

2015

EMERSON PARK MASTER PLAN



Cayuga County, New York

Adopted by the Cayuga County Legislature
April 28, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREPARED FOR

COUNTY OF CAYUGA

Michael H. Chapman, Chairman of the Legislature

Suzanne Sinclair, County Administrator

Tucker Whitman, Chair, Cayuga County Public Works Committee

Gary Duckett, Director, Cayuga County Buildings, Grounds and Parks

Michelle Lincoln, Assistant Park Maintenance Supervisor

PREPARED BY

CAYUGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stephen F. Lynch, AICP, Director

Nick Colas, AICP, Principal GIS Analyst

Kari Terwilliger, AICP, Planner

Gabriel Holbrow, Planner

John Zepko, CPESC, Planner

STEERING COMMITTEE

Gino Alberici

Keith Batman, Cayuga County Legislature

Amy Chirco

Gary Duckett

Sam Giangreco

Connie Reilley

Brian Roper

Joseph Runkle, Cayuga County Legislature

Dan Schuster

Jim Young

RESOURCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Cayuga County Parks & Recreation Staff: Michele Lincoln and Charlene Sanders

Ward O'Hara Agricultural Museum, Tim Quill, Museum Director

The Emerson Foundation, Dan Fessenden, Executive Director

Cayuga County Office of Tourism, Meg Vanek, Executive Director

Cayuga County IGNITE

H&J Hospitality, Tim Capwell, Operations Manager

EDR Companies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BACKGROUND	3
3. THE PLANNING PROCESS	7
4. THEMES FOR IMPLEMENTATION	19
5. MASTER PLAN GOALS	21
1. ENHANCE & EXPAND ACTIVE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL USES WITHIN THE PARK	23
2. PROTECT THE PARK'S NATURAL SETTING AND ENHANCE PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USES WITHIN THE PARK	46
3. PROVIDE NEW AMENITIES FOR EXPANDED USES	52
6. KEY PLAN ELEMENTS	62
7. IMPLEMENTATION	73
8. APPENDICIES	78
A. ANNOTATED HISTORY OF EMERSON PARK	78
B. LETTER FROM FRED L. EMERSON TO THE CAYUGA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, JUNE 12, 1944	79
IMAGE CREDITS	80

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan is the most recent comprehensive park plan for Emerson Park in a long history of park planning efforts reaching back over fifty years. Over time, each Emerson Park Plan has contributed to park development, guiding decision making and managing incremental changes to this exceptional lakeshore park. The last Master Plan, prepared in 2000-2001, coincided with the planned reconstruction of the Emerson Park Seawall and related improvements along the Owasco River. The 2001 plan was an exciting and extremely ambitious plan which included proposals for significant and expensive capital improvements. Although not formally adopted when presented to the County Legislature, a number of park improvements outlined in the plan have been completed and the considerable public and private investments made since 2001 have set the stage for the 2015 Master Plan.

In October of 2013, the Cayuga County Parks Commission approached the County Planning Department requesting assistance with an update to the 2001 Master Plan that would build on these park improvements while providing a framework for identifying and pursuing future park programs and projects. The Parks Commission and the Planning Department felt strongly that the 2015 Master Plan should arise from meaningful public input and ideas, balanced by a pragmatic and realistic assessment of what could reasonably be accomplished. Finally, the Commission and staff sought to develop a Master Plan that carried broad public acceptance and support, positioning the Master Plan for consideration and formal adoption by the County Legislature. This 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan is a result of that effort.

MAJOR GOAL OF THE PLAN

The Parks Commission, in its dual role as both Master Plan Steering Committee and appointed County Parks Commission, worked with the Planning Department staff to frame an overarching goal to guide the development of the Master Plan:

The Major Goal of the 2015 Master Plan is to deliver cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs at Emerson Park that are attractive, well maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the park's cultural history, and continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages from both inside and outside Cayuga County for many years to come.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chapter 3 of the Master Plan outlines the public participation process. From the outset, the Steering Committee and the Planning Staff were determined to undertake a public participation process for the 2015 Master Plan that was open, engaged and interactive. The first step was to identify and meet with a collection of local leaders and Emerson Park stakeholders to inform them of the plan, and to solicit their assistance in developing and rolling out the public participation process.

Ultimately, the stakeholder group and Steering Committee agreed that a series of well-attended and open public input meetings for the general public, held between April and August 2014, would provide a sound foundation for soliciting feedback about the park and the proposed Master Plan. Three (3) public participation meetings were held in 2014 with meetings on April 23rd, June 11th, and



Figure 1: Photograph of Nick Colas, member of the Planning Staff,

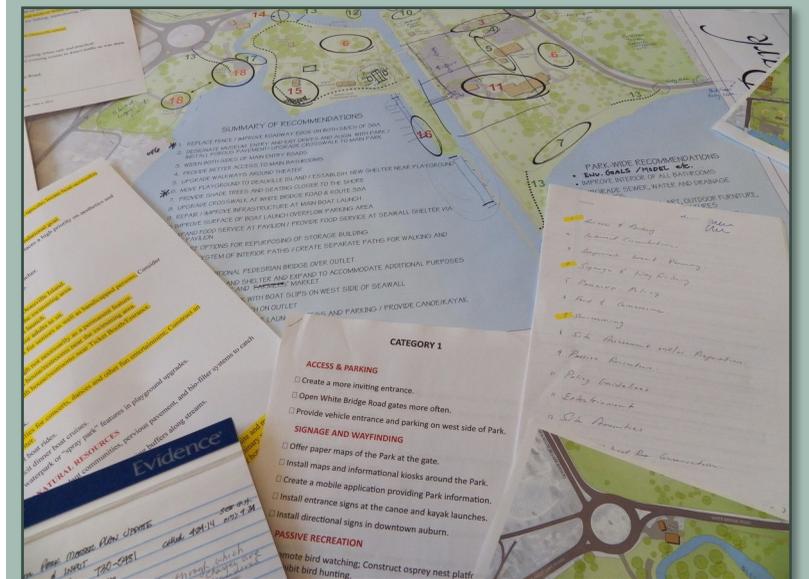


Figure 2: Photograph of all of the public input, notes, maps and proposed improvements gathered by staff prior to the August 22, 2014 meeting.

August 22nd. All of the public meetings were held in the early evening at 7:00 PM and, naturally, they were held at the Emerson Park Pavilion. The public meetings were energized and enthusiastic - with all ideas welcomed, discussed and recorded. Participation was high, with nearly everyone suggesting Park changes and recommending Park improvements and participants often adding personal stories and park memories along with constructive feedback on what they were hearing from others.

