



**Niagara River Greenway Commission
Project Consultation & Review Submission**

March 2025

North Tonawanda: Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements



Project Registration Number: _____

Niagara River Greenway Commission Consultation and Review Form:

Type of Review: Mandatory Consultation
 Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement

PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Mailing Address: 721 Main Street, Buffalo

State: New York Zip Code: 14203

Federal ID# 22-2993054 Charities Registration #: 04-91-05

PROJECT TYPE

Check all that apply: Trail Development / Improvement Interpretation / Cultural Monuments
 Ecosystem / Riparian Habitat Restoration Stewardship
 Niagara River Greenway Placemaking / Public Access / Wayfinding

Funding Committee Request: Host Community Standing Committee
 Buffalo and Erie County Standing Committee
 Ecological Standing Committee
 State Parks Standing Committee
 Unsure at this time

Total Amount Requested: \$319,660

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: North Tonawanda: Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements

Location: Portion of Erie Canal within North Tonawanda

Site Address: Sweeney Street, North Tonawanda

State: NY Zip Code: 14120

Minor Civil Division(s): North Tonawanda

County: Niagara

Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other): Other

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Name: Jill Jedlicka Title: Executive Director

Business Address: 721 Main Street

State: New York Zip Code: 14203

Telephone Number: 716-852-7483 x21 Cell Number: _____

Fax Number: 716-885-0765

E-Mail Address: jedlicka@bnwaterkeeper.org

PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

Name: Emily Root Title: Project Manager

Organization/Firm: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Business Address: 721 Main Street

State: New York Zip Code: 14203

Telephone Number: 716-852-7483 ex.16 Cell Number: _____

Fax Number: 716-885-0765

E-Mail Address: eroot@BNWaterkeeper.org

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

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

This project is a continuation of Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's (BNW's) Niagara River Riparian Restoration Program (also referred to as Living Shoreline Program). The program was developed in response to several planning initiatives and data analysis revealing the vast loss in natural shorelines and coastal wetland habitats within the Niagara Region. Modeling best practices from similar shoreline restoration programs around the nation, BNW's Living Shoreline Program aims to address the gap between interested waterfront landowners and required resources for on-the-ground restoration. This program leverages the skills and existing resources of conservation partners to increase riparian restoration activities in the Niagara River Greenway while increasing community engagement and awareness of shoreline best management practices. To date, and with the support of funding from the Greenway Ecological Fund, BNW has implemented many successful shoreline restoration projects through this program including those at Sandy Beach Park Club, Hyde Park Lake, Ellicott Creek Park, Tiff Nature Preserve, the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens, and Ellicott Island Bark Park. The completed projects have been successful in restoring degraded shoreline areas while demonstrating the benefits of nature-based landscape management.

The proposed project area is located along several sections of Tonawanda Creek within the City of North Tonawanda. This section of the canal is owned by the NYS Canal Corporation, and operated/maintained by the City of North Tonawanda. The project will focus on three focal points that offer room for improvement in terms of riparian conditions. Currently, these areas are primarily mowed turf grass up to the edge of the creek, with invasive species existing in the fringe areas between land and water. These landscapes offer little ecological value, and continually combating invasives each year is costly for the municipality. Work that will take place in each of the three focal points are as follows (may change slightly during plan development/refinement, and with input from the community):

- Area A: The riparian area in Area A has very steep slopes with mixed woody invasive species along the water's edge where mowing isn't taking place. Existing low quality vegetation will be removed and replaced with native shrub plantings (not to exceed 4' in height across from residential areas to maintain views of the water). These plants will establish strong root systems over time to help hold in soils and prevent future erosion while also offering valuable habitat for pollinators and other wildlife species.
- Area B: Project Area B is a depression in the landscape where a stormwater pipe outfalls into the creek. It is currently devoid of vegetation and attracts debris. After invasive species are removed/treated, restoration plantings will take place in this area to help absorb and filter runoff before it enters the creek while also preventing debris collection. Locust posts will be installed around the perimeter to help delineate this area from areas that are regularly mowed. An educational sign will also be installed at this site.
- Area C: The majority of the invasive species treatments will take place in this area, primarily targeting an existing stand of Phragmites. Dense plug plantings will take place along the water's edge to replace the area where the Phragmites once grew. Rock socks will also be installed in several areas along this stretch of Tonawanda Creek to establish emergent aquatic vegetation. BNW will coordinate with DEC who is leading treatments of an invasive aquatic species, Hydrilla, in this section of the creek to ensure species selected will persist regardless of treatments that will occur in the future. Park trees will also be installed in this area to help establish shade and overhanging cover along the creek. A volunteer planting event will be held to install the trees.

