

Host Community Project Number: HCSC-12-001

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

## Host Communities Standing Committee Review Form

<b>PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION:</b>
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**Name:** Town of Lewiston

**Mailing Address:** 1375 Ridge Road, Lewiston

**State:** NY                      **Zip Code:** 14092

<b>PROJECT TYPE</b>
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**Check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land or Water Public Access	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational/Interpretive	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterfront or Land Based Development		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signage	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreational		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

**Project Name:** Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project

**Location:** Town of Lewiston

**Site Address:** Lower Niagara River Road, Route 18F, Lewiston

**State:** NY                      **Zip Code:** 14092

**Minor Civil Divison(s):** Town

**County:** Niagara

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

The Town of Lewiston is leasing the property in interest from the State of New York for a period of no less than 50 years

**AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL**

**Name:** Mr. Steve Reiter **Title:** Town Supervisor

**Business Address:** 1375 Ridge Road, Lewiston

**State:** NY **Zip Code:** 14092

**Telephone Number:** 716-754-8213 **Cell Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax Number:** 716-754-2821

**E-Mail Address:** supervisor@townoflewiston.us

**PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT**

**Name:** Mr. Steve Reiter **Title:** Town Supervisor

**Business Address:** 1375 Ridge Road, Lewiston

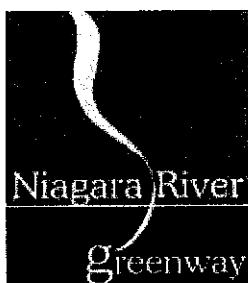
**State:** NY **Zip Code:** 14092

**Telephone Number:** 716-754-8213 **Cell Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

*If you have any questions regarding this form, please call 716-278-8760 for assistance.*



January 18, 2012

Steve Reiter, Supervisor  
Town of Lewiston  
1375 Ridge Road  
Lewiston, New York 14092

Dear Mr. Reiter:

The Niagara River Greenway Commission is pleased to support the Town of Lewiston's "Project Consultation and Review" package for the following project:

Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project

This project was deemed consistent to the Niagara River Greenway Plan as determined by the Niagara River Greenway Commission. The subjective evaluations were based on the principals, goals and criteria that define the Niagara River Greenway Plan. I have attached the Commission's comments and questions as well as public comments received on the projects submitted during the deliberation timeframe for your use. The Commission is pleased to support the Town of Lewiston's project proposals and wish you great success.

Respectfully,

*Rob Belue*

R.A. Belue  
Executive Director

Cc: Host Community Standing Committee  
Attachments:

## **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

1. The Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project is a compilation of smaller individual projects aimed at transforming a formerly closed NYS Park into a gleaming example of a community's will to "make the best of a bad situation." The overall project will both retain and create jobs, provide new recreational opportunities to all demographic groups (old, young, singles, families, sportsman, nature lovers, etc.), improve the image of the Park and Western New York by creating a world class destination on the Niagara River, celebrate the relationship of the regional assets (including Artpark, Niagara Fashion Outlets, and Niagara Falls). The Town of Lewiston has allocated over \$5,000,000 in funds available to them by way of the Niagara River Greenway Commission and licensing agreement with the New York Power Authority towards an overall \$10,000,000 project that will have an ongoing positive impact on the region and New York State for decades to come. A description of the major capital improvement project elements are as follows:

### **Road & Parking Lot Improvements**

Pavement renovations are necessary to improve safe access to all the recreational areas of the Park and to provide a welcoming message to all Park visitors. Safety of the Park visitors is just as important.

The quantity of parking and general roadway access is adequate with the exception of the River parcel. A one-way access road from River Road will be added for all visitors to access the riverfront parcel without going to the main entrance of the Park.

The remaining pavement work will be centered around repairing and upgrading existing roads and parking lots. The budgeted cost for pavement improvements is \$500,000 in Phase I.

