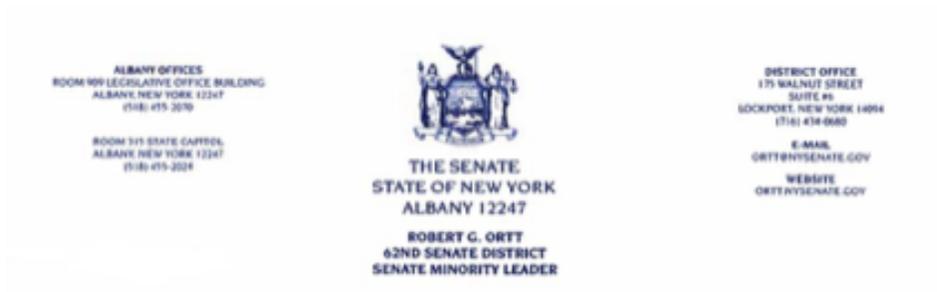
Current condition of Thelma & Walter Balling Cabin Addition Site





Balling Cabin N. Tonawanda, NY <b>2025 Addition</b> <b>Capital Budget</b> <b>6/18/2025</b>	450 sf
	<b>Total Cost</b>
General Conditions / Demo	\$ 12,000
Concrete Slab w/ Trench Foundation	\$ 20,000
Rough Framing	\$ 19,500
Doors / Windows	\$ 2,800
Roofing	\$ 5,500
Drywall / Finishing	\$ 8,650
Flooring	\$ 5,500
Exterior Finishes	\$ 6,500
Plumbing	\$ 9,000
Electrical	\$ 4,000
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$ 93,450</b>
Project Contingency / unforeseen conditions	\$ 7,476
<b>General Contractor Fee</b>	<b>\$ 10,093</b>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$ 111,019</b>





December 5, 2025

RE: Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. – Donald F. Miller Park Improvements

To whom it may concern:

I write to you in support of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc., a 501(c) 3 public charity that operates and maintains Donald F. Miller Park in order to provide outdoor educational experiences to thousands of people in our community. Just this past year – more than 3,300 people participated in activities at the park. The club is looking to add bathroom facilities to each cabin in the park.

There are 19 different activities such as canoeing, kayaking, archery, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc. Through these activities the Club educates people on taking good care of the environment. The experiences are provided at a low cost, allowing more underserved and special needs people to participate.

The current bathroom facility is in its own building, approximately 150 ft. from the cabins where all other activities take place. Connecting bathroom and changing facilities to each cabin will improve safety during nighttime use and provide private accessible spaces for individuals with disabilities and parents with young children/infants. The comfort stations will be fully ADA compliant to ensure universal access.

I support and encourage you to assist the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. by providing them with the funds needed for this important community project. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (716) 434-0680 or via email at [ortt@nysenate.gov](mailto:ortt@nysenate.gov).

With Respect,

Robert G. Ort  
Senate Minority Leader  
62<sup>nd</sup> District

CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA



AUSTIN J. TYLEC

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

**Re:** Support for Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club Funding Request for Park Facility Upgrades

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the City of North Tonawanda, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. as they seek funding to add private bathroom and changing room facilities to the two cabins at Donald F. Miller Park.

Donald F. Miller Park is an important community space that supports outdoor recreation, education, and gatherings for residents of all ages. The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club has been a dedicated partner in maintaining and enhancing this asset for many years.

The proposed improvements will provide fully ADA compliant, private, and accessible facilities for individuals with disabilities, families with young children, and the many groups that use the cabins throughout the year. These upgrades will allow the park to better accommodate community programs and ensure a more inclusive and comfortable experience for visitors.

I fully support this project and encourage your favorable consideration of their funding request. Please feel free to contact my office if you would like additional information or wish to discuss the impact of this project further.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Austin Tylec' in a cursive style.

Austin Tylec  
Mayor



To Whom It May Concern:

The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc., located at Donald F. Miller Park, provides valuable opportunities for social gatherings, outdoor education, and recreational activities for members of our community. The organization is widely recognized as a significant asset within the City of North Tonawanda.