In total, the project will take place across 1,500 linear feet of shoreline, and within 1.4 acres of riparian area.

The goal of this project is to transform the existing, degraded shoreline into a more natural, resilient, and self-repairing form which will better support a sustainable, protective, and higher-functioning ecosystem. Numerous ecological benefits will be achieved through this project, including: improved water quality and erosion control through bank stabilization; improved resiliency; invasive species removal; and increased plant diversity. The project will create resting, nesting and feeding areas for a variety of fish and wildlife species and will create a self-sustaining habitat that grows stronger over time.

METHODS:

BNW will lead this project in close coordination with the City of North Tonawanda's Parks Department. This project is somewhat different than BNW's traditional living shoreline projects in that it applies fairly simple restoration techniques that will not require hiring a licensed landscape architect or require heavy machinery. BNW will work with the City to develop a preliminary project/planting plan that will be shared with the community for input through BNW and the City's website and social media platforms as well as through tabling within the project area. Once finalized, BNW will hire a landscape contractor to complete the majority of the invasive species work as well as the plantings. One volunteer planting event will be held to install park trees in Area C. BNW will design 2 educational signs to place within the project area to promote continual community education about this work and the importance of living shorelines. Meadow markers will also be utilized to help delineate restoration areas from areas that are regularly mowed. BNW will work with the City to complete any and all required permitting needs as well as coordination and approvals with Canal Corps.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

BNW plans to apply to the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (GESC) in June 2025. If awarded, the project is proposed to begin in January 2026 with the goal of reaching project close-out by December 2027. A more detailed description of project sequencing is provided below.

January 2026:

- Project kick-off

February-May 2026:

- Secure landowner agreement
- Existing conditions data collection
- Develop preliminary project/planting plan, share with City and the community, revise and finalize
- Submit any required permits

June-July 2026:

- Develop and release RFP for landscape services
- Review proposals, select contractor, execute contract
- Permits secured

July-December 2026:

- Begin invasive species management
- Outreach to keep community members informed

March-June 2027:

- Contractor completes invasive species management and restoration plantings

- BNW designs educational signage
- Outreach to keep community members informed

September-December 2027:

- Contractor completes invasive species management and restoration plantings
- Contractor installs educational signage
- BNW hosts volunteer tree planting
- BNW develops long-term maintenance plan and review with North Tonawanda Parks Department staff
- Outreach to keep community members informed

January 2028-November 2028:

- One year period-of-establishment- landscape contractor to complete spots treatments and replace plantings as needed

December 2028:

- Project Closeout

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.

The Living Shorelines Program has been found consistent with Greenway goals, principals, and criteria and BNW intends to uphold these values in this proposed project along Tonawanda Creek. A more detailed description of how this project aligns with the Greenway vision is described below.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Excellence

In congruence with the history of success of BNW's Living Shorelines projects, BNW is committed to ensuring that this project is completed to the high standards BNW has established for the restoration projects completed through the Living Shoreline Program. This will be achieved through careful selection of project partners, thoughtful design, and by utilizing best management practices during project implementation.

Restoration

The section of Tonawanda Creek within the project area holds vast opportunity for improvement as the current riparian buffer is limited due to mowing and has been degraded because of invasive species and ash die-off. As a result, this stretch of creek supports limited wildlife, few pollinators, and experiences impaired water quality due to unchecked runoff flowing directly into the Creek. This project will address these impairments through the revitalization of 1.4 acres of impaired shoreline and riparian habitat. Once restored to a higher function landscape, the living shoreline project will offer many ecological services to the surrounding communities while providing improved habitat for a large variety of species, including pollinators, birds, and amphibians.