The public outreach did not end with the public participation meetings. Staff expanded the opportunity for public participation through development of an online outreach program and establishment of an interactive project website allowing residents to submit ideas and concerns to the Planning Staff electronically. Finally, in an attempt to reach a younger demographic of park users, staff contacted IGNITE, the Cayuga County Young Professionals Group supported by the Chamber of Commerce, and asked to meet with the group to discuss the future of Emerson Park. The IGNITE group enthusiastically responded by not only meeting with staff, but agreeing to prepare and circulate a digital survey to its membership about their use of the park, garnering suggestions for improvements and ideas about making a revitalized Emerson Park responsive to younger users.

THEMES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

As discussed above, the major goal for the future of Emerson Park is to provide cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs that are: attractive, well-maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the Park's cultural history, and that continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages for many years to come. The purpose of this Master Plan is to create a useful framework for assessing how various future proposals might fit into this community objective, not to provide a step-by-step design of Emerson Park.

Chapter 4 outlines five (5) overarching “Themes for Implementation” that provide park staff, the Parks Commission, and other County officials with a common and consistent frame of reference when planning, designing, and constructing any new addition or alteration. The five themes are:

1. Establish a design-focused approach to project development;
2. Provide programming and marketing support for park programs and amenities;
3. Establish and model environmentally sound design, practice and education;
4. Address infrastructure and capital planning needs; and
5. Incorporate public art, amenities and outdoor furniture.

Collectively, these Themes for Implementation should be integrated into park planning practices and inform decisions regarding development of park programs and projects.

THREE OVERARCHING GOALS

The Master Plan identifies three (3) overarching goals for future development and programming at Emerson Park and all three goals build on Emerson Park's strengths:

1. To enhance and expand active recreational and cultural uses within the park.
2. To protect the park's natural setting and enhance passive recreational uses within the park.
3. To add new amenities for expanded uses.

For each of these three goals, the Parks Commission has identified several major projects to undertake, and each major project is supported with smaller sub-projects. Chapter 5, which might be considered the “core” of the Master Plan, presents and discusses each of these three goals in turn and includes a brief listing of all the proposed

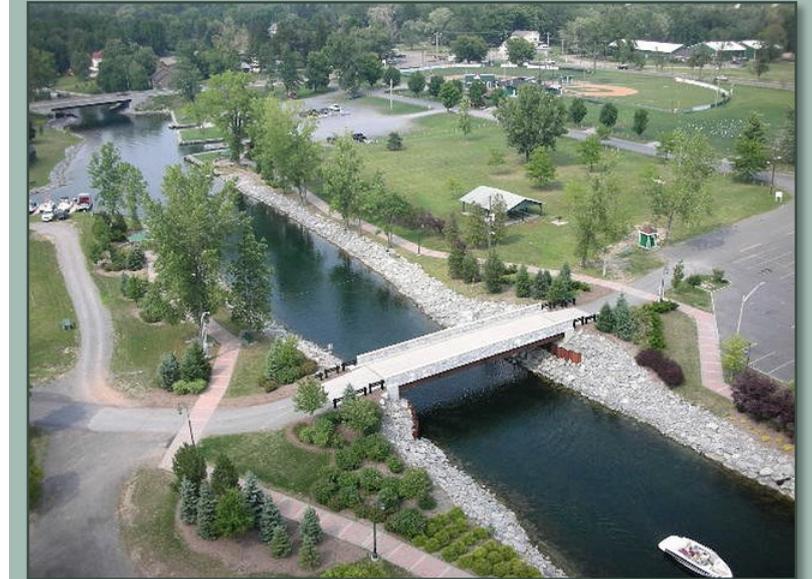


Figure 3: Aerial view of Emerson Park over the Owasco River.



Figure 4: View of the large willow tree and the seawall from Deauville Island.

park projects and program developments included within the Master Plan. An illustrative concept plan showing the approximate locations of proposed projects appears on page 22.

KEY PLAN ELEMENTS

Although the well-attended public participation process resulted in many projects and programs that support one or more of these three (3) overarching goals, the Parks Commission and staff have identified five (5) Key Priority Park Improvements we believe are essential to pursue first. Detailed in Chapter 6, the following “threshold projects” support each of the overall park development goals, collectively set the stage for expanded public amenities and increased park use, establishing a strong foundation on which the remaining projects and programs can build:

1. Establish a parkwide bicycle and pedestrian pathway system
2. Pavilion area playground relocation and expansion of playground at Deauville Island
3. Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore beach area & swimming area upgrades
4. Expand boater access and user base with seawall docks and pedestrian bridge
5. Development and expansion of food concessions in the park

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Chapter 7 presents a flexible matrix for implementing the twenty-one (21) main projects proposed by the Plan. Each of these projects has several key project components – or smaller sub-projects which, taken together, accomplish the larger project. Each project in the implementation matrix has been classified into one of four priority levels based on their immediate importance, impact and scope of work needed to develop the project.

The first priority level, **Key Plan Element**, categorizes the projects that should be undertaken first and represent the “threshold projects” discussed above. More detail on these five (5) projects is provided in Chapter 6. The second priority level, **Primary Plan Element**, categorizes projects that are still a high priority and should be undertaken at the beginning of the implementation process for this plan, but after the Key Plan Elements have been established. There are six (6) projects in this priority level.

The third priority level, **Support Plan Element**, categorizes seven (7) projects and programs that either already exist and function fairly well, but that could benefit from additional support and enhancements from the County; or once established will provide support amenities for park users and the overall function of the park. The fourth and final priority level, **Provisional Plan Element**, categorizes three (3) projects that are larger in scope, including the time required for design and construction, than the other projects recommended in the plan.

The implementation matrix purposefully does not include specific time frames for completion beyond the stated priority ranking, allowing for flexibility in project development as funding opportunities become available.

ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

It is important that the Emerson Park Master Plan support the overall goals and objectives of both local and regional plans such that successful implementation of the Master Plan yields benefits beyond the park’s boundaries. The 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan has taken into consideration the following local and regional planning efforts:

Central New York Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan for Transforming the Region.
The 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan has been carefully



Figure 5: Example of amenities and landscaping along a park path system.

