



**NIAGARA
PARKS**

Niagara Parks Update

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Council

Presentation by CEO David Adames



About Niagara Parks

- Founded in 1885
- Operates under the Niagara Parks Act
- Two founding principles:
 - Niagara Parks would never be a burden to the taxpayers of Ontario
 - Niagara Parks would as much as possible, be free to enjoy
- Board-governed operational enterprise under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming
- 12 Member Board: Chair Graham Coveney, Town of NOTL is represented by Deputy Lord Mayor Erwin Wiens
- One of the region's largest employers; 2,000 projected headcount for this year; \$70+ million payroll.
- **Mandate:** To be the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River Corridor
- **Vision:** To be one of the most spectacular parks in the world



Environmental Stewardship

- Environmental Stewardship Action Plan 2020-2030
- Coastal Wetland Restoration Project
- Chippawa Grassland Bird Habitat Project
- Gonder's Flats Restoration
- Urban Forestry Management Strategy
 - Over 7,000 trees planted in 2025
- Annual Prescribed Burn Program
- Invasive Species Management Strategy
- Soil Analysis Program through Vineland Research and Innovation Centre
- Improvements to Niagara River Recreation Trail
- Dufferin Islands Visitor Experience and Ecological Enhancement Initiative



Cultural Stewardship

- Heritage Sites
 - Old Fort Erie
 - Mackenzie Printery
 - Laura Secord Homestead
 - McFarland House
 - Landscape of Nations Memorial
- Special events (Valour and Victory Indigenous Veterans Ceremony, Chippawa Battlefield Ceremony, Siege of Old Fort Erie Battle Re-enactment National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)
- Explore the Niagara collaborative initiative with Parks Canada and bordering municipalities
 - Highlight sites, experiences, events related to themes of Black History, Indigenous culture, nation-building, nature & gardens, active living
- Published Landscape of Nations: Beyond the Mist, an unprecedented exploration of Indigenous presence in Niagara.
- McFarland House supports the NOTL Rotary Holiday House Tour





Anniversary Programming

- 90th anniversary of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture
 - New Mosaiculture displays
 - July 26 - Legacy tree planting and commemorative event
 - Homecoming weekend in September
 - Then & Now Lecture Series
- 30th anniversary of the Butterfly Conservatory
 - New exhibits featuring digital illustration experience
- 75th anniversary of Whirlpool Golf Course
 - July 23 - Anniversary golf tournament and dinner event
 - 75 themed merchandise, promotions, competitions, etc.



Tennis and Pickleball Courts

- Four new tennis courts and four new pickleball courts unveiled last summer
 - Tennis courts have existed at this location for a century
- First full operating season for the new tennis and pickleball courts at Queenston Heights Park
 - Courts will reopen in May
- Drop-in rates and season's passes available
- Newly refreshed Queenston Courts shop including tennis and pickleball merchandise, snacks and refreshments
- New programming to be announced for 2026



Cellular Strategy

- Strategy to improve Canadian cellular service along the Niagara Parkway
- Working with Shared Tower Inc. to install cellular infrastructure at identified priority locations across Niagara Parks
- Proposed sites on NPC property within Town of NOTL:
 - McFarland North Parking Lot (35m monopole)
 - Brown's Point (35m monopole)
 - Queenston Heights Park (35m monopole)
- Following the regulations and requirements of all bordering municipalities, including hosting public information centres
- Upcoming this spring:
 - Public consultation for:
 - McFarland North Parking Lot
 - Brown's Point
 - Queenston Heights Park





FIFA 26: Fan Zone by the Falls

- To celebrate Canada as one of the host nations for the FIFA 26 World Cup, Niagara Parks will activate the front lawn of Queen Victoria Place for a Fan Zone by the Falls.
- Outdoor area will feature a licensed, covered patio with a stage, large viewing screens and mobile kitchen.
- Green space will feature themed activities and programming for children and families.
- The activation will continue after the FIFA tournament with concerts and programming through to Labour Day.