The proposed construction of new bathroom and changing facilities at two cabins will create private, accessible spaces for individuals with disabilities as well as for parents with young children and infants. These comfort stations will be fully ADA-compliant, ensuring safe and inclusive access for all visitors.

I strongly support this project and encourage you to assist the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. by providing the funding necessary to complete this important community improvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JLavey".

Joseph Lavey, Jr.  
Council President  
Alderman – AT – Large  
City of North Tonawanda  
716-984-4262  
JLavey@northtonawanda.org

Dear Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.,

I am writing to extend our most sincere gratitude for your continuous and unwavering support of our foundation. Your profound generosity in consistently providing your club as the venue for our "Warrior Camp Days" is absolutely invaluable to our mission.

These unique camp days at Donald F. Miller Park offer a vital space for the incredible children and families we serve, allowing them to experience joy, camaraderie, and empowerment in a safe and welcoming environment. Your partnership directly enables us to create these transformative experiences, fostering resilience and a sense of belonging among our warriors, and for that, we are truly thankful.

Attached to this email, you will find our formal partnership letter, which outlines the significant impact of your contributions and reaffirms our shared commitment to this crucial work. We hope it clearly conveys the depth of our appreciation and the positive outcomes made possible by your support.

Thank you once again for your exceptional dedication and for being such a cornerstone of our community efforts. We deeply value our collaboration and eagerly anticipate continuing our impactful work together.



With Love

Kristina Benintende  
Proud mother of Sophia Brielle  
Vice President, STF  
716-783-1819



**Sophia the Fierce Inc.**  
379 Seabrook Drive  
Williamsville, NY 14221  
716-783-1819  
Info@sophiathefierce.org

**RESPITE** ♥ **RESEARCH** ♥ **RELIEF**

Sophia the Fierce Inc. was founded by Sophia Benintende, at just 9 years old. She became a fierce advocate for pediatric cancer warriors. Even while fighting her own battle with cancer, Sophia dedicated herself to helping others. Sophia passed away in May of 2023 after a two-year battle with Ewing Sarcoma, a rare and aggressive form of cancer. Her family and Friends carry on her mission of providing respite, research, and relief for children and families facing pediatric cancer.

### **RESPITE**

We are saving to purchase a respite home for families and caregivers to enjoy much needed quality time together - one of Sophia's core initiatives. In the meantime, we provide respite weekends or days for families to get away from it all.

### **RESEARCH**

We are working to fund a research trial for rare pediatric cancers, including Ewing Sarcoma, led by Dr. Joyce Ohm at Roswell Park, which aims to develop less toxic and more effective treatment options for children. Only 4% of federal funding goes towards pediatric cancer research. 50% of the funding comes from organizations like Sophia the Fierce. We are committed to continuing our support of this initiative.

### **RELIEF**

We are able to provide financial relief for these families. When cancer strikes a child, a parent typically needs to put their day job on hold to become a caretaker. We help elevate this burden! We've assisted families with various needs, from a needed down payment for a car to get back and forth to daily treatment, aided a family with a handicap accessible bathroom, cleared past due bills, and the list goes on.

In 2024, Sophia the Fierce Inc. partnered with the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club to host our Legacy Day Camp at Don Miller Park. It was the first of three day camps we have now held at this wonderful facility. These camps allow Western New York pediatric cancer warriors to spend time outdoors, learn new skills, and, if only for a day, forget the challenges they endure throughout their treatment. Families enjoy bonding, making memories, and experiencing nature in a way that brings peace and joy, just as Sophia loved to do.

To date, we have hosted three camp days at the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, and this December, we will be hosting our first Winter Camp Day. This completely cost-free event series serves pediatric cancer families from Roswell Park, Oishei Children's Hospital, and the greater Western New York Community. Activities have included archery, crafts, live entertainment, scavenger hunts, and a Parent Relaxation Station, offering massages and quiet rest time. All meals and snacks are provided to families at no cost.

This partnership between Sophia the Fierce Inc. and the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club is an essential part of our mission. We are sincerely grateful to the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club for their continued generosity, collaboration, and commitment to uplifting pediatric cancer warriors and their loved ones.