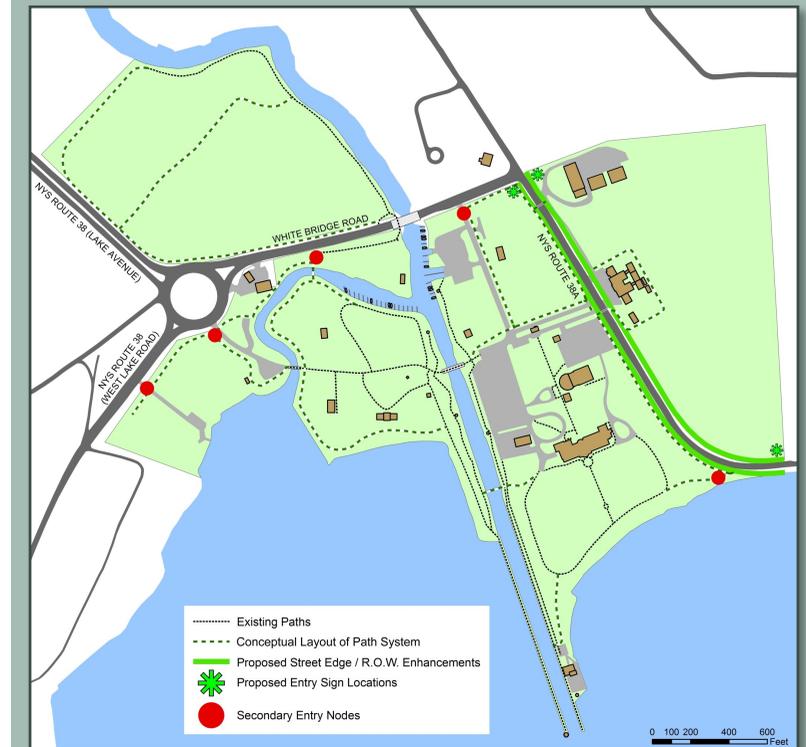


Figure 6: Existing and conceptual schematic of the approximate

linked to the CNY REDC Strategic Plan and is particularly related to one of the three priority goals established to guide the region’s collective actions, namely the goal of “Strengthening Targeted Industry Concentrations that Leverage Unique Assets”. More specifically, the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan and its projects support an industry cluster identified as critical to the region’s growth and transformation: the one-billion dollar tourism industry in Central New York. Further, the Master Plan also strengthens Cayuga County’s urban core, a second priority goal of the CNY REDC Strategic Plan. By enhancing the built environment and improving quality of life, the 2015 Master Plan will help create the underlying foundations that support the region’s growth.

Cayuga Economic Development Agency Strategic Plan.

The Cayuga County Strategic Economic Development Plan, created by the Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA) in 2011, placed a high priority on developing the County’s tourism assets, including attracting more overnight visitors and increasing occupancy tax revenues; increasing visitor spending on lodging, recreation, food & beverage, retail and transportation; increasing tourism employment; generating local and state tax revenue; and providing tax relief for Cayuga County households. The 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan supports all of these goals, and each are consistent with the principles of economic development. In fact, one of the most important aspects of tourism as economic development is that it brings in outside dollars to be spent locally, and in doing so, it allows businesses that could not survive by relying strictly on local customers to supplement their income.

City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan (2009) specifically sites the economic development potential embedded in the Owasco River, the source of which originates at Emerson

Park. The Comprehensive Plan further acknowledges that, while the Owasco River may not attract many visitors, a well-designed park system can and should be a regional draw. The Comprehensive Plan’s goals relative to park development and the Owasco River include: connecting people to the Owasco River; leveraging the Owasco River as an economic asset for the community; and improving and maintaining the Owasco River as an environmental resource. The 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan supports and compliments these Comprehensive Plan goals, with expanded access to the Owasco River, development of park assets between the Owasco River and Owasco Lake, and connecting Emerson Park and Owasco Lake to the City of Auburn via the Owasco River Trail.

CONCLUSION

This Master Plan for Emerson Park, developed with significant input and support from the public, park users and park advocates, presents a goal-oriented framework for realizing comprehensive park improvements and future growth for the benefit of Cayuga County residents and visitors alike. Guided by overarching “themes for implementation” the Master Plan presents twenty-one key projects that build on existing park strengths while focusing on three interrelated goals: (1) Enhance and Expand Active Recreational and Cultural Uses within the Park; (2) Protect the Park’s Natural Setting and Enhance Passive Recreational Uses; and (3) Provide New Amenities for Expanded Uses. Benefiting from the significant investment of public and private resources over the last fifteen years, the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan provides Cayuga County with an unprecedented opportunity to preserve the Park’s natural beauty, build on its untapped strengths, and invest in Emerson Park’s future growth and potential.

“Cayuga County Director of Planning and Economic Development Steve Lynch told attendees their input was essential for “the preparation and adoption of a renewed set of goals and objectives.” Ideally, these would be achievable in five years.”

“Lynch said the scope and methodology of the park’s future improvements relies upon responsible public input. He emphasized ideas should keep several priorities in mind, chiefly, cost efficiency, year-round accessibility, protection of natural resources, respect for park history and attractive facilities.”

Quotes from The Auburn Citizen news coverage by reporter Carrie Chantler of the June 11, 2014 meeting, published June 12, 2014 in the article *Could a miniature golf course be in Emerson Park’s future?*

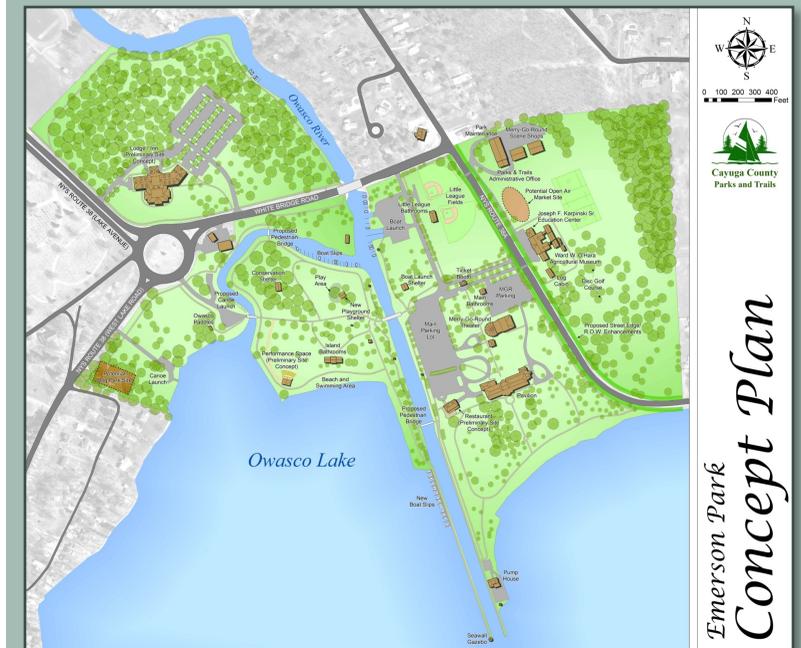


Figure 7: Concept Plan of Emerson Park showing the approximate location of proposed amenities referenced in the plan.

EMERSON PARK MASTER PLAN



Figure 8: View of the Owasco River looking toward the lake from the pedestrian bridge that connects to Deauville Island.