Capital Projects

Completed in 2025/26: \$3.5 million

- Pedestrian Bridge Replacement (Bridge #35 at Line 3)
- Trail upgrades near Brown's Point
- Queenston Heights Park
 - 4 new tennis and 4 new pickleball courts
 - Additional public washroom
 - Fountain repairs (in front of Queenston Heights Restaurant)
- Road resurfacing:
 - Service Road 63
 - Niagara Parkway
 - Butterfly Conservatory north to Sir Adam Beck (including 2 parkettes)
 - York Road to Line 8
 - Service Road 57 to Brown's Point Parking Lot
- Repairs at Queenston Docks

Planned for 2026/27

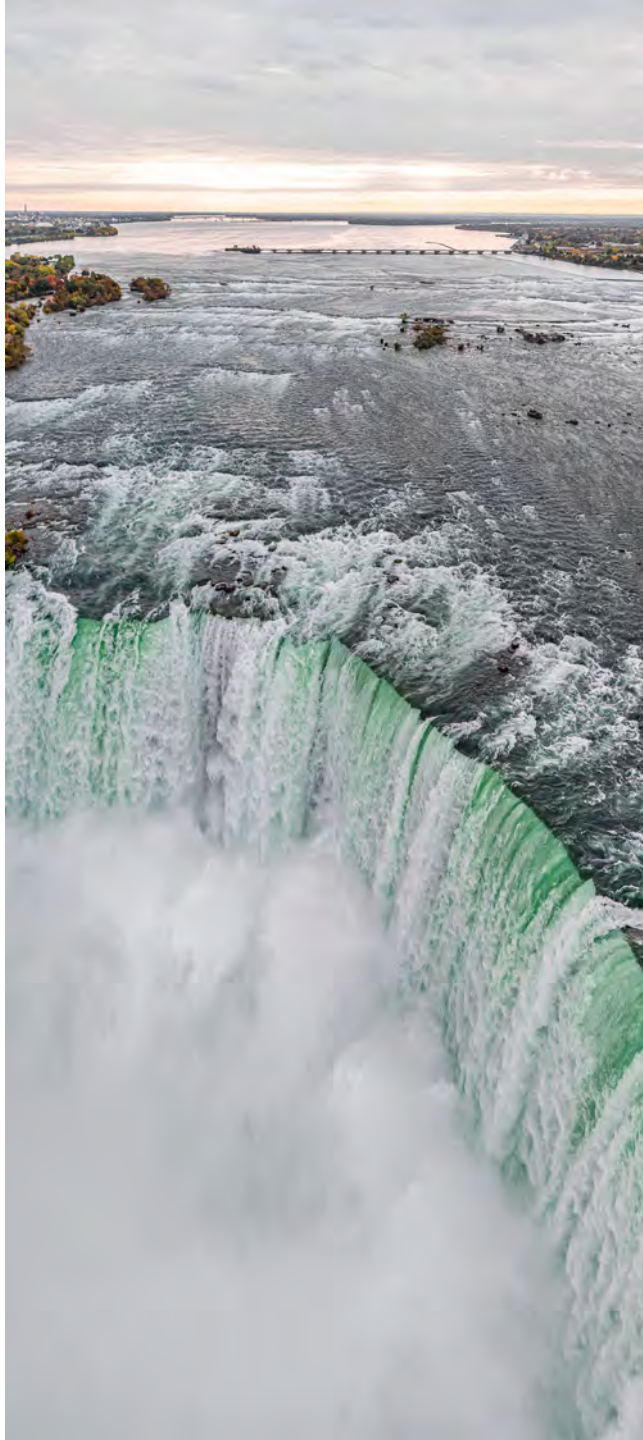
- Rehabilitation work at Brock's Monument by Parks Canada (\$1.1 million from Government of Canada)
- Bus parking expansion at Floral Clock



Community Connections

- Works closely with municipal partners (including Town of NOTL), Niagara Falls Tourism; Tourism Partnership of Niagara
- Collaborations with local post-secondary institutions (Brock University, Niagara College, University of Niagara Falls).
- Partnership with The Bridge to fight food insecurity by donating unused food from Niagara Parks events.
- Seniors Month Promotion – 50% off admission on Wednesdays in June.
- \$50 annual parking pass geared toward local residents and frequent visitors.
- Partner and host of annual Winter Festival of Lights.
- Presenting sponsor of Niagara Grape & Wine Festival and host of 'Cool as Ice' Ice Wine Gala at the Niagara Parks Power Station.
- Work with NOTL Ambassadors program to host familiarization tours at Niagara Parks sites.