If you require additional information or documentation, please contact Kristina at [kristina@sophiathefierce.org](mailto:kristina@sophiathefierce.org) or AnnMarie Lesnewski at [alesnewski@yahoo.com](mailto:alesnewski@yahoo.com).

With gratitude,

Kristina Benintende  
Proud Mother of Sophia Brielle  
Vice President, Sophia the Fierce Inc.

Ann Marie Lesnewski  
Legacy Camp Day Chair



**IN LOVING MEMORY**  
Sophia "the Fierce" Benintende  
November 19th 2013 - May 9th 2023

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR MISSION PLEASE VISIT [WWW.SOPHIATHEFIERCE.ORG](http://WWW.SOPHIATHEFIERCE.ORG)**

November 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) and certified Autism Coach. I have developed and facilitate a program called The Neuro Social Circle, which facilitates social connections and opportunities for young adult neuro divergent individuals. A recent group activity was visiting Don Miller Park where the members explored the outdoors and familiarized themselves and their families with local resources. The group fully enjoyed hiking the nature trail, reading the posted educational resources and learning about the elements of nature. The experience at the park allowed members to interact with each other via sharing their impressions of the environment and their own knowledge of nature. Environments that provide communication catalyst while remaining safe and accepting, such as Don Miller Park, are essential for this population.

In my clinical opinion, and based on the response of my group members, the park has a wonderful potential to expand its community service by developing an autism nature trail. The nearest nature trail of this type is in Letchworth State Park which, although well-formed, is too distant for most local families to use on a regular basis. A nature trail for the autism population includes designs sensitive to potential sensory issues is also a fantastic resource for the whole neuro divergent population which includes but is not limited to attention deficit disorder (ADHD), anxiety disorder, OCD. In addition, the spacing and noise awareness in such designs benefits the general population, providing space in nature for quiet and exposure to the natural textures, calming tools for our hectic world

In conclusion, I strongly advocate for securing financial resources and community support to create an autism nature trail at Don Miller Park. The benefits of such a resource will only expand the park's community value. I would support such a project wholeheartedly.

Sincerely,

Patty McCalister, LMHC/Autism Coach  
Gatehouse Professional  
6395 Old Niagara Road  
Lockport NY, 14094  
[pattymccalister@gmail.com](mailto:pattymccalister@gmail.com)  
(716) 345-5450

January 22, 2026

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. – Donald F. Miller Park and their anticipated plans to enhance their facilities by adding private bathroom and changing area for each of their cabins.

This past semester, the University at Buffalo's Department of Environment and Sustainability contracted with the Board to utilize the space each semester for teaching purposes. We taught two classes for seven weeks in the fall.

This semester we are utilizing the space to teach two Wilderness First Aid academic courses (EVS 301 and EVS 302) on Tuesday evenings. An expansion which would add a bathroom and changing area would prove advantageous for us giving the requirement of teaching segments both indoors and outdoors. Students are required to travel directly from their previous classes and have had difficulty at times changing their attire into "outdoor" gear.

I know for a fact it is in our plans within our department to expand use of this wonderful venue to enhance the learning opportunities for our students at UB. We are anticipating the development of student volunteering, student research projects plus additional academic coursework in the future.

Personally, I found the initial process of securing space seamlessly. I made an initial inquiry and received a return call within a day. A day later and I went to the venue and was provided a tour along with the explanation of the rental process. The volunteer staff made this process easy and look forward to additional bookings down the road.

We have found the staff cooperative and willing to lend a hand whenever we are in need. Volunteer staff periodically came by during the fall semester just to make sure all was taken care of.

Again – great communication with the organization.

Later this spring, wearing a similar hat, I have booked a weekend training with a local non-profit, Earth Spirit Educational Services where we will be conducting a training and certification in an 80-hour Wilderness First Responder course through the National Association of Search and Rescue. We will have our participants spend Saturday night at the venue to allow us to simulate a "wilderness" scenario. Having bathrooms and changing areas will be a much needed improvement to the space.