Figure 9: Map of the existing park layout, structures, and the names of areas in the park that are referenced in this plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

ROLE OF THE MASTER PLAN

From the late 1940's when Fred L. Emerson donated Enna Jettick Park to Cayuga County for the future use and enjoyment of Cayuga County residents and visitors, at least a half-dozen full park plans have been prepared to shape the future growth and improvement of Emerson Park. Many of the park improvements we see today are a direct result of these park planning efforts as public and private leaders in Cayuga County have championed park projects, bringing them from concept to reality.

The most recent park planning effort was undertaken in 2000-2001, when the 2001 Emerson Park Master Plan was prepared and presented to the public in concert with the design and construction of the Emerson Park Seawall and related park improvements. Although the 2001 Master Plan presented an imaginative and ambitious vision for the future of the park, it was also a very capital intensive plan that failed to secure the full support of the County Legislature and was never formally adopted.

In October of 2013, the Cayuga County Parks Commission approached the County Planning Department requesting assistance with an update to the 2001 Master Plan that would build on park improvements set in place since 2001 while providing a framework for identifying and pursuing future park programs and projects. The Parks Commission and the Planning Department felt strongly that the 2015 Master Plan should arise from significant public input and ideas, balanced by a pragmatic and realistic assessment of what could reasonably be accomplished. Finally, the Commission and staff sought to develop a Master Plan that

carried broad public acceptance and support, positioning the Master Plan for consideration and formal adoption by the County Legislature. This 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan is a result of that effort.

A consistent theme that emerged from an engaged public participation process was that future projects and programs for Emerson Park should build upon Emerson Park's strengths and focus on three (3) overarching Master Plan Goals:

1. Enhance and Expand Active Recreational and Cultural Uses in the Park;
2. Protect the Park's Natural Setting and Enhance Passive Recreational Uses; and
3. Add New Amenities for Expanded Uses.

The Master Plan document can generally be divided into two parts. The first part, consisting of Chapters 2 through 4, sets the stage for the Plan, providing an overview of the Park's history and background, documenting the public participation process and framing a set of five (5) Themes for Implementation. The second part of the Plan, presented in Chapters 5 through 7, is perhaps the core of the Master Plan. Chapter 5 provides an overview of each proposed project or program, categorized under the three Master Plan Goals listed above. Chapter 6 details five (5) Key Plan Elements – or “priority projects” selected from Chapter 5, and outlines the tasks necessary to carry these priority projects forward. Chapter 7 presents an Implementation Plan, listing twenty-one main projects in the form of a flexible matrix divided into four priority levels based on their immediate importance, impact and scope of work needed to develop the project.

Overarching Master Plan Goals

- *Enhance and Expand Active Recreational and Cultural Uses in the Park;*
- *Protect the Park's Natural Setting and Enhance Passive Recreational Uses; and*
- *Add New Amenities for Expanded Uses.*

The Parks Commission, Parks and Planning Department Staff would like to extend their thanks to the broad range of park users and advocates who actively and enthusiastically participated in the development of the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan. The public participation process provided an exceptional forum for park users and the general public to come together, understand Emerson Park as it is today, build on the park's strengths and establish a clear set of overall goals to guide the future development of this outstanding lakeshore park. With the significant investment of public and private resources into park infrastructure and facilities over the last fifteen years, the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan provides Cayuga County with an unprecedented opportunity to preserve the Park's natural beauty, build on its untapped strengths, and invest in its future growth and potential.



Figure 10: Existing pedestrian path along the Owasco River near the existing boat launch.

2. BACKGROUND

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EMERSON PARK

Master Plans of any kind are an opportunity to create a connection between a shared past and a hoped-for future. In the case of Emerson Park, our shared past is written in the collective memory of many Cayuga County residents who grew up visiting the Park, riding the Merry-Go-Round and dancing to the sounds of Big Bands on the summertime shores of Owasco Lake.

This section will briefly recount the modern development of Emerson Park from its early roots as the location for competing amusement parks: Lakeside Park vs. “Owasco Lake Park” or “Island Park”; on through the Enna Jettick years and the storied history of Deauville Island; and, to the final expansion and consolidation of its many separate parts into the Emerson Park we see today.

While this stunning jewel on the northern shore of Owasco Lake has changed hands and fortunes many times over the intervening years with much of its heyday a result of private enterprise and civic good will, a constant theme in the development of Emerson Park is first and foremost as a place for recreation and relaxation for the people of Cayuga County.

THE EARLY YEARS

A relatively detailed timeline of the early years of the park can be assembled from various resources due to the dedication and work of local and regional historians and authors, including Ms. Laurel Auchampaugh. Ms. Auchampaugh has compiled the early story of the park by

assembling deed records and by researching countless files at the Cayuga County Historian’s Office. Additional histories are available through published resources such as the book Postcard History Series: Owasco Lake by Mr. Paul K. Williams and Mr. Charles N. Williams, and the excellent “Images of America” series depicting local history, authored by Stephanie E. Przybylek and Peter Lloyd Jones and published by Arcadia Publishing.

A brief overview of the early years of the park is provided below, with thanks and credit to the individuals mentioned above and others fascinated by our local history. For the sake of posterity and as an important benchmark for an official Cayuga County document, a more detailed timeline is provided in the Appendix.

The modern development of the area we now refer to as Emerson Park began in the mid-1800s with New York State appropriating funds, creating the channel, and establishing Deauville Island in the general shape and outline as we see it today. During this time, the lakefront area was served by taverns, accommodations and attractions, from the “Two Mile House” tavern which was built in 1852 and operated for nearly four decades, to the development of Owasco Lake Park which opened July 1, 1889 on what is now Deauville Island. Leading up to the turn of the century, park amusements were developed on both sides of the channel, on the Island and on the lakeshore lands east of the channel, with savvy entrepreneurs competing for customers by adding new attractions in a lively, commercial game of one-upmanship.

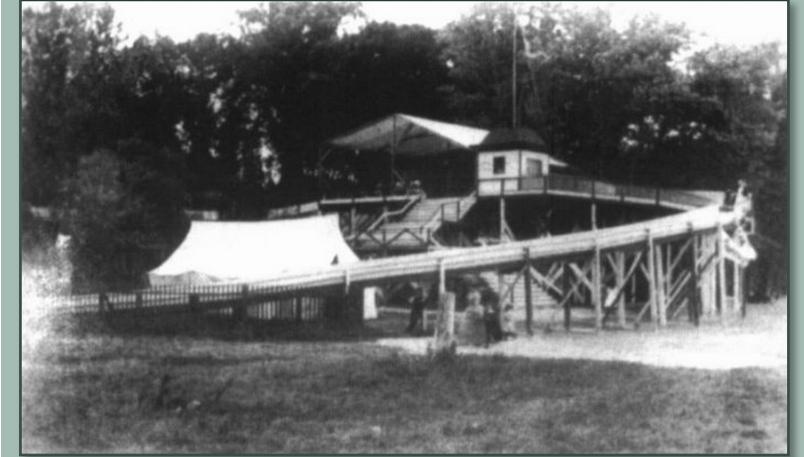


Figure 11: Photograph of one of the first rides in operation at Lakeside Park.



