

## 2.0 Vision

### Vision Statement

*Black Rock Canal Park will be a pre-eminent public open space, a recreational destination in the county, an icon of the Black Rock and Riverside neighborhoods and a portal onto the Niagara River waterfront. It has the potential to become a regional destination, a component of the Niagara River Greenway and act as a gateway into the City.*

### Goals and Objectives

#### **Promote a variety of connections with all areas of the city.**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park is the most significant waterfront open space in west Buffalo it serves as an anchor and a portal on the Niagara River for the entire open space system of parks and trails. Specifically it provides links to

- Riverside High School
- the Black Rock and Riverside neighborhoods
- Olmsted system of parks
- the Niagara River

#### **Develop a significant regional attraction in the city.**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park has the largest waterfront land base (8 acres) of any open space along the Niagara River it offers amenities that make it a destination for residents and visitors.

- Promote water activities as boating, fishing, scuba
- Enhance opportunities for viewing in all four seasons for a variety of users
- Create a primary space for special events and gathering
- Develop the feature section of a future continuous waterfront promenade

#### **Create a recognizable icon on the waterfront of the city.**

The Black Rock Canal Park is a waterfront park on a world renowned river in a city with three waterfronts: the Niagara River, Lake Erie and the Buffalo River. It is a place that is unique and exemplary with a sense of place.

- Develop a park that reflects its own unique local character
- Create signature features that reflect the history and culture of the site
- Attract a wide cross section of residents and visitors
- Develop an inviting pedestrian oriented place
- Introduce art into the public waterfront

## **Develop a gateway entering the city from the north.**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park is visible from the I-190 south entering the City of Buffalo and from the Niagara River at the northern edge of the city it will be a signature place with significant features that add to its value as a gateway to the city.

- Build a recognizable and visible signature
- Develop a green natural area of riverfront
- Set the standard for the continuity of waterfront green space

## **Promote and enhance nature and green development in all aspects of the park.**

Black Rock Canal Park will be a vestige of publicly accessible shoreline, located along one of the most scenic rivers in the world. All aspects of design, construction and education must enhance and complement the values:

- Manage stormwater in an environmentally responsible way
- Build green incorporating environmental design principles
- Interpret green design and construction techniques

## **Program the park to support community education.**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park is proximate to Riverside High School and is rich in history and natural wonders, a comprehensive interpretation program will make this park a significant attraction.

- Develop a comprehensive interpretative program
- Enhance understanding of nature and ecology
- Develop an atmosphere of an outdoor museum
- Develop community/neighborhood facilities

## **Recognize the significance of the site's connection to the New York State Canal System**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park is located between the Canal Gateway in Tonawanda and North Tonawanda and the Buffalo Inner Harbor, this park should serve to represent the link between the past Old Erie Canal and the present Erie Canal and Inner Harbor and the future

Canal-side Project in the Buffalo Inner Harbor.

- Develop a comprehensive interpretive program educating visitors about the canal
- Improve facilities that will enable boaters to navigate to these locations

Encourage events that the recreational and historical value of the Canal System.

## **Enhance access to a significant public resource, the Niagara River.**

Given that Black Rock Canal Park is the longest stretch of open shoreline on the Niagara River in Buffalo, the area should as water accessible as possible both physically, visually and for challenged individuals.

- Promote areas where one can touch the water
- Improve accessibility for water based activities as boating, fishing
- Apply standards to make all components accessible for challenged individuals
- Maintain waterside lands for water dependent uses

## *Guiding Principles*

*Guiding principles are fundamental obligations or tenets that are applied to the development of public waterfront open space. There are six guiding principles that cover all aspects to guide the evaluation and design of Black Rock Canal Park. The design of the waterfront open space should promote:*

- the environment: stormwater, contamination remediation and general sustainability
- nature: through the use of native vegetation, and landscapes
- circulation: pedestrians, bicycles and boaters
- people activities both indoor and outdoor and for all seasons
- water use and access
- viewsheds