### **New Boat Launch**

It is clear that a great deal is lost from not having a connection between Joseph Davis State park and the Niagara River. Plans to make improvements on this parcel should focus on making that connection. It is clear that the addition of a boat launch will do a number of things to change Joseph Davis State Park. All of these things increase activity to a section of the Park that has long been lost.

It has been demonstrated that there is a need for a boat launch that will provide adequate parking for boat "launchers." This new launch will be nearly in the middle of existing launches in Lewiston and Youngstown. The budgeted cost for this new Boat Launch is \$500,000.

### **New Visitor's Center**

The Niagara River is dotted with visitor's centers up and down its coastline. It is clear that there are stories to tell the people who visit from other parts of the world. Joseph Davis State Park is among the places along the Niagara trail that not only has a historic story, but contemporary stories about the community as well. A new "Visitor's Center" is a necessary part of telling that story.

Town of Lewiston Supervisor Steve Reiter has suggested that a single story building approximately 10,000 square feet would be adequate to provide the community with a place that will house displays and offer a refuge for Park visitor's to rest and congregate comfortably.

The building will include restrooms and a wide open design to optimize flexibility in its uses. The budgeted cost for the Visitor's Center is \$1,000,000.

### **New Camp Ground & Main Campus Improvements**

"Recreational Activities are the focus!" The mission of the JDSPLDC is to further develop the Park consistent with the master plan and to improve the recreational opportunities for its users and the community. Camping has always been a cornerstone of American parks.

The need for high quality campgrounds has been demonstrated by the popularity of area campgrounds. Few have the excellent location that is enjoyed by Joseph Davis State Park.

Discussions of the campground have centered around the general location and the size (with respect to the number of camp sites). The overall budget for the campground is \$500,000. This does not include the other elements that will be shared by campers that are budgeted in other line items.

Many of the other amenities including new pavilions, restrooms, playground, dog park, walking trails, and disc golf course improvements enhance the camping experience, as well as supply the community with a complete recreational experience.

### **New Audubon Society Nature Center**

The Buffalo Audubon Society is bringing world-class nature programming to the Niagara Frontier. The Park is recognized as a cornerstone of the Niagara River Globally Important Bird Area and is home to a unique array of habitats, environments, plants and animals. Located between Niagara Falls and Old Fort Niagara, Joseph Davis State Park is a part of the internationally recognized Niagara River Corridor, and has the potential to become a destination park for nature enthusiasts from across Western New York and around the world.

The new nature center will serve as a gateway to enjoyment of the Park and its unique habitats, focus attention and appreciation of the Niagara River Important Bird Area, and demonstrate principles and practices of energy conservation, sustainable living, and environmental preservation. It will enhance visitor, interpretive, and educational facilities at a currently under-utilized and unappreciated public open space, and will support field trips, nature education programming, and visits by residents and by tourists from and the world who come to the Niagara Region.

The center will be a LEED certified building that encourages citizens to preserve, enhance, restore, maintain, and care for the environment. We will demonstrate green building practices such as green roofs and water gardens. Wind, geothermal and solar will be incorporated into the project, as will state-of-the-art energy conservation practices with the ultimate goal of attaining carbon neutrality. We will interpret sustainable practices such as wildlife-friendly backyards, and include hands-on environmental or enhancement projects for students and residents of the

region. The educational programs of the center will be in concert with the restoration of critical bird habitats within the Park and the development of nature trails focused on birds, bird watching, and the diverse habitats found at the Park. Fresh water is an important regional asset, a dominate feature of the landscape in the region, and a crucial component of the habitats and environments at the Park. The role of water will also be emphasized in the design and programming of the center.

The nature center will educate a new generation of environmental stewards through the design of the center itself and through the exhibits and programming that focus on the Great Lakes, Niagara River, and the habitats and ecosystems of the region. The nature center, bird watching, and other passive recreational opportunities will draw visitors from across the Western New York and around the globe, and will have a significant economic impact on the region.

The budgeted cost of the Audubon Nature Center is \$3,250,000.