This Fall, we had media coverage of our unique course that illustrated the importance of hands-on outdoor education recognizing how special to have a venue like Donald F. Miller Park so close is access for our University.

Respectfully,  
Russell E. Crispell

*Retired Director of Outdoor Pursuits  
Earth Spirit Educator / Trip Leader / Emergency Preparedness Coordinator  
Adjunct Professor – University at Buffalo Department of Environmental Science and Sustainability  
Adjunct Professor – SUNY Niagara (Formerly NCCC) – Nursing and Allied Health Division  
NASAR Instructor – Wilderness First Aid / Wilderness First Responder / Wilderness EMT Upgrade  
American Red Cross Instructor – CPR/AED/1<sup>st</sup> Aid/BLS/Blood Borne Pathogens/Wilderness First Aid  
American Heart Association – CPR/AED/1<sup>st</sup> Aid/BLS/Blood Borne Pathogens  
Licensed NYS DEC Master Guide #4082  
Remember - The strength of the wolf is in the pack... and the strength of the pack is in the wolf!*

Date: 01/24/2026

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in strong support of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc., and their request for funding to expand the cabins at Donald F. Miller Park to include private bathrooms and changing rooms.

Our Girl Scouts troop has been utilizing Donald F. Miller Park for our annual camping trips, and it has become an incredibly important and meaningful place for our girls especially our younger Daisies. We are a very large troop, with approximately thirty girls total, ranging from Daisies all the way through Seniors. Donald F. Miller Park offers a wide variety of activities that are appropriate and engaging for every age level, ensuring that no one is ever bored. It truly feels like we are away at camp, while still being close to home, which is a huge benefit for both the girls and their families.

One of the greatest advantages of this camp is its convenient location, which allows families flexibility. Girls are able to attend for the day or stay for the entire weekend, making participation much more accessible than camps farther away.

Making reservations for the camp has always been extremely easy and straightforward. The process for reserving cabins, setting up payments, and coordinating logistics was clear and well-organized. We also received a thorough walkthrough of the facilities, including expectations and emergency procedures, which made us feel confident, prepared, and supported throughout our stay.

The club volunteers were wonderful to work with. They were friendly, knowledgeable, and always willing to assist with opening and closing the facilities, as well as offering support during programs and activities. Their involvement truly enhanced our experience and made our time at camp run smoothly.

Our girls absolutely loved their time at Donald F. Miller Park. The facility was always clean, safe, and secure, which is incredibly important for youth groups. The camp offers so many amazing opportunities, including snowshoeing, archery, canoeing, nature hikes, community service projects, and Take Action projects. We participated in fun challenges, outdoor relay races, water balloon fights, campfire building, sing-alongs, and enjoyed s'mores together around the fire pit. These experiences created lasting memories and meaningful learning moments for our girls.

Adding private bathrooms and changing rooms attached to the cabins would make an enormous difference for our troop. This improvement would be especially beneficial for our youngest campers and for girls with special needs who require one-on-one attention. Having a nearby, private bathroom would reduce stress, increase comfort, and make the camp more inclusive and accessible for all participants.

Donald F. Miller Park truly means so much to our troop. The welcoming environment, ease of use, and wide range of activities make it a place we return to year after year. We would absolutely love to see the camp expanded so it can host even more adventures and continue serving large groups and youth groups in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I strongly support this expansion project and believe it will greatly enhance the experience for countless campers in the future.

Sincerely,  
Bobbie Lynn Binner, MAOL  
Girl Scout Troop 71226 Leader

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Lisa Abramo, and I am involved with Cub Scout Pack 286 and Boy Scout Troop 286. Our pack and troop have used Donald F. Miller Park many times over the years for campouts, service projects, and outdoor activities. It has consistently been one of our preferred locations because of its welcoming environment, well-maintained grounds, and supportive staff.

From our experience, making a reservation at Donald F. Miller Park has always been straightforward and efficient. The process has been clear, organized, and responsive, making it easy for our groups to plan trips, coordinate schedules, and focus on programming rather than logistics. This reliability is extremely important for youth organizations like ours that depend on smooth planning and communication.