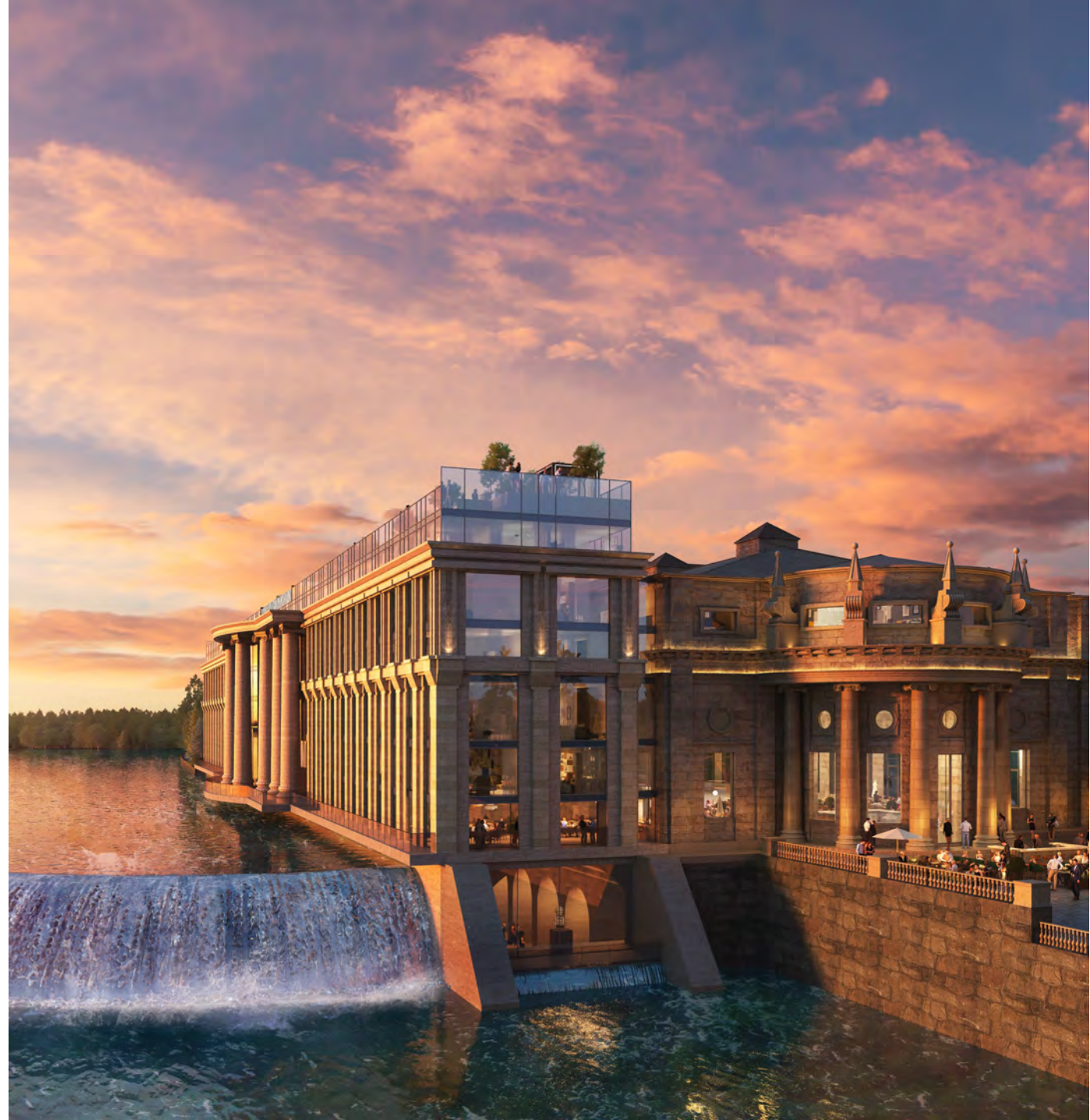
Destination Niagara Strategy

- Announced by the Province on December 15, 2025, at Niagara Takes Flight (Table Rock Centre)
- Strategic Goals:
 - Double annual visitation
 - Extend length of stays
 - Raise global profile
 - Attract private investment
- Five areas of focus:
 - Tourism attractions
 - World-class gaming
 - Wine and culinary
 - Arts and culture
 - Transportation