A little over a year ago, Joseph Davis State Park was scheduled for closure by the New York State office of Parks and Historic Preservation because of a funding gap. The lack of adequate funding for State Parks has been felt all over the State of New York. It is not a recent phenomena, however. Inadequate funding for upkeep and maintenance lead to a circumstance that made this once beautiful resource an unappealing destination.

As visitors declined, the reasons for improvements to the Park became less important. Closing the Park, however, was not in the best interest of the community. Therefore, Lewiston Town Supervisor Steve Reiter jumped in with a plan to re-open the Park.

A lease agreement between the New York State OPRHP and the Town of Lewiston was created and a Local Development Corporation was formed to manage a Capital Improvement Program to help meet the needs of the community.

Joseph Davis Park in Lewiston, NY and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake lie on opposite shores of the Niagara River at the confluence of the Niagara River and Lake Ontario. Though the U.S.-Canadian boundary separates these two areas, in reality a mere 2,000 feet of river water forms the divide.

Today the rich histories, well preserved architecture, and historical sites have become the life force of the economies of both regions. As the area has become an eclectic mix of old and new, cultural and heritage tourism has blossomed as evidenced by the hundreds of thousands of visitors that are drawn to these locations every year.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to travel between these two regions which together offer enormous tourism possibilities and opportunity for business development. While entry into both the U.S. and Canada can be accessed from the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge, excessive delays with vehicular traffic makes the trip longer by the extended wait times on bridges, idling vehicles while waiting on the bridge into either country, and the concentrated carbon monoxide emissions from both car and tractor trailers, as well as the waste of fuel while in this hold pattern.

A proposed water taxi would reduce bridge traffic, reduce fuel costs and improve the environment air quality of idling vehicles. It also provides a new "Gateway" between the United States and Canada that will make Joseph Davis State Park another American destination. By connecting Joseph Davis State Park to other regional destinations like Niagara Falls, Fort Niagara, Hickory Stick Golf Course, The Fashion Outlet Mall, Seneca Niagara Casino, Artpark, Fatima Shrine, and others, the economic and cultural benefits can be leveraged into new and exciting opportunities for development in the entire region.

Niagara County has suffered from a history of environmental abuse. In spite of this legacy, it is an area that boasts stunning natural beauty and a wide range of open spaces and natural areas. The Niagara River corridor, linking Lakes Erie and Ontario, is recognized bi-nationally as an "Important Bird Area" and draws a remarkable number of international visitors seeking to enjoy the diversity of bird species which can be found there. Most experts agree that the future of Niagara County and the Niagara River corridor will be inexorably linked with the regions' remarkable natural amenities. Presently, however, there are only limited opportunities for the public to participate in environmental education programming that can inspire a deeper understanding of the environment and connect people to nature in a meaningful way. Construction of the Joseph Davis State Park Nature Center will assist in the creation of a permanent educational presence by both Buffalo Audubon and Audubon New York and will go a long way toward fulfilling this need and assuring that Niagara County's youngest citizens grow to fully appreciate and protect the natural wonders that surround them, while adults learn about the environmental issues facing Niagara County today.

The development of this nature center is in line with the missions and priorities of each of the partners. The project is a direct outgrowth of Buffalo Audubon Society's strategic commitment to increase its presence in and services to Niagara County. Although BAS is one of the two largest and most active providers of nature education in the State of New York and Niagara County lies within BAS service area, it has not historically received the same intensity of services as Erie and other counties served by the Society. Similarly, an identified priority of Audubon New York's strategic plan is the expansion of its programs and centers statewide. This goal has not yet been realized.

The Nature Center will be a facility that educates people of all ages about Niagara County's environment and ecology. The center will be designed as a LEED certified green building, and will be used to encourage and demonstrate sustainable building and living practices. It will also provide increased access to an already established State Park in the region by encouraging participation in on-site programming specifically focused on Niagara County and the Niagara River corridor. Ecology, natural history, environmental education, and sustainable living are themes on which all programming will be based.