Celebration

This project will be designed to celebrate the natural water resources that typify the Western New York region. Plant selection will be limited to Niagara River Watershed natives, further instilling a sense of place by

showcasing and celebrating our regional flora identity. Additionally, BNW and project partners will document and share the success of the project with the community through social media posts and our website.

Sustainability

Long-term sustainability of the project will be achieved through the continued partnership with the City of North Tonawanda, which as the owners of the site will ensure its maintenance as an environmental restoration site. The environmental restoration techniques used in the project will repair and enhance the shoreline into a natural system that is functional and self-repairing, once established.

Authenticity

Authenticity of place can be reinforced through the celebration of native flora and creating meaningful experiences for people to engage with their natural heritage and the significance of this space to indigenous heritage. This Living Shoreline project will touch on all of these things. Thoughtful plant selection will limit species lists to the plants historically documented to occur within the Niagara River Watershed and those that are informed by ITEK, reinforcing regional identity and cultural significance. The ability for the community to interact with the project as they traverse the trail that follows along the canal will showcase the region's native flora and will provide opportunities to create connections between people and their natural heritage.

Ecological Integrity

The ecological integrity of our natural resources is under constant threat from anthropogenic disturbances. The current conditions of the project area have been negatively affected through riparian infringement and degradation, runoff, and invasive species colonization. This project will work to address each of these impairments and revitalize 1.4 acres of shoreline habitat into a higher-functioning environment.

Partnerships

BNW has partnered with the City of North Tonawanda on a living shoreline project at the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens which has proven to be a successful project and North Tonawanda has continued to invest in maintaining the improvements made at that site. This project area was identified as a priority by the City of North Tonawanda Parks staff and they are committed to partnering with BNW to implement the project and maintain it long-term.

Public Well-Being

After restoration, this project will provide a wealth of environmental services to the surrounding ecosystems and communities. Residents and visitors that encounter the project will experience the benefits associated with healthy shoreline ecosystems including the physical and psychological benefits associated with spending time in a thriving natural setting. The project will also demonstrate how healthy shoreline environments can exist in a manner that does not detract from public access uses along the waterfront, or sight lines to the water which is important for community members, particularly those that live across the street from the creek.

Community Based

BNW will host opportunities for community input through BNW and North Tonawanda's website and social media, as well as tabling within the project area. It's important that the final restoration incorporates the desires of the community members, those who walk along the Tonawanda Creek path, and anyone else with a vested interest.

GOALS:

Improve Access and Make Connections

The proposed living shoreline will incorporate areas of low growing native plants to maintain visual connections to the water.

Protect and Restore Environmental Systems

When functioning properly, living shoreline environments improve water quality by filtering sediments and improving stormwater infiltration; create habitat that supports the life cycles of many fish and wildlife species; reduce shoreline erosion by absorbing and lessening erosive forces; and enhance public access. This project will restore the ecological integrity of 1.4 acres of shoreline habitat, creating the conditions for these currently degraded areas to provide the many ecological services described above.

Also, the Living Shoreline Program aims to showcase best management practices and engage visitors to instill individual accountability towards the health and vitality of our shoreline environments. Each time a visitor walks along the pathway adjacent to the project area or reads a project sign, the project is successful in increasing public awareness about the importance of our shoreline ecosystems, which they take with them.

Promote Long Term Sustainability

Long-term sustainability of the project will be achieved through the continued partnership with the City of North Tonawanda, which as the owners of the site will ensure its maintenance as an environmental restoration site. The environmental restoration techniques used in the project will repair and enhance the shoreline into a natural system that is functional and self-repairing, once established. Being a local organization, BNW often monitors sites to offer landowners advice on sustainable management and to offer adaptive management services through the RestoreCorps program when funding allows.