Toronto Power Redevelopment

- Construction underway; detailed design phase
- Cofferdam in place to keep water away from east side of the building for construction
- \$300 Million private-sector investment:
 - **Niagara Falls' first and only five-star boutique accommodation**
 - A variety of culinary offerings
 - Craft brewery
 - Wellness and social spa
 - Event and programming space
 - Museum and Art Gallery
 - Theatre
 - Educational programming





New Private Sector Opportunities

- As part of the December 15 announcement, Niagara Parks launched three new private sector opportunities:
- Redevelopment of Ontario Power Generating Station
 - Request for Interest (Dec 15 – March 26, 2026)
- Redevelopment of the Niagara Parks Marina
 - Request for Qualifications (Dec 15 – Feb 26, 2026)
- Development of a New World-Class Observation Wheel
 - Request for Proposals (Dec 15 – May 21, 2026)





Destination Niagara Strategy Pillar 1: Tourism Attractions

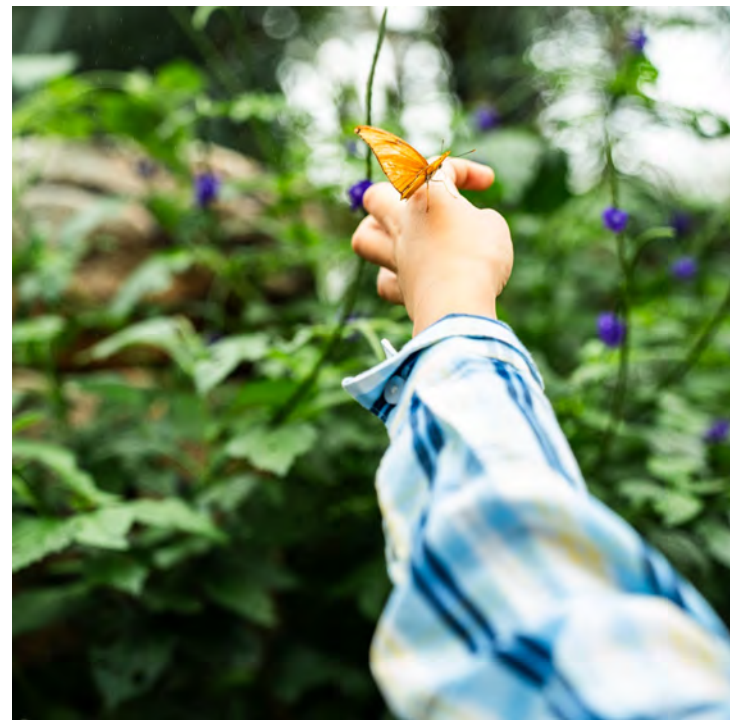
Niagara Takes Flight

- This past summer, Niagara Parks opened its newest must-see attraction at Table Rock Centre – Niagara Takes Flight.
- \$25 million investment from our earned revenue.
- Replacement of a previous attraction that had reached the end of its lifecycle.
- Only the second flyover attraction to open in Canada.
- Provides a brand-new reason to visit Niagara Parks and Table Rock Centre.
- Since opening, the attraction has welcomed over 150,000 guests.



Butterfly Conservatory

- 30th anniversary of the beloved family-friendly attraction in 2026.
- Improving the visitor experience through legacy upgrades.
- Back-of-house upgrades (netting replacement) + new exhibits and retail updates.
- Updated signage and storytelling within the Conservatory space.
- New interactive exhibits within front exhibition space themed around pollinators and environmental stewardship.
- Centrepiece of the space will be new interactive digital drawing experience, opening for March Break.