Finally, the construction of a nature education center fulfills a longstanding goal that was envisioned during the process of developing the Master Plan for Joseph Davis State Park, and has the potential to draw new visitors and tourists to the Lewiston/Porter area.

Audubon's presence at Joseph Davis State Park could be a particularly effective mechanism for attracting EPF funds to construct additional interpretive facilities such as boardwalks,

observation blinds, and outdoor facilities designed to accommodate the needs of those with limited mobility and that support the educational programming conducted by Audubon. Audubon has already garnered \$195,000 in funds from the Niagara River Greenway Ecological Standing Committee to create a habitat management plan for the Park, and this has in turn leveraged another \$360,000 in funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for habitat restoration. The new center's location within an Important Bird Area and along the Niagara River will also make it well positioned for funding under the Niagara Greenway Plan, which explicitly calls for the establishment of ecological and environmental education centers within the corridor.

It is important to note also that the new nature center at Joseph Davis will be designed according to green building principles established by LEED (the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program of the U.S. Green Building Council). The new building will therefore provide a model for other construction projects, whether state funded or otherwise, and an additional opportunity for interpretation. Programming and exhibits based on the design of the building will be developed to showcase the ecological sustainability of the construction methods and materials and operations of the building.

Community leaders have studied the wants and needs in Lewiston for decades. Fulfilling those needs have been limited by both funding and opportunity. Although the Audubon Nature Center satisfy a need that can be demonstrated and verified by facts and figures, the remaining improvements in Phase I are no less important. In a broad sense, these improvements can be described as upgrades necessary to bring a once closed State Park back to life. The question perhaps should be: "Statement of What's not needed." The answer would be: "A State Park that is not open to the public."

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.

**Niagara Greenway Vision Statement:**

*The Niagara River Greenway is a world-class corridor of places, parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic, and heritage resources and provides access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.*

The Town of Lewiston has a population of around 16,000 people. Their residents enjoy a wide variety of attractions in their historic and culturally rich community. Landmarks in the area include the Artpark, the Lower Niagara River with its majestic views of the river, the mouth of Lake Ontario and Canada.

The Town is located among some of the most historic buildings in the nation which many are on the National Historic Building Register. This project emulates the vision statement of the Niagara River Greenway by being located in Parks setting, and is often referred to as one of the most historic areas America.



The project would offer visitors a rest area for those using this linear park trail along the Niagara River to enjoy the parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic, and heritage resources and provides access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.

This project incorporates several goals of the Greenway Commission, and will support an accessible, unified, environmentally friendly, and revitalized corridor that highlights the natural beauty, cultural diversity, and historic significance of the Niagara River. These goals are as follows:

## **GOALS**

### **Improve Access**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will provide a variety of economic, educational, social and cultural benefits as well as an interpretative center by:

- Providing a Nature Center for Tourist, Students and Visitors to the Greenway Corridor.
- Improved public access and education to historic area.
- Provide a "gateway" to the Niagara Wine Trail, Seaway Trail, Upper and Lower Niagara River and Lake Ontario and the Erie Canal.
- Participate in annual cultural festivals that bring economic development to the area.
- Improved community livability, interaction, and cohesion.
- Improved local and international transport and access for drivers, non-drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians to the area.

### **Make Connections**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project is located on the Seaway Trail, The Niagara Wine Trail, as well as connections to the Erie Canal. Located on Route 18F offers connections South to the Village of Lewiston, City of Niagara Falls, the great Niagara Falls Cataracts and Canada; North to the Village of Youngstown, Fort Niagara State Park, and the Seaway Trail to Lake Ontario. The project will also make physical connections available to our international Canadian neighbors through the implementation of the cross river with a potential water taxi.

### **Celebrate History and Heritage**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will offer the public open space for enjoying nature and recreational opportunities that have ceased to exist at the Park. Joseph Davis State Park will further serve as a place for residents and visitors to the area a place to stop and rest as they travel along the Seaway Trail.