Figure 12: Postcard of the roller coaster on Lakeside Park adjacent to the Owasco River.

A “Coney-Island Atmosphere”, enhanced by the natural beauty of Owasco Lake, was the overriding theme in these early years as the park amusements were used to generate increased ridership on the Electric Trolley lines serving the park area. By the turn of the century, the area was in full swing with expansive amusements at the “Island Park” and a grand lakeside pavilion on Owasco Lake on the east side of the channel. With increased attendance, the Trolley was extended to White Bridge Road and the Auburn and Syracuse Electric Railway Company advertised that “all tracks lead to Lakeside Park” in an attempt to draw visitors from as far away as Syracuse and Rochester.

THE ROARING TWENTIES THROUGH WWII

During the rising prosperity of the twenties, both sides of the Owasco Channel were charging forward with entertainment, amusements and attractions that drew users to the park area from throughout Cayuga County and across the region. In the early 20’s, the Merry-Go-Round building was converted to a roller skating rink and by 1926 the Merry-Go-Round building-rink was also used for Monday night boxing, accommodating up to 800 fans.

According to the histories laid out in their book Owasco Lake, authors Paul K. Williams and Charles N. Williams recount that the trolley line ceased to operate in 1930 and, with the impact of the Great Depression on leisure activities and amusements, Lakeside Park went bankrupt. It was at this time that Mr. Fred Emerson, owner of the Dunn and McCarthy Shoe Company in Auburn, purchased the park for \$250,000 and renamed it Enna Jettick Park, after a line of women’s shoes that were manufactured at the Emerson’s factory in Auburn.

Enna Jettick Park continued to operate as a haven for recreation and lakefront enjoyment up until World War II,

when it was closed for several years due to government rationing programs. Enna Jettick Park closed for the last time in 1944 and at that time Mr. Fred Emerson decided to donate Enna Jettick Park, along with the lands east of NYS Route 38A bordering the Owasco County Club and residential homes, to Cayuga County.

The June 12, 1944 Letter from Fred L. Emerson to the Cayuga County Board of Supervisors, offering to donate the park lands to the County, provides a valuable insight into Mr. Emerson’s intentions for generously donating these lakeshore lands to the residents of Cayuga County. The letter, which can be found in Appendix B, also offers a touchstone value that Planning Staff and the Steering Committee placed front and center when facilitating public discussions on the park’s future.

“In all the country there is probably nothing that excels Central New York for just homey livable, loveliness, and the Finger Lakes region is one of its gems, and Owasco Lake, wholly within Cayuga County, is a gem amongst gems, yet there is not a foot of publicly owned land along Owasco’s shores, dedicated to the perpetual and free use of Cayuga’s citizens, for outings and leisurely wholesome enjoyment.

If the people of Cayuga County desire to remedy this situation and I believe they do, I will have conveyed to the County the property known as Enna-Jettick Park.”



Figure 13: Advertisement from the Auburn and Syracuse Electric Railway Company that was published in local papers after the rail system was extended to Lakeside Park.



Figure 14: 1938 aerial photograph of the park.

PREVIOUS PARK PLANS

Over the years, there have been a number of Park Plans created to help guide the development, expansion and operation of Emerson Park for the benefit of Cayuga County residents and visitors, including the following which were all reviewed at the start of this planning process:

- **1964 Cayuga County New York: Preliminary Plan: Park, Recreation and Open Space.** Prepared for the (newly formed) Cayuga County Planning Board by Russell Duryea and Associates, Syracuse, N.Y., Landscape Architects and Urban Renewal Consultants.
- **1967-1968 Emerson Park Development Plan.** Prepared for the Cayuga County Park Commission by George L. King, Landscape Architect and Land Surveyor.
- **1972 Owasco River Plan.** Prepared by County Planning Staff, the Owasco River Sub-Committee and the Cayuga County Planning Board and presented to the Cayuga County Legislature in August, 1972.
- **1975 Emerson Park Development and Management Plan.** This Park Development and Management Plan was prepared by Cayuga County Planning Board staff with oversight and consultation by the Saratoga Associates, and under the guidance and assistance of the Cayuga County Recreation Commission and the Emerson Park Commission.
- **1998 Functional Plan for Emerson Park.** This Plan was prepared by County Planning and Parks Department staffs, with the support and input of an active group of “citizen planners” who served on committees organized and dedicated to develop “sub-plans” for different geographical segments of the park.

- **2001 Emerson Park Master Plan.** This redevelopment plan was prepared by a consultant team with staff from Clough, Harbour & Associates, LLP, Syracuse, N.Y.; Kent Environmental Planning & Design, Syracuse, N.Y.; and ConsultEcon, Cambridge, M.A. for the Cayuga County Legislature and the County Department of Parks and Trails.

While the scope, methodology and philosophy for each of these planning efforts differed, each plan provided a degree of guidance as Emerson Park continued to develop. Unfortunately, none of these prior planning efforts was formally adopted or institutionalized. Although some of these planning efforts included public participation to generate support and consensus, the majority did not incorporate significant public input from the start. Those that did include limited public input tended to ask for feedback on plans already fully developed by an internal project team.

During the 1970s and 1980s the County Parks Commission would occasionally become inactive, leaving Emerson Park without an advocate before the legislature. Until the appointment of a County Director of Parks and Trails in 1997, there was no single individual charged with overall park development and management. Prior to the 1998 Functional Plan, the ongoing development of the park tended to be ad-hoc in its approach and park planning responded primarily to advocates for the various private sector groups and organizations engaged in park activities and venues. Under these circumstances, previous park plans were often overlooked and there was little or no coordination between projects.



Figure 15: Image for future design and programming for the park from the 1972 Owasco River Plan (originally developed for the 1967-1968 Emerson Park Development Plan).



Figure 16: Image for future design and programming for the park from the 2001 Emerson Park Master Plan.

With the appointment of a dedicated Parks Director and support staff in the late 1990's and the commitment of the County Legislature to park improvements, Emerson Park was well positioned for a string of successful projects that would lay a strong foundation for this planning effort and the parks future, including:

- The reconstruction of the Seawall and Western Pier;
- The relocation of and the construction of new park maintenance facilities;
- The reconstruction and stabilization of the Owasco River within the Park and the replacement of the Deauville Island Bridge;
- Improvements at White Bridge Road and NYS Route 38A and the establishment of pedestrian connections under White Bridge Road to the Owasco River Trail;
- Expansion and Improvements to the Merry-Go-Round Theater;
- Expansion and Improvements to the Ward W. O'Hara Agriculture Museum;
- Addition of the Joseph F. Karpinski Sr. Education Center
- The complete renovation and expansion of the Emerson Park Pavilion.