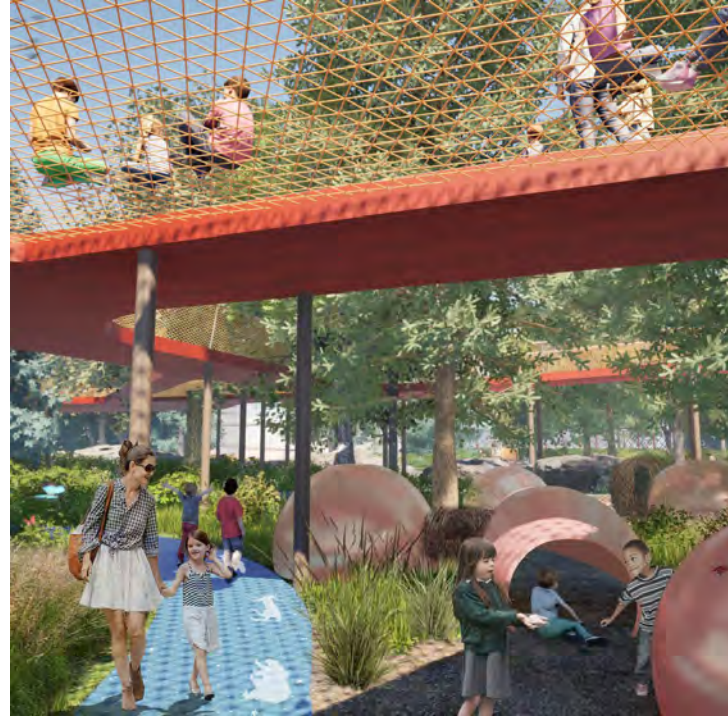


Children's Garden

- 90th Anniversary of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture
- Working with the Niagara Parks Foundation to build a four-acre, nature-based Children's Garden at the Botanical Gardens.
 - \$15 million project
 - Largest Children's Garden of this scale in Ontario
- Focus groups; public engagement completed in 2025.
- Fundraising Council formed – Chaired by Sue-Ann Ramsden (Vice Chair of the Foundation)
- Design firm awarded after rigorous selection process to complete tender-ready detailed design by this fall
 - MT Planners and +VG Architects
- Anticipating to break ground on construction in fall of 2026 (beginning with servicing infrastructure)

Future:

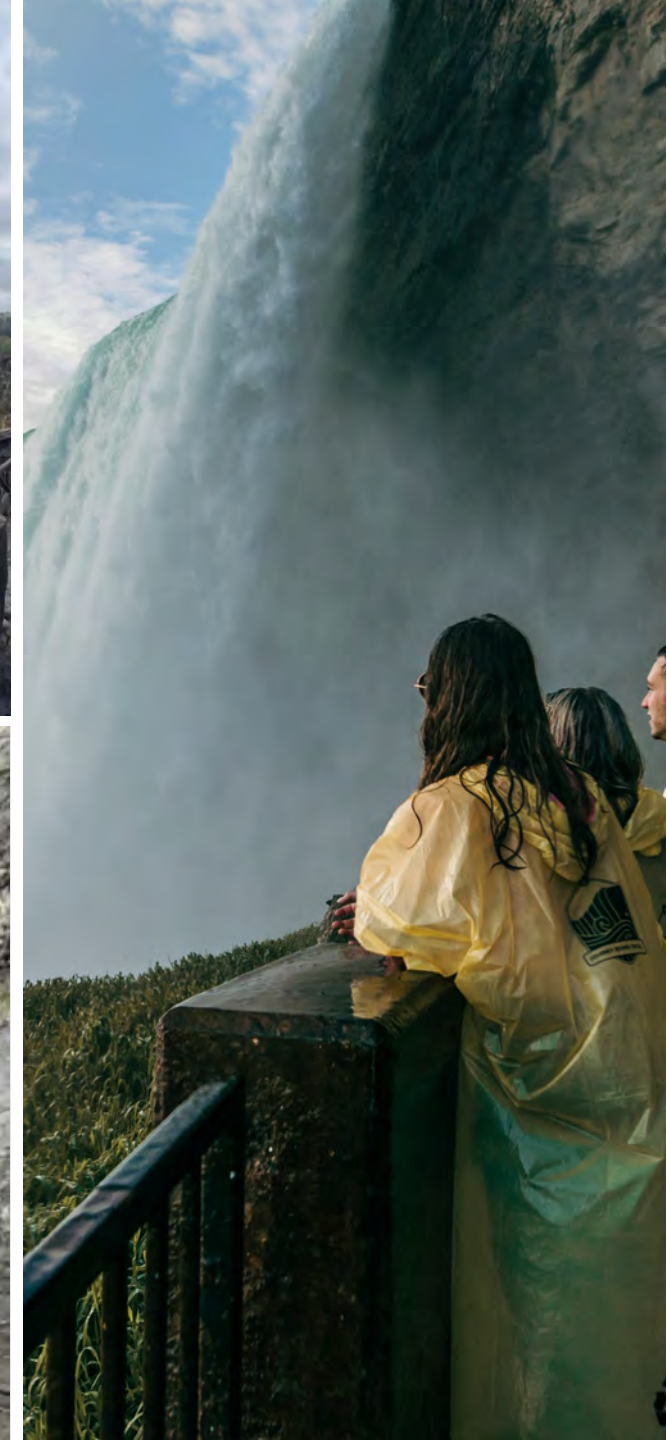
- Goal to open first phase in summer of 2028.