A number of festivals and events sponsored by the local arts council, business organization and historical association attract tens of thousands of annual visitors. Sport fishing is also dramatically gaining in popularity. The Town of Lewiston is home to the New York Power Authority's Robert Moses Power Project, which is the largest hydroelectric generating facility in

New York State, built in the early 1960s. Niagara University, founded in 1856, is one of the largest private colleges in Western New York also calls Lewiston home. The Tuscarora Indian Reservation, established around 1800, is located entirely within Lewiston.

Lewiston continues to evolve as a commercial, cultural, recreational, and residential center. Building upon its deep historical roots, development continues to make the Niagara River waterfront more attractive and accessible. The Town is located among some of the most historic buildings in the nation which many are on the National Historic Building Register. This project emulates the vision statement of the Niagara River Greenway by being located in Parks setting, and is often referred to as one of the most historic areas America.

Local citizens and visitors alike enjoy the rich and fascinating history, and look to the future with optimism and confidence as Lewiston's reputation becomes stronger as the ideal place to live, work and raise a family in Western New York.

### **Promote Long Term Sustainability**

The Town of Lewiston has developed and executed a master plan that has successfully grown by providing a secure home for our local history while developed plans to expand to meet the needs of all that come to the Town. With the anticipation of implementing the proposed project's capital improvements, the Town of Lewiston has entered into agreement with NYSOPRHP for a term of no less than 50 years to operate and maintain the property, buildings, and amenities that will be available at Joseph Davis State Park.

### **Extend Olmstead's Legacy**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will complement the Olmstead legacy in preserving "green open space" as outlined in the National Association of Olmstead Parks' mission statement. Joseph Davis State Park Comfort Station is nestled on top the Niagara River Gorge and enhances the natural landscape, restore environmental systems, and improve the wildlife habitat. This continued revitalization of the land will promote Olmstead's desire to preserve areas of natural beauty within urban settings, thereby *restoring the ecological resources* of the area and ensuring that the *health, vitality and integrity of natural resources and wildlife habitats and preserve the historical architecture of the building*.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPALS**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will meet the following guiding principles of the Niagara Greenway Commission:

### **Excellence**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will provide open space for passive and active recreation and several opportunities for interpretation, education, and celebration of the regions environmental and ecological resources. This commitment to excellence to provide these opportunities and available amenities to the visitors, tourists, and students is exemplified by each and every element of the proposed capital improvements. The project will lay the foundation for additional future park developments and

will enhance the economic viability of tourism and other revenue-generating activities in Lewiston and the surrounding Western New York region.

**Sustainability**

The Town of Lewiston’s Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will promote the safe environment and the cultural experience by being a Gateway into the Greenway Corridor in the development for long-term viability and effectiveness. The JDSPLDC is working with the Town of Lewiston to support the maintenance services of the Park including law maintenance, snow plowing, and security. The Town will continue to provide the services throughout the term of the lease.

**Accessibility & Public Well-Being**

In accordance with Greenway principles, this project as a Gateway is designed to provide and increase physical and visual access to the project area. These improvements will promote usage of the many parks and trails by all visitors to the Niagara Greenway. The project will enhance public well-being through the recreational opportunities as well as the environmental education and conservation that will be offered through this project for generations to come.

**Connectivity**

The Town of Lewiston’s Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will facilitate its ability to be the Gateway into the Niagara Frontier connecting the Niagara Wine Trail and the Seaway Trail to the Upper and Lower Niagara River, Lake Ontario, and the Erie Canal. These improvements will allow for better connectivity to the trails, business districts, and schools. The project will increase connectivity and access to all points in the continuity of open space and habitats, historical landmarks, and provide for connections to related corridors and resources across the region including international connections to Canada through the cross river ferry taxi.