Whenever we have visited, Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club volunteers have been very helpful. They have assisted us with opening and closing procedures, answered questions, delivered their programs, and supported our programs when needed. Their presence and willingness to help have made our visits run smoothly and have contributed greatly to the positive experience our cubs and scouts have had at the park.

Our groups have always enjoyed our time at Donald F. Miller Park. The facility has consistently felt clean, safe, and secure. The cabins and grounds provide an excellent setting for youth development, outdoor education, and community building, and our cubs and scouts always look forward to returning.

Adding a private bathroom and changing room to each cabin would be a major improvement and would significantly benefit our groups and many others. Having restrooms directly attached to the cabins would improve safety, convenience, and accessibility, especially during overnight stays, bad weather, winter months, and for younger scouts. It would also make the cabins more inclusive and comfortable for a wider range of users, increasing the park's ability to host programs, families, and organizations with diverse needs.

Donald F. Miller Park has been an important and valuable resource to our pack and troop, and we strongly support the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club's efforts to enhance the cabins. We believe this improvement would greatly strengthen the facility and further its mission of providing a high-quality, welcoming outdoor experience.

Thank you for considering our support.

Sincerely,

Lisa Abramo  
Cub Scout Pack 286, Cubmaster  
Boy Scout Troop 286, Committee Member



**Radio Association of Western New York  
c/o Ken Knox, KD2KEH  
124 Rosemont Drive  
Amherst, NY 14226**



26 January 2026

T0: Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.

SUBJECT: Donald F. Miller Park, improvement project idea

The Radio Association of Western New York (RAWNY) members read with enthusiasm your idea of putting an addition on to each cabin at Don Miller Park that would include a private bathroom and changing room. In this era of changing demographics and mixed genders in all youth groups just to survive, we find ourselves with females and males in the same building for day time and night time activities. The changing room makes this sometimes-awkward process so much easier. The bathroom brings convenience in inclement weather of rain, snow, cold and wind.

RAWNY has used *Don Miller Park's* facilities once or twice a year for the past 6 years. We have both males and females stay overnight and, with our winter events, the bathroom building, while very nice, is an awful long way away from the cabins at night and in winter weather. How nice it would be to have a conjoined facility that you hope to build.

The Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club has been very accommodating to our group based on our leaders also being Boy Scout leaders. Reservations are always easy to make and, upon arrival, we have found the facilities to be clean, well-maintained, secure, and warm. Their reasonable requests have been easy to meet.

The surrounding open spaces and wooded areas allow us to erect temporary antennas and run wires to those antennas. We are careful how this is done, but never have had unreasonable limitations as to how we use the space around the cabins. This area is well maintained with no high grass or cumbersome branches, sticks or brambles impeding our operations. This camp, in so many ways is an ideal camp for outdoor groups like ours needing a shelter to which we can retreat.

Club volunteers have offered assistance with their programs to tie into our own, but we have been self-sufficient in that regard. Their courtesy and willingness to assist have been commendable.

If you have questions, please, call me at (716) 832-1917 or email me at [kenaknox@aol.com](mailto:kenaknox@aol.com).

For the Radio Association of Western New York,

Ken Knox  
Association Secretary

Whomever this may concern;

My name is Sean LoBue. Mr. Ken Knox at Cub Scout Pack 431 asked if I might give an overview of my experiences with camping and different events I've had at Donald F. Miller Park. I was Cubmaster of Pack 444 before coming to Pack 431 and was at the site many times over the years.

From the time my oldest was 6 (10+ years ago), we have been in scouting. I became a leader with Pack 444 in his second year and was a larger part of that group as the years went on. I have another younger boy in with us as well. We have all been at Don Miller at least once a year since we joined. Whether it was the Fellowship, Crossover events, weekend campouts or even trainings (CPR), I've spent plenty of time there. When Covid hit, we were decimated as a group because of all the closings and shut downs and restrictions. But what was available even with all that going on... Don Miller was.