Journey Behind the Falls

- Significant updates planned for flagship Journey Behind the Falls attraction to elevate the year-round guest experience and expand capacity.
- Bucket-list worthy experience of standing at the base of the Horseshoe Falls.
- Updates will build off of recent redevelopment of Table Rock Centre and new visitor gallery at Journey Behind the Falls (2023).
- Restoration of historic tunnel that will lead to a new, year-round outdoor viewing platform.
- Repairing and replacing existing Rainbow Platform.





White Water Walk

- Investing in improvements to transform White Water Walk into a world-class attraction that celebrates the globally significant class 6 rapids of the mighty Niagara River

Phase 1: 2025-26

- Relocation of WEGO bus layby to expand queueing space
- New accessible washroom
- Enlarge staff areas
- Extending emergency egress stairs
- Rebuild end viewing platform

Future:

- Boardwalk expansion
- Retail improvements
- Signage upgrades
- Structural enhancements and building extension(s)



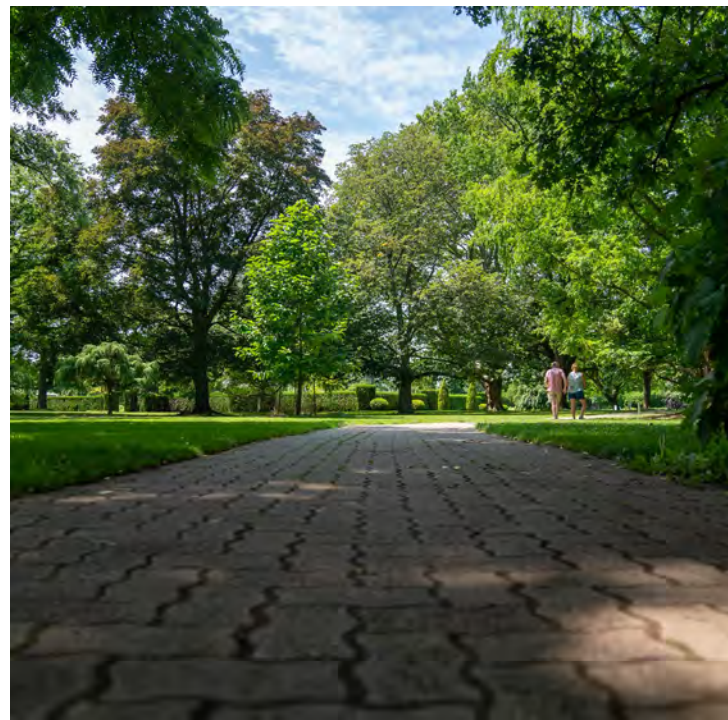
Destination Niagara Strategy Pillar 3: Wine and Culinary Tourism