**Restoration**

The Town of Lewiston had the foresight to restore an unused public park through implementing the proposed capital improvements at Joseph Davis State Park. The project will result in restoring once available opportunities for free public access to open space for active and leisure recreation, community gatherings, environmental and ecological education and conservation, and economic growth for the Town and surrounding region.

**CRITERIA**

The Town of Lewiston’s Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project meets the following criteria of the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

**Priority Status**

The Town of Lewiston’s Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project will serve as a vital Gateway between existing Greenway resources and attractions. The completion of this project will offer improved access to public park facilities, including boating and parking access, interpretive nature centers, and renewed connections to neighboring Canada to meet the needs of residents, students, and visitors to the area.

**Focus Area**

The location of Joseph Davis State Park falls within the area of the Greenway boundaries and Gateways to The Seaway and Niagara Wine Trail as well as the Historic Lewiston area and neighboring Canada. Improvements to the site will demonstrate visible results of the Greenway mission and contribute to the overall success of the plan.

**Implementable**

The investment of grant money, manpower by Town Staff, and planning provides an implementable project. The Town Board has shown commitment to the project as evidenced through the accompanying resolution. By presenting a more attractive vision to travelers crossing this Gateway, tourists will be encouraged to stop and patronize local establishments. As the local sponsor for this project, upon completion the Town will consistently budget funding to assist in maintaining the integrity of the project area.

**Economic Viability and Local Sponsor**

All maintenance and upkeep of the project area will be provided by the Town of Lewiston. The Town of Lewiston will continue to provide stewardship for this project, and provide the necessary support with any in-kind manpower to further this project along to its completion phase and beyond.

**Consideration of Other Planning Efforts**

This project is consistent with the Town of Lewiston's Comprehensive Master Plan. A lease agreement between the New York State OPRHP and the Town of Lewiston was created and a Local Development Corporation was formed to manage a Capital Improvement Program to help meet the needs of the community

**Clear Benefits**

The Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project has endless benefits for the community, Niagara River Greenway, and Western New York region as a whole. The project will improve the aesthetic beauty of the Park, leading to better environmental conditions and education of its important resources. The project will result in a better view of the area to travelers crossing our Gateway, and will provide an increase in safety with improved facilities for residents and visitors and increased incentive for our visitors. The resulting benefits in public well-being, environmental education and conservation, and economic viability make this project beneficial to the entire region of Western New York and the Niagara River Greenway.

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

**Joseph Davis State Park Capital Improvements Project  
Proposed Budget**

Engineering	\$300,000
Log Cabins along top edge of River Setting	\$300,000
Building Demolition (old bathroom area)	\$50,000
Roadway to River Entrance (laid out and build)	\$300,000
Trails through Bird Preservation area	\$20,000
Shelters (3)	\$200,000
Repair Parking Lots	\$300,000
Fishing Deck Extended	\$100,000
Prepare & Start Boat Launch	\$1,000,000
Start Audubon Society Building	\$1,000,000
Start Nature Camp programs	\$75,000
Install Sledding Hill	\$50,000
Improve Playground area and install equipment	\$200,000
Repair Existing Building/Update/ Bathrooms/Stone fronts	\$150,000
Marketing & Promotion	\$150,000
Misc Equipment and Furniture	\$200,000
Welcome Center	\$905,000
Contingencies	\$200,000
New Employees	\$200,000

**Total \$5,700,000**

TOTAL PROJECT COST is BUDGETED **\$ 5,700,000**

Amount requested from Niagara River Greenway Commission: **\$5,700,000\***

\* The Town of Lewiston will draw \$450,000 per year to finance the project.

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 will provide an excellent, visually pleasing Gateway directly on the Seaway Trail and at the heart of the Niagara River Greenway Corridor. The Town of Lewiston recognized that the closure of Joseph Davis State Park was not in the best interest of the community and the Niagara region. In doing so, the Town pursued an agreement with the New York OPRHP and created a Local Development Corporation for the sole purpose of "saving" Joseph Davis State Park. The mission of the JDSPLDC is to further develop the Park consistent with the master plan and to improve the recreational opportunities for its users and the community. The Town of Lewiston supervisor and Lewiston Town Board has rallied its community for support. They have sought out experts in all areas of development to prepare a well defined plan for development that will become a model for private/public/not-for-profit development.