The current planning process incorporated significant public outreach and input from the beginning, resulting in a 2015 Master Plan that carries strong public support and consensus on key park projects generated from a range of park users and advocates. Thanks to the significant investment of public and private resources into park infrastructure and facilities over the last fifteen years, the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan provides Cayuga County with an unprecedented opportunity to preserve its natural beauty, build on the Park's untapped strengths, and invest in its future growth and potential.



Figure 17: Image of the gazebo at the end of the seawall pedestrian walkway looking out onto Owasco Lake.

3. THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Planning Process for the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan relied primarily on gathering public input and ideas during a series of public and stakeholder meetings. These meetings, with public notice and outreach, were augmented by the Planning Department’s open door outreach policy which provided a range of opportunities for gathering public input, including social media, web surveys, email, phone calls, target group meetings and face-to-face interviews with many different users and advocates for Emerson Park. Throughout this public planning process, the nine-member Parks Commission appointed by the County Legislature acted as the project steering committee as outlined below.

PARKS COMMISSION AND STEERING COMMITTEE

The Cayuga County Parks Commission is a nine-member board appointed by the Cayuga County Legislature and charged with the responsibility to oversee the overall operation, improvement and enhancement of the County’s park system for the benefit of Cayuga County residents.

For the 2015 Master Plan, the Parks Commission took on the key role and responsibility as the project Steering Committee. As such, the Commission members played an early role by working with County staff to define the overall scope of the Master Plan, identify and define the overarching goals for the Plan, participate in all of the public meetings and work as the sounding board for consideration of all public input gathered during the Plan’s development.

In the dual project roles of both Project Steering Committee and as the appointed County Parks Commission, the

Commission’s primary responsibility was to finalize the proposed 2015 Master Plan following the public participation process and initial drafting of the Plan by staff and to make final recommendations to the County Legislature on the adoption and approval of the Plan.

The first meeting with the Steering Committee was on December 10, 2013. At this meeting, Planning Staff presented a general outline of the 2013 Master Plan and an overview of the anticipated Planning Process. This meeting resulted in Steering Committee consensus on two key items:

The Purpose of the 2015 Master Plan Project is to formulate and legislatively adopt:

- *An affirmed and/or renewed set of goals and objectives providing a realistic vision of the future of Emerson Park in the context of the larger County park system;*
- *A feasible approach to achieving those goals and objectives over the next five (5) years; and*
- *To design and implement a participatory public planning process that can be used as a model for other components of the County park system.*

The Major Goal of the 2015 Master Plan is to:

- *Deliver cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs that are attractive, well-maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the park’s cultural history, and continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages from both inside and outside Cayuga County for many years to come.*

Major Goal of the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan

“Deliver cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs that are attractive, well-maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the park’s cultural history, and continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages from both inside and outside Cayuga County for many years to come.”

With Steering Committee consensus on these key planning concepts, County Planning Staff prepared to initiate the project - beginning with identifying key project stakeholders and a kick-off of the public participation process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

From the outset, the Steering Committee and the Planning Staff were determined to undertake a public participation process for the 2015 Master Plan that was open, engaged and interactive. The first step was to identify and meet with a collection of local leaders and Emerson Park stakeholders to inform them of the plan, and to solicit their assistance in developing and rolling out the public participation process.

On January 22, 2014, the Steering Committee and Planning Staff convened a Parks Commission Meeting at the Joseph F. Karpinski, Sr. Education Center of the Ward O'Hara Agriculture Museum. In addition to the Parks Commission members and staff, there were many participants from a very broad list of stakeholders invited, including representatives from the City of Auburn, the Cayuga County Legislature, the town boards of Fleming and Owasco, the County Tourism Office, and representatives from other County parks and recreation venues. The purpose of this initial stakeholder meeting was twofold:

1. Provide an Overall Project Introduction to Stakeholders
 - An outline of the 2001 Plan was provided;
 - The proposal and intention to update the 2001 plan was presented; and
 - The pre-project discussions to date were summarized.

2. Define the Role of Public Participation and Develop a Public Participation Plan

- Various ways of soliciting public input were reviewed and discussed;
- Options for developing and organizing the public process and creating open lines of communication were shared; and
- A framework for the public participation plan for the project was defined

Ultimately, the stakeholder group and Steering Committee agreed that a series of well-attended and open public input meetings for the general public, held between April and August 2014, would provide a sound foundation for soliciting feedback about the park and the proposed Master Plan. In addition, the opportunity for public participation would be expanded through development of an online outreach program and establishment of an interactive project website allowing residents to submit ideas and concerns to the Planning Staff electronically.

With the Public Participation Plan in place, the official public start of the 2015 Master Plan was ready to proceed with the start of public meetings in April of 2014.

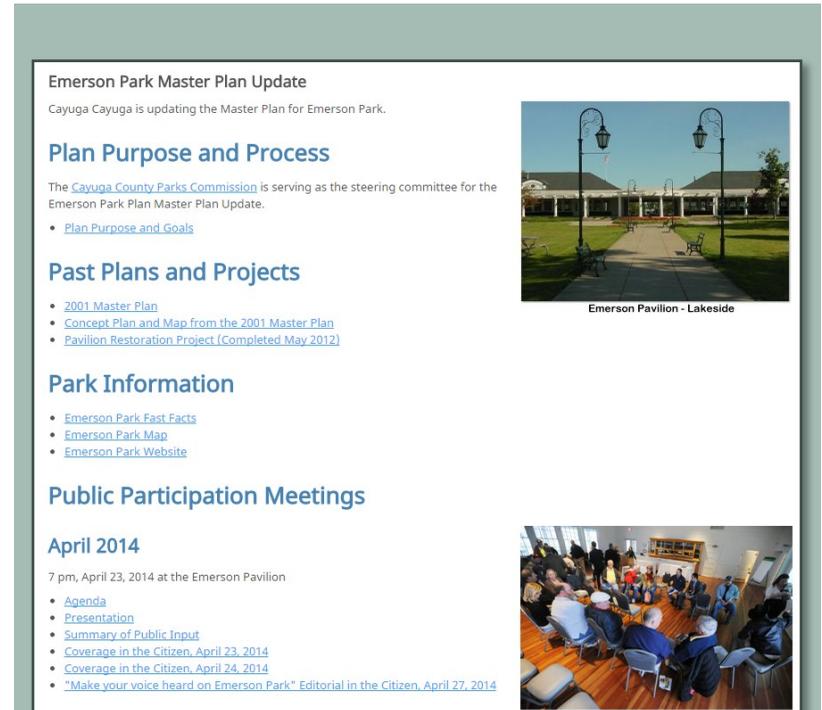


Figure 18: Image of the Emerson Park Master Plan Update website.