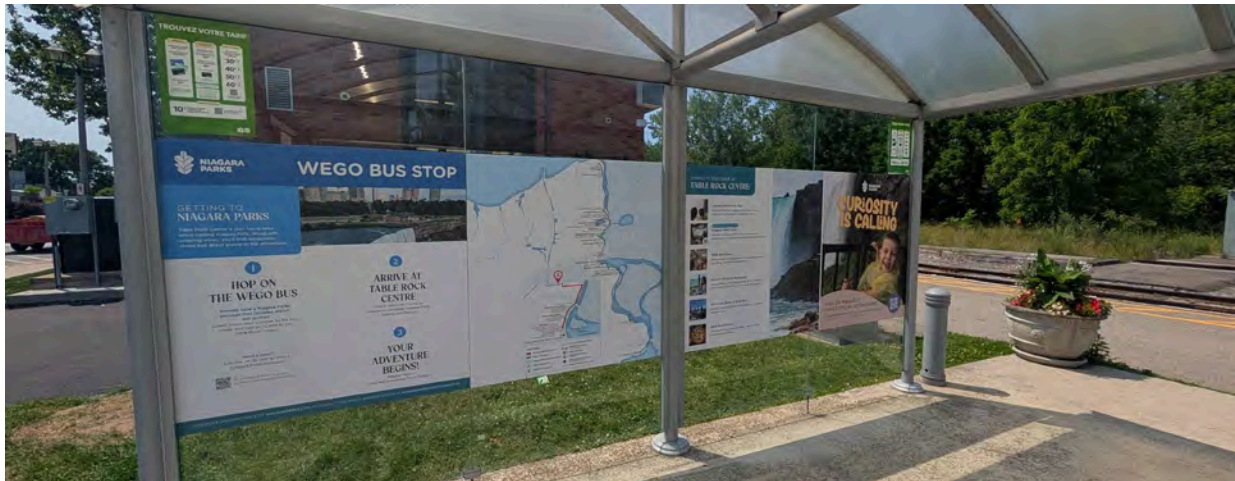
- Continued participation in the FeastOn initiative
 - Over 36% of Niagara Parks' food purchasing is from
 - Ontario 87% of beverage purchasing from Ontario
- Niagara Parks features only Niagara VQA wines at our full-service restaurants
 - Over 70 wines from 40+ Niagara wineries
 - Over 20 beers/ciders from 12 local craft breweries
 - 13 different spirits from 6 local distilleries
- Recent Frozen Falls Icewine Bar pop-up at Table Rock Centre during Niagara Icewine Festival
- Cool as Ice Gala at the Niagara Parks Power Station
- Niagara Parks is now a presenting sponsor for Niagara Grape & Wine Festival



Destination Niagara Strategy Pillar 4: Arts and Culture

- Participation in NOTL's InBloom Festival
 - McFarland House will be a stop along the tour featuring a new Mosaiculture installation
 - Niagara Parks staff will host a horticultural workshop
- New partnership with the Shaw Festival to host new programming at the Botanical Gardens, to be announced this spring.
- Return of the Queenston Heights Sunday Afternoon Concert Series (50th anniversary of the Queenston Bandshell).
- New art exhibit at Old Fort Erie featuring artwork by Indigenous artist Tracey-Mae Chambers.





Destination Niagara Strategy Pillar 5: Transportation Infrastructure

- Operates WEGO bus system and Falls Incline Railway to provide seamless transit for guests visiting Niagara Falls
- **New this summer:** NOTL extension will be fully integrated into WEGO system
 - No longer a separate ticket / service
 - Improved, seamless experience for guests
- Ongoing collaboration with Metrolinx to bundle GO Train to Niagara with WEGO access
- Invested in signage and horticultural improvements around the Bridge Street Train Station to help improve the experience for guests arriving via the GO Train



Questions and Comments

Thank you for your time today and continued support of Niagara Parks!