Celebrate History and Heritage

Restoring degraded shoreline environments into higher functioning ecosystems contributes towards cultivating beauty and pride in our region. When put into a larger context, we realize that our region is not only defined by its globally significant freshwater resources, but also its rebirth and renaissance. Habitat restoration is part of that story and BNW helps tell this story by bringing living shoreline projects to communities throughout the Niagara River Watershed.

Through the careful selection of native plants, BNW strives to create site specific projects that celebrate native flora, reinforcing a regional identity centered around environment and ecology. These projects create opportunities for meaningful connections to occur as visitors experience these landscapes as they walk the trails and read project signage. This type of experience provides the platform for people to re-engage with their natural heritage and celebrate what makes this region special.

Spark Revitalization and Renewal

All the projects that comprise the Living Shoreline Program have two goals. The first is to restore ecological function at the site scale, and the second is to inspire change by providing on-the-ground examples of restoration techniques for others to emulate and to educate community members about healthy shorelines and their importance. As part of the Living Shoreline Program, the ecological restoration component of this project contributes directly to this sentiment by improving the health of our natural environment through restoration, and by offering opportunities of meaningful engagement via signage.

Community engagement is a key aspect of changing the current waterfront land management regime to one that promotes healthy shoreline conditions. Successful habitat revitalization projects have the power to inspire citizens to embrace a new landscape aesthetic along the shoreline that is more conducive to ecosystem health.

This type of engagement increases awareness and empathy for our shoreline environments, which in turn can lead to a greater demand for these projects in the future and the creation of long-term stewards for years to come.

Extend Olmsted's Legacy

Olmsted's legacy can be seen all over Western New York. Rather than seeing a park as an isolated parcel, his vision was to create park networks and corridors. He challenged the existing paradigm that a park exists in a city, and instead promoted the idea that a city should exist within a park. A green necklace of open spaces and greenways embody this notion, and the Living Shoreline Program strives to add depth to this concept.

Not only should people have access to parks and greenways, but they should also be able to access healthy ecosystems that provide immersive viewing experiences and many other ecological services. This project adds this additional layer by creating 1.4 acres of riparian habitat along Tonawanda Creek. The project will enhance habitat connections along the Creek and will provide opportunity to access and engage with restored riparian systems in a meaningful way.

CRITERIA

Priority Status

Restoration of the Niagara River and its tributaries is called out as a priority conservation project in the Niagara River Greenway Plan. The project will also provide restored natural habitat in an area that has been degraded, and will offer educational opportunities through signage.

Focus Area:

The project is located within the Greenway Focus Area.

Environmental Soundness:

Through the implementation of the Living Shoreline Program, BNW's team has gained extensive knowledge, partnerships, and technical expertise required to administer and lead restoration projects like the one proposed here. BNW will pull from experience to apply best practices to this project to maximize the project's impact as an ecological and community asset.

Implementable:

As described above, BNW has cultivated productive relationships with the landowner who is eager to work together to transform the existing riparian area into a thriving living shoreline. BNW's past experiences with similar restoration projects will ensure all aspects of the project remain feasible and implementable.

Economic Viability:

All professional services provided through this project will be secured through a competitive bid process, allowing BNW to select the most cost effective and qualified applicants to join the project team. Assembling a cost effective and experienced team is one of the primary responsibilities of BNW during this project. Project sustainability and longevity are other important factors to consider when evaluating a project's economic viability. BNW has coordinated with the landowners to confirm they have the skills and capacity to take on long-term stewardship of the project, ensuring the initial investment in enhancing the shoreline areas along this section of Tonawanda Creek will endure for many years.

Local Sponsors or Partners:

BNW will be the lead sponsor of the project and will work closely with the City of North Tonawanda throughout the project.

Matching Funds/Leveraging

BNW is actively looking for match opportunities to help support the work to be completed through this project, ideally expanding the impact and footprint of this work along the Canal.