I became Cubmaster of Pack 444 during covid, so I have dealt directly with many of the folks within the Nor-Ton Red Jacket organization. When you think of how you want people to be, this is what you want. And is how they all have been with me and my group. Kindness... Goodness... It is obvious that they care about what they do. And as volunteers no less! When any family asked about not being campers, my go-to line was always "then you should come to our Don Miller campout. It is perfect for anyone who is not comfortable with the idea of camping." And they ALWAYS had a great time. That is due in large part because of the team there.

Now for a complaint: They could ABSOLUTELY use bathroom facilities in the cabins. We often went during the colder weather. That alone is reason enough to not want the kids clamoring to and from the bath house. That becomes more of a concern with cold temps we've seen recently. And with the rules we must have in place for the kid's safety, not having the ability to change in the cabins is a great disadvantage to the grounds in the evening, when the younger ones are there. This was one of the bigger concerns I felt. More as a worry that the parents might be anxious about the kids heading out there late at night. We always kept things controlled but would have loved the extra convenience that is at other campgrounds. I can think of no place more deserving.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sean LoBue

Pack 431



**NIAGARA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

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Christopher Bopst  
*Assistants*

February 6, 2026

Karl Heilemann, Board Member  
Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.  
1601 Sweeney Street  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Re: Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc. Increasing Accessibility  
With Comfort Station Additions  
Niagara River Greenway Project

Dear Mr. Heilemann:

The Niagara County Ad Hoc Committee on Recreation and Tourism Legislator Richard L. Andres, Chairman, requested that our office, on its behalf, thank you for your presentation. Your application for funds that Niagara County receives from the New York State Power Authority and through the relicensing agreement for Greenway projects that are a part of the Niagara Greenway, is acknowledged.

The committee has further reviewed your documentation and taken into consideration your presentation. The Committee is happy to inform you that they will be recommending your project to the full body of the Legislature for approval as to sponsorship. Should the Legislature pass the resolution, you will then need to present your application to the Niagara River Greenway Commission for consultation (if not already accomplished) and then to the Host Community Standing Committee. This last Committee is part of the Niagara County Power Coalition, in which there are eight members.

If you wish to note the protocols for this next step in your application, they are on the Niagara Power Coalition's website. If you have any trouble obtaining those, you may contact the undersigned and we will provide the same to you. I would appreciate your contacting us and staying in touch so that we can advise you with the date for Legislature approval and then the date meeting of the Host Community Standing Committee. You will need to be prepared to present your presentation to that body at the date established; once the Niagara County Legislature has approved sponsorship of your project and consultation with the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

Specifically, upon all consultations and approvals, you will be receiving a grant pursuant to the terms and conditions as set forth in the relicensing agreement and the protocols as set forth in the Host Community Standing Committee and those protocols as set forth by Niagara County in the amount up to \$190,000. This amount was arrived at after taking into consideration the need for leveraging matching funds which is one of the principals and goals set forth in the Niagara River Commission Plan. Once the Niagara County Legislature has approved sponsorship; you will be notified.

Karl Heilemann, Board Member  
Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc.  
February 5, 2026  
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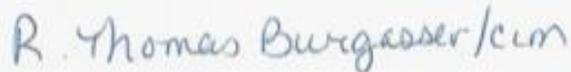
You will need to add into your budget signage of at least a headway sign. Templates were sent to you December 1, 2025. The cost is approximately \$6,400.00, but you need to confirm this with a signage company of your choice. You shall use the single template form chosen by the County for the head sign.

You also need to remember that this is a reimbursement grant and payment will be paid through the audit and purchasing department in the County of Niagara after their review of the contracts' invoices as presented once the project is complete (unless waived by the Committee), including signage and approval of all work by the County Auditor.

The sponsorship by the Niagara County Legislature, if approved, and any approval of funding by the Host Community Standing Committee is also subject to the requirements of Niagara County.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



R. Thomas Burgasser  
Assistant County Attorney

RTB:clm

cc: Richard L. Andres, Chairman, Niagara County  
Ad hoc Committee on Recreation and Tourism

Niagara County Legislator Randy R. Bradt

Niagara County Legislator Jesse P. Gooch