The JDSPLCD is in the process of preparing the documents necessary to encumber the proposed funds from the Niagara River Greenway Commission and will be issuing bonds for the \$5 million Town contribution.

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 the 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 animals 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.

Joseph Davis State Park located in Niagara County on the eastern side of the Niagara River, approximately four miles north of the Village of Lewiston. Adjacent to the Lower Niagara River, Joseph Davis Park encompasses 357 acres of land that ranges from waterfront habitat, scrub land and forested areas, to areas that provide an array of recreational activities for park visitors. Portions of the Park provide a unique habitat and environment for migratory birds, while other areas provide opportunities for activities such as hiking, fishing and disc golf. In addition, picnic, sheltered areas and restroom facilities are provided on site.

Access to the park is provided off of Park Road which connects with Route 18F (River Road) and Pletcher Road. Pletcher Road provides adjacent access to the Robert Moses Parkway. The Park is bounded by Park Road to the north, the Riverwalk Subdivision and Pletcher Road to the south, Robert Moses Parkway to the east, and the Niagara River and Route 18F to the west.

The land uses immediately adjacent to the park consist primarily of vacant or residential land (as defined by Town of Lewiston zoning maps). The predominate land use within the vicinity of the park are single family residential developments.

The park also has been designated the Joseph Davis Bird Conservation Area (BCA), which includes frontage along the Niagara River, successional shrub land and second growth forests. Joseph Davis State Park is also part of the National Audubon Society's Niagara River Corridor Important Bird Area. The Buffalo Audubon Society has recently completed a report on the development of the Buffalo Audubon Nature Center at Joseph Davis State Park.

Joseph Davis State Park currently offers passive and active recreational activities for visitors, such as disc golf, fishing, hiking, bird watching, and cross-country skiing, in addition to several other recreational opportunities. Amenities in the Park include paved roads and parking areas, a fishing pier/boat dock, a 27-hole Frisbee disc golf course, trails, a playground, restroom facilities, and picnic and shelter areas. Other buildings are located on the site including a maintenance building and a building that served as a snack bar. While some of these amenities are in good or acceptable conditions, others have moderately deteriorated.

Fishing is permitted in the Niagara River and the fishing pond near the main parking lot. A fishing dock is located along the Niagara River in the northwest corner of the property. Access is provided from the Park road by a paved trail. The dock is in good condition and is used frequently. Parking is provided to the east immediately and the south (also used by the users of the picnic shelter).

Hunting for small game (pheasants) is allowed during the State regulated seasons in designated areas throughout the Park. State rules and regulations apply.

The Park includes mowed and dirt trails which meander through both forest and successional fields. There are limited paved trails for pedestrian/bicyclist only traffic in portions of the maintained areas of the park. Hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing are allowed on all trails.

A playground is located to the west of the fishing pond and east of the Frisbee disc golf course. The playground is in good condition and is used frequently. A swing set is also located immediately north of this site. Parking is located in the main area east of the playground.

The road network within the park includes a two-lane paved entrance road off of Park Road leading to an internal road system that connects all of the parking lots on the site and the maintenance building. Some unimproved gravel roads/trails for maintenance vehicles are located on Park grounds as well. Most of the roads are composed of asphalt and in general are in good shape. Some areas of the internal road network do need to be improved however. With the exception of the parking lot located by the River, the other two parking lots have deteriorated to a significant degree. All parking lots are not striped so the amount of actual parking spaces is unknown.

Park structures and lighting within the Park are supplied electricity from National Grid. Most of the electrical lines are underground. Power lines do run through the property down the middle of the Frisbee disc golf course. Water within the Park is supplied by Niagara County and services most buildings on the site. Sewage services are provided by the Town of Lewiston.