Consideration of Other Planning Efforts:

The Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy specifically identifies the section of Tonawanda Creek that flows through North Tonawanda as an opportunity to “increase stream buffers, especially where connectivity to active floodplains, riparian wetlands, or other habitats is enhanced or where problems with runoff, flooding, and/or erosion are known to exist.” Additionally, the plan cites that, “all of these areas would benefit from bank stabilization, planting of vegetation, invasive species management, and aquatic habitat restoration. Living shorelines techniques to accomplish these restoration objectives should be used whenever possible.”

The Niagara River Remedial Action Plan cites the loss of fish and wildlife habitat and biodiversity along with degradation of nearshore habitats as major issues affecting the health of the Niagara River ecosystem. The Living Shoreline Program, through which many degraded shoreline areas have been revitalized, addresses this critical impairment, while advancing goals found in other important documents including: The Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy, Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, NY State Forest Action Plan, NY State Open Space Plan, NY Wildlife Action Plan, Great Lakes Action Agenda, and NYS Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

Clear Benefits:

This project will benefit water quality in Tonawanda Creek and the Niagara River through nature-based strategies. Healthy riparian ecosystems are proven to effectively reduce stormwater pollution by extracting, containing, or immobilizing contaminants and excess nutrients from soil and water before it enters local waterbodies. Dense shoreline vegetation also reduces erosion of sediment via complex root systems that hold soils in place. This project proposes the creation of dense riparian plantings and nature-based green infrastructure solutions to maximize the ability of the shoreline to attenuate stormwater before it reaches Tonawanda Creek and eventually the larger Great Lakes system.

This project will also benefit wildlife, most notably birds and beneficial insects, through use of native plants and invasive species removal. The delicate relationship between plants and animals is well documented and this project will create a mosaic of different habitats ranging from wetlands to upland pollinator meadows. These types of habitats are desperately needed in the Niagara River watershed and long-term stewardship efforts from the landowners will help ensure this project continues to provide high-quality habitat for a variety of wildlife.

As beneficiaries of this environmental restoration, community members will experience the benefits associated with healthy shoreline ecosystems including the physical and psychological benefits associated with spending time in a thriving natural setting.

- 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.**

PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel	\$104,940
Supplies/Program Expenses	\$1,819
Contractual	\$212,100
Travel	\$801
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$319,660
Matching Funds	\$0
TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST FROM GREENWAY	\$319,660

The numbers provided in the table above are a preliminary estimate based off projects of similar scope and size. A more detailed description of the funding categories is described below.

Personnel: Funding will support BNW staff carry out the roles and responsibilities described in this proposal.

Supplies/ Program Expenses: Expenses in this category cover the cost of contractor’s construction general liability insurance (\$1,119), refreshments and supplies for the community engagement activities (\$500), and potential permitting costs (\$2,400).

Contractual: These expenses will be used to hire a landscape contractor to support the work that will be completed through this project. This includes invasive species treatments, clearing and grubbing, a variety of plantings and seeding, and signage installation.

Travel: We estimated approximately 1,144 miles of travel during the project (40 trips to and from the office at 28.6 miles each trip). A mileage rate of .70 was applied to determine the mileage budget estimate.

Matching Funds: While no matching funds are currently secured, BNW will seek matching resources to support this project to hopefully expand the impact of work along Tonawanda Creek.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE:

BNW recognizes the importance of proper landscape establishment and ongoing adaptive landscape management for shoreline restoration projects such as this. To ensure long-term success we have incorporated a one-year warranty period for the contractor to ensure the project gets a strong start after initial project implementation. BNW will also incorporate this site into future RestoreCorps programing to accomplish future adaptive landscape management needs beyond this project, as future funding allows.

- 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.

This project area was identified as a priority by the City of North Tonawanda Parks staff. The project has also been identified as a priority in recent conversations related to the development of the North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan which are both being drafted and should be finalized in the next 1-2 years. North Tonawanda has documented their commitment to the project in the attached letter of support. Their role includes close coordination throughout project development and implementation, as well as responsibility for long-term maintenance. Volunteers will be involved in the project via tree plantings in Project Area C.

The Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy specifically identifies the section of Tonawanda Creek that flows through North Tonawanda as an opportunity to “increase stream buffers, especially where connectivity to active floodplains, riparian wetlands, or other habitats is enhanced or where problems with runoff, flooding, and/or erosion are known to exist.” Additionally, the plan cites that, “all of these areas would benefit from bank stabilization, planting of vegetation, invasive species management, and aquatic habitat restoration. Living shorelines techniques to accomplish these restoration objectives should be used whenever possible.”

The Niagara River Remedial Action Plan cites the loss of fish and wildlife habitat and biodiversity along with degradation of nearshore habitats as major issues affecting the health of the Niagara River ecosystem. The Living Shoreline Program directly addresses this critical impairment, while advancing goals found in other important documents including: the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, NY State Forest Action Plan, NY State Open Space Plan, NY Wildlife Action Plan, Great Lakes Action Agenda, and NYS Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

- 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.**

EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The riparian area within the project area is primarily mowed turf grass to the water’s edge, and limited aquatic vegetation exists along the creek within the project area. Some invasive species are present along the water’s edge, which are frequently mowed by the municipality to keep sight lines and water access open, however they grow back quickly and require consistent maintenance. The riparian area in Project Area A has very steep slopes with mixed woody invasive species along the water’s edge where mowing isn’t taking place. Project Area B is a depression in the landscape where a stormwater pipe outfalls into the creek. It is currently devoid of vegetation and attracts debris. Restoration plantings will help absorb and filter runoff before it enters the creek while also preventing debris collection.

The attachments to this proposal include photographs of existing conditions, and a preliminary map of the project areas and proposed project work to show how the site will change once the project is implemented.

SEQRA AND RTE SPECIES CONSIDERATIONS:

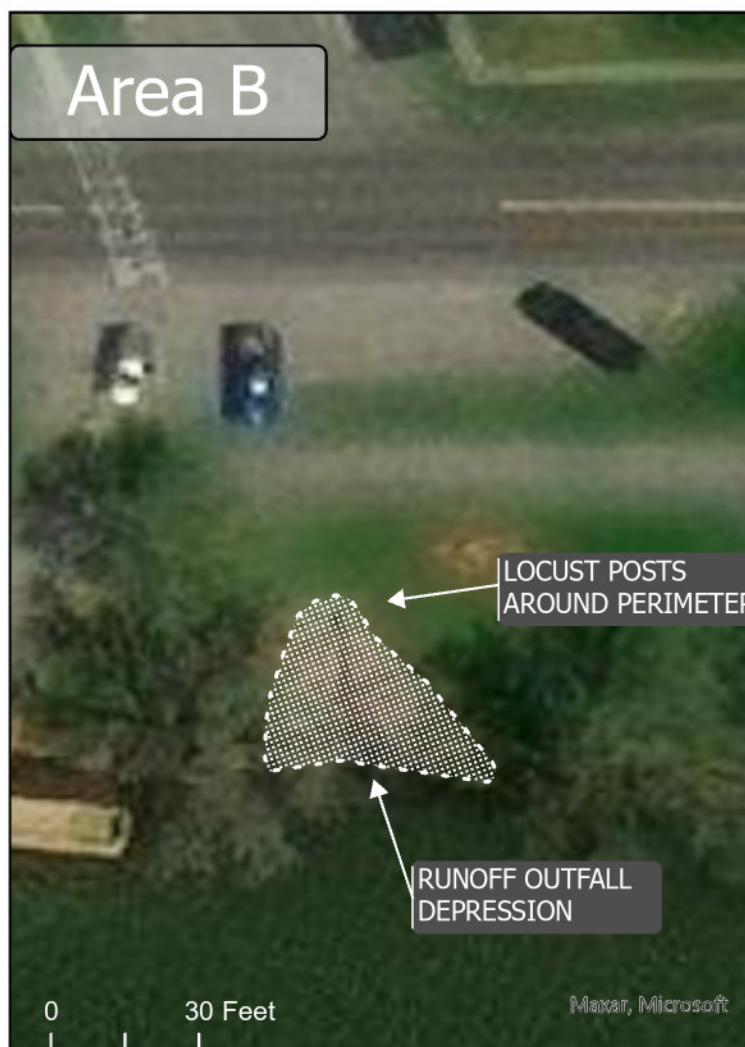
No wetlands or rare species are known to exist within the project area. BNW and North Tonawanda will navigate the SEQRA process before any on-the-ground work is completed.

