



Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition

721 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14213

*Adirondack
Mountain Club,
Niagara
Chapter*

DATE: 05/03/2021
TO: Niagara River Greenway Commissioners
FROM: Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
RE: Comments on Proposed Greenway Projects

*Audubon New
York*

The Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition has reviewed the proposals before you today and submits the following comments.

*Buffalo Niagara
Waterkeeper*

Town of Lewiston, 2021 Lewiston Town Park at Pletcher Road Playground Construction Project

*League of
Women
Voters of Buffalo
Niagara*

Recommendation: NREC was unable to reach consensus regarding consistency. The NREC's comments and concerns are included below for consideration.

*Niagara Musky
Association*

*Presbytery of
Western New
York*

*Sierra Club,
Niagara Group*

*Western New
York Land
Conservancy*

- We acknowledge positive aspects of the proposed project that come along with providing active play spaces for children. The playground is located on a waterfront property and presents the opportunity to draw visitors from outside areas to the Niagara River Greenway. However, the current playground design misses an opportunity to incorporate nature-based design, and regionally relevant play features that connect or call attention to the vision and principles of the Greenway Plan. As currently designed, the play space could be located anywhere and does not serve to add to a world class Greenway. NREC recommends that the playground design be revised to incorporate best practices for safety, community input, as well as stronger ties to the natural landscape and unique ecological and cultural resources within the Niagara River Greenway. Many examples of playgrounds of this nature are available for reference.
- NREC finds the Town's statement of not being able to contribute matching or leveraging funds to the project troubling. As a project that is designed primarily for the residents of the Town, the Town should, at a minimum, look to contribute public tax dollars via its capital improvement budgets to the project. Additionally, many grants are available through State and private funders to help support world-class play spaces should the design be revisited and elevated. Given the lack of identifiable connections between the proposed playground and the vision of the Niagara River Greenway, the NREC questions the appropriateness of using Greenway funds to fully pay for this improvement.

A photograph of the Niagara River rapids, showing turbulent green water with white foam and splashing. In the background, there are concrete structures and a rocky shoreline.

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Town of Lewiston, Sanborn Park Playground Replacement Project

Recommendation: Not Consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan

- NREC recommends that this project is not consistent with the Greenway Plan because it is located far from the Niagara River, does not have strong connections to the Niagara River Greenway, and largely consists of repair of existing playground equipment and maintenance. The proposed plan does not add to establishment of a world class Niagara River Greenway.

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Cayuga Creek Land Protection

Recommendation: Consistent with the Niagara River Greenway Plan