Figure 19: Image of the agenda for the January 22, 2014 meeting with the Parks Commission.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The first Public Participation Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at 7:00 PM. What better venue to hold the initial public kick-off meeting than at the newly renovated Emerson Park Pavilion at the heart of the park? Approximately seventy-five residents and park supporters joined Planning Department and Parks staff, Steering Committee Members and members of the County Legislature for a lively, two-hour meeting on the future of Emerson Park.

Following welcome and introductions, meeting participants were presented with an introduction of the project, an outline of the overall project scope and the major goal of the Plan Update established by the Parks Commission / Steering Committee.

During preparation of the 2001 Emerson Park Plan, a detailed design plan was prepared, rendered and reviewed by key stakeholders before being finalized and brought out to the general public for review and feedback. As an alternative to this design-driven approach, the Steering Committee and Planning Staff opted to start the Public Participation Process with a relatively blank slate for the plan and seek the public's input about overall plan elements, program goals and park improvements, thereby stepping away from a design-focused plan and favoring a goal oriented plan to inform future design and development decisions.

To facilitate small group discussion and feedback on the current use – and future opportunities in the Park, a series of three (3) break-out sessions were held to focus participant input on three distinct areas:

1. Access and Circulation in the Park;
2. Park Destinations – a discussion of current and expanded uses and programming; and
3. Protecting and Enhancing the Park Environment and Natural Systems.

During these break-out sessions, which divided the meeting participants into three working groups, staff facilitators emphasized the project goal of establishing a publicly driven and supported framework for the park's future development versus creating a design-based plan where the entire park is mapped out with site specific project and program elements “set in stone”.

The break-out sessions were energized and enthusiastic with all ideas welcomed, discussed and recorded. Participation within each of the three groups was high, with nearly everyone suggesting changes and recommending park improvements while adding personal stories and park memories along with constructive feedback on what they were hearing from others.

After each break-out session, the three groups came together and the group facilitators summarized the public input for everyone attending to hear and consider. The overall mood was optimistic and positive.

The first public meeting was a success and the meeting concluded with an overview of the next steps and the open lines of communication for continued input. “Refrigerator Note Cards” with the project website, office email and phone and the dates/times of the next two public meetings were passed out to all participants.



Figure 20: Photograph of participants at the April 23, 2014 meeting.



Figure 21: Photograph of participants during break-out sessions at the April 23, 2014 meeting.

SUMMARY OF INITIAL PUBLIC INPUT – APRIL AND MAY 2014

In the weeks following the April 23rd kick-off meeting, Planning Staff continued to solicit and receive significant public input on the Park. A summary of all input received during this initial public meeting, and through the project website, emails, personal meetings and calls to the staff during the weeks that followed, are summarized below. The input below was broken out into categories for presentation to the Parks Commission / Steering Committee at their May 28, 2014 meeting. This summary includes all initial public input. Please note that not all ideas were incorporated into the final Concept Plan or list of proposed projects as outlined in Chapter 5.

ACCESS & PARKING

- Create a more inviting entrance - something that says "welcome."
- Open the gates to the existing access on the south side of White Bridge Road near the boat launch more often.
- Provide an additional vehicle entrance and parking on the west side of the Park.
- Create a major "entry statement" structure at the main entrance of the Park.
- Make the park more inviting from the lake and increase access to the park via the lake.
- Create an area where boats can tie up temporarily for free.
- Bring back the access and parking lot on White Bridge Road (south side of road between gas station/traffic circle and the bridge over the Owasco River). They provided convenient free access to good fishing spots on the Owasco River channels.

- Install signage prohibiting parents from dropping off their children for little league at the roadside instead of driving into the park.
- Need more parking spaces near major event centers in the park.
- Add valet service at the pavilion and theater for events. There is not enough parking close enough to these two event centers.
- Create a drop-off area (not a parking area) close to the shoreline for people who cannot walk long distances or for picnickers to unload.
- Provide access for pedestrians and vehicles to the parcel north of White Bridge Road.
- Widen the access roads into the Park to make turns easier for larger vehicles.
- Organize a scheduled trolley service to and from downtown Auburn.
- Construct an arched walkway bridge starting from either side of the gas station on White Bridge Road over the channel onto Deauville Island; be careful to design it so that boats can pass under it.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge over White Bridge Road west of the Owasco River.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge over the channel where the seawall begins.
- Widen the exit road toward East Lake Road (NYS Route 38A). Some of the delays in exiting after events is caused by cars forming only one line. The road is striped and marked for two lanes but the width of road is narrow and cars often do not form two lanes.

Access and Circulation

How can we best enhance access to the Park for vehicles and pedestrians?

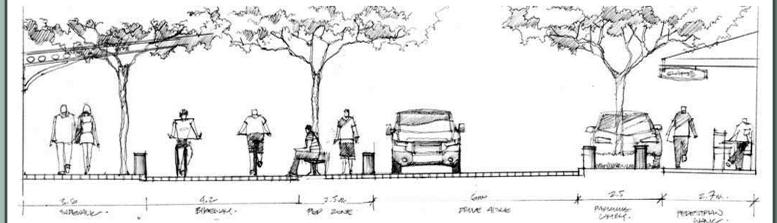


Figure 22: Image of a slide from the PowerPoint presentation at the April 23, 2014 meeting.



Figure 23: Image of a pedestrian bridge over navigable water in a park.

PARKING POLICY

- Provide Auburn hotel guests with a one-time parking voucher.
- Look for alternative ways to raise revenue other than the parking fee.
- County residents should not have to pay for parking. Issue season parking passes to Cayuga County residents with their property tax receipts; make parking fees included in event ticket prices and little league registration fees.

SIGNAGE & WAY-FINDING

- Offer paper maps of the Park at the gate.
- Install maps and kiosks at various locations around the Park to show how big the Park really is and to provide more information about the park's features and amenities and how to get to them.
- Consider creating a mobile phone application providing information about Park features and amenities.
- Install signs marking the entrances to the canoe and kayak launches. This would increase use of these lesser-known facilities.
- Install signs in downtown Auburn providing directions to the Park. Many visitors in downtown Auburn do not know where Emerson Park is.

SWIMMING

- Switch the location of the swimming area with the boat anchoring area so that it is on the other side of the channel near the island bathrooms (Note: this change was already in place but is included here with other comments on swimming).

- Life guards on duty more hours during the peak swimming season.
- Provide better access to the water for swimming.
- Dredge a portion of the swimming area to make it deeper and more attractive for use by adults.
- Fix the muck problem in the swimming area.
- Construct a pool to provide swimming opportunities for adults as well as children.