Restrooms are located near the main parking lot next to the snack shop building and near X. The building next to the snack shop is in average shape and the roof shows signs of deterioration. The restroom near X is in good condition. These facilities are closed during the winter. Portable toilets are also located throughout the Park.

The maintenance building and garage provides ample storage for equipment associated with maintenance around the park. Petroleum storage includes one 185 gallon gasoline storage tank and one 185 gallon diesel tank located in the staff parking lot near the maintenance shop/office. The tanks are relatively new and new electric dispensers have been installed.

As the lead agency for environmental review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation will complete its review of the project during the planning phase before any construction or ground disturbing activities begin.



Town of Lewiston

RESOLUTION 2011 - 18

For the Joseph Davis State Park Phase 1 Capital Improvement Project


I, Carol Brandon, acting Town Clerk of the Town of Lewiston located at 1375 Ridge Road Lewiston, New York 14092, do hereby certify that the following resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Town of Lewiston held on November 14, 2011, and is incorporated in the original minutes of said meeting and that said resolution has not been altered, amended or revoked and is in full force and effect.

Resolved: That the Town of Lewiston will submit to the Niagara River Greenway Commission a proposal for recommendation of the Town of Lewiston's Joseph Davis State Park Phase I Capital Improvement Project Grant funding request.

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE:

Councilman Bax	Yes
Councilman Marra	Yes
Councilman Palmer	Yes
Councilman Winkley	Yes
Supervisor Reiter	Yes

Motion Carried 5 - 0



Carol Brandon, Lewiston Town Clerk  
November 14, 2011





Joseph Davis State Park

Image U.S. Geological Survey

©2010 Google

Imagery Date 10/6/2008 1941 ft

43.173702° N 79.024800° W elev 325 ft

Eye alt 8750ft



**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Niagara Frontier Region • Prospect Park, PO Box 1132, Niagara Falls, New York 14303-1032  
Telephone: 716-278-1770  
Fax: 716-278-1725  
www.nysparks.com

**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor

**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner

**Mark W. Thomas**  
Director, Western District

November 22, 2011

Mr. Neil E. Nolf  
Chairman of the Board of Directors  
Joseph Davis State Park Local Development Corporation  
1375 Ridge Road  
PO Box 330  
Lewiston, NY 14092

RE: Application Number 3324: Joseph Davis State Park Phase 1 Capital Improvements

Dear Mr. Nolf:

I am writing in response to your request for a letter of support for the NYS Consolidated Funding Application submitted by the Joseph Davis State Park Local Development Corporation.

After a careful review of the CFA, we find there are elements that are consistent with the Master Plan for the park, and merit serious consideration and financial support.

- We fully support the request for funding for construction of the Audubon Society Nature Center, which was included in the park's Master Plan. This project has the potential to become the signature feature of the park, and we strongly endorse it.
- Paving and repair of existing roads and parking lots will contribute to the appeal of the park for all patrons, and enhance its usefulness. We urge the committee to support these elements. However, the construction of new roads or expansions of parking areas cannot be approved without the opportunity to review the projects for consistency with the Master Plan.

Apart from those elements we can endorse, we are very concerned that the CFA also includes a number of projects that present significant issues and challenges, including some projects that had not previously been presented for our consideration. Specifically, we are not prepared at this time to endorse the visitor center, the water taxi service and its associated international port of entry facility or the proposed campground. Consistent with the Master Plan and our agreement with the Town, State Parks cannot support these concepts without careful, thorough and substantive review.

We reiterate our earlier commitment to work with the Town to improve facilities at Joseph Davis State Park. Working cooperatively, I am certain the partnership between the Town and State Parks can result in many needed improvements as we work together through the required processes and procedures. Thank you for your support of Joseph Davis State Park.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Thomas  
Western District Director

Cc: Andy Beers  
Christopher Pushkarsh  
Thomas Alworth  
Thomas Lyons  
Steven Reiter  
File

MWT/sw