ATTACHMENTS






A: Proposed Project Area

B: NT Letter of Support

C: Project Photos



DATE	FEBRUARY 2025
SHEET #	1 OF 1
SHEET TITLE	Tonawanda Creek Riparian Improvements

KEY	
	Proposed Project Area
	Shoreline Shrub Planting
	Tree Planting
	Herbaceous Plug Planting
	Fenced Emergent Plantings

PLAN NOTES
<p>PROJECT AREA: Proposed project area amounts to a total of 1.41 Acres and roughly 1500 feet of shoreline along Tonawanda Creek in the Town of North Tonawanda.</p>
<p>INVASIVE SPECIES TREATMENT: Entire project area will undergo invasive species management targeting both herbaceous and woody invasive species.</p>
<p>RESTORATION PLANTING: Restoration planting efforts of native plants throughout the project area will consist of multiple approaches dependent on location. Shoreline shrub plantings will involve bank stabilizing plantings scoped for maximum height of 4' in front of residential property. Herbaceous plug plantings will fill shoreline edge, with fenced in-water sections of emergent vegetation. Tree plantings will consist of a park re-tree effort planting a total of 10 trees.</p>
<p>WATER ACCESS: Potential water access improvements/features will be explored along shoreline edge.</p>

Tonawanda Creek Riparian Improvements

North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
721 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14203



NORTH TONAWANDA
Dept. of Youth, Recreation, Parks & Seniors

500 Wheatfield Street
North Tonawanda, NY 14120
Phone: (716) 695-8520
Email: ntparksrec@northtonawanda.org



www.ntparksrec.com

March 13, 2025

Niagara River Greenway Commission
PO Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the City of North Tonawanda, I am writing to confirm our support and participation in the North Tonawanda: Erie Canal Riparian Enhancement project proposed by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW). We fully support the application to the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

The project aims to transform current conditions along the Erie Canal shoreline in North Tonawanda to a more natural and self-sustaining ecosystem. The restoration completed through this project will create unique in-water and shoreline habitats that support fish and wildlife; address erosion and sedimentation issues with best management practices; create sustainable riparian buffers that lessen maintenance, improve water quality and limit the spread of invasive species; and create spaces that improve the public's enjoyment of our waterfront.

This project will directly advance the goals of our Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and Comprehensive Plan. As one of seven community park spaces in North Tonawanda the Erie Canal waterfront is an important resource within our municipality that currently offers room for improvement in terms of the ecological conditions along the shoreline. Situated within the Niagara River Greenway, and along the Erie Canal, investments in improving this area will contribute towards the revitalization of a regionally significant waterfront resource.

The land along the section of the Erie Canal that makes up the proposed project area is owned by NYS Canal Corporation, and operated and maintained by the City of North Tonawanda. Recurring maintenance of invasive species has become an ongoing and costly task for our Parks Department. Improvements along several key sections of the Canal that will be achieved through this project will help to improve the ecological health of the waterfront and surrounding areas, achieve aesthetic improvements, and connect the community to the cultural and environmental resources of the area. Improved aquatic habitat will also enhance fishing activities.

The City of North Tonawanda has successfully worked with BNW on the completion of a Living Shoreline project at the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens and has supported their RestoreCorps Program. We look forward to working with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper to achieve shoreline improvements along the Canal, and are committed to providing input into landscape design development for the project, supporting community engagement efforts, and will maintain the project long-term. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Domaradzki', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex Domaradzki

Director

(716) 695-8520

adomaradzki@northtonawanda.org

Project Photos

Site A



Site B



Site C