EVENT PLANNING AND PARK ENTERTAINMENT

- Open the gates on White Bridge Road near the boat launch regularly after events (and especially after large events such as the 4th of July) to prevent backups and delays for visitors attempting to exit.
- Security and parking staff should stay until the end of evening events to direct traffic.
- Host concerts at the Pavilion.
- Promote and develop facilities for fun activities such as concerts, dances and other types of entertainment.
- Construct an amphitheater or band shelter.
- Provide boat rides.
- Provide Dinner Boat Cruises on the Lake.
- Develop a waterpark (also consider a "spray park" similar to one now in Geneva).
- Develop a penny arcade.
- Build a major attraction like a Ferris wheel or roller coaster.
- Develop a boardwalk accompanied by casual dining establishments, gift shops, and other family-friendly amusements like there once were on Deauville Island.



Figure 24: 2014 photo of the Emerson Park Fee Sign by the Ticket Booth.



Figure 25: Photo of the Emerson Park Main Entrance Sign.

SITE AMENITIES

- Update the shelters on Deauville Island by installing or upgrading electrical service.
- Install tables and benches and a shade shelter close to the swimming area.
- Create an enhanced picnic area near the boat launch to make it convenient for people to spend time at the park even after they are done on the water.
- Update the playground and improve it by providing areas for adults to sit.
- Provide playground areas and equipment designed for seniors as well as handicapped adults and children.
- Establish a Vietnam Veterans' Memorial with a parking area south of White Bridge Road. The area would contain benches and gardens, and would be used for quiet reflection and relaxation.
- Create a dog park with a fenced, leash-off dog run on the north side of White Bridge Road near the traffic circle.
- Provide bath house/restroom facilities near the Owasco Lakeshore swimming area like there once was.
- Provide restroom facilities in the northwest part of the Park, across White Bridge Road.
- Clean up the brush and grade/drain the area north of White Bridge Road that was filled with debris from the redevelopment of Auburn. This is necessary in order for the County to find out what it actually has to work with there.

FOOD & CONCESSIONS

- Enter into long term lease arrangements with the operators of the kind of food trucks that are growing in popularity in certain areas of the country.
- Provide more options for food and dining from hot dog stands to casual cafes and bakeries and upscale restaurants.
- Dining opportunities that are not tied to particular events should be available to the public year round.
- Some casual restaurant options should be located near the lakeshore or on Deauville Island and made accessible by boat.

OVERALL POLICY GUIDELINES

- A foundational goal for all aspects of Emerson Park improvements or new development should be Environmental Stewardship and Public Education, especially regarding strategies to improve and protect water quality and natural resources in general.
- Establish a design and development review process which places a high priority on the aesthetic quality of all improvements and protects views of the Lake.
- The current Park property should be sold to private developers of park and recreational uses and facilities.
- Develop a road through the park and further subdivide the property to facilitate such development if necessary.



Figure 26: Example of “café-style” seating in a public park.



Figure 27: Example of environmental stewardship demonstration area in a public park (sign says natural wildflower area).

PASSIVE RECREATION

- Promote bird watching. Construct platforms for nesting ospreys; Prohibit bird hunting.
- Establish a more comprehensive system of paths designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and rollerblades. This system could incorporate a lakeshore walkway or “promenade.” Site various landscape plantings, sculptures, establish opportunities for activity (such as volleyball nets), outdoor entertainment areas, seating/eating areas, and other points of interest along the redesigned walkway system.
- Establish nature trails in the area north of White Bridge Road.
- Encourage year round use by providing for winter activities such as ice skating, ice fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Construct parking lot improvements that catch and filter storm water runoff before it is released back into water bodies such as the Owasco River or the lake by using bio-swales, native plant communities, pervious pavement, and bio-filter systems.
- Install stream bank stabilization and natural planting buffers along the numerous streams running through the park and into the lake.

PARK LODGING AND CONFERENCE CENTER

- Promote the private development of a large scale Inn and Conference Center to generate revenue and offset the costs of the park operations.

- Promote the private development of a small scale Inn-style hotel of approximately 40 rooms for Pavilion wedding guests. It could contain a restaurant that serves only breakfast so that the Pavilion wouldn't lose lunch and dinner business. The facility should not include conference space since that can be provided by the Pavilion. The Inn should be sited and designed to “fit in” with the overall setting of the park. Refer to the Inn of Geneva and Geneva on the Lake as examples.
- A hotel should be considered on the County park property north of White Bridge Road between Lake Avenue and the Owasco River. This location will not block views of the lake and allow boating access to the lake via dock slips along the Owasco River; a hotel at this location would allow the County to subdivide the parcel off from the rest of the Park and sell it directly to the developer.
- An alternative location for a Park hotel would be on the Park lands west of NYS Route 38A and south of the Ag Museum (Frisbee Golf Course location); this would also not block views of the lake.

CAMPING

- Establish a camping area including an RV park.
- Work with the private sector to establish a unique “bed & breakfast” type camping venue with furnished tee-pees or Yurts or treehouses and including upscale amenities such as organic food, yoga, kayaking, etc. Other tourism areas have done this and marketed it as “Glamping” (Glamorous Camping).



Figure 28: Photo of a Blue Herring at Emerson Park.



Figure 29: Aerial view of the Geneva on the Lake resort in Geneva, NY.

STEERING COMMITTEE REVIEW OF INITIAL PUBLIC INPUT

Planning Staff met with the project Steering Committee to review the public input received during April and May, listed above. Before reviewing the long list of ideas and suggestions for park improvements with the Steering Committee, the Planning Staff reminded the committee of the primary project goal behind the Master Plan Update, namely:

“Delivering cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs that are attractive, well-maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the park’s cultural history, and continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages from both inside and outside Cayuga County for many years to come”

With this foundational goal in mind, the Steering Committee considered each of the dozens of ideas and suggestions submitted by the public and identified those which not only supported the overall project goal shown above, but those projects or programs they believed could be implemented, either fully or with substantial progress, within the relatively short five-year time frame proposed in the 2015 Master Plan. Some ideas and suggestions were pared down or combined into a single recommendation, while some were not included simply because the suggestion was already being done (e.g. move the bathing beach from the Pavilion side over to Deauville Island). The list below is the result of that review.

ACCESS & PARKING

- Create a more inviting entrance.
- Improve the existing vehicle entrances and parking on the west side of Park.
- Improve access to the park via the lake.

- Create an area where boats can tie up temporarily for free.
- Allow or solicit valet service at the pavilion and theater.
- Widen the access roads into the Park and the main exit road toward East Lake Road.
- Construct an arched walkway bridge over the channel on the east side of the gas station and design it so that boats can pass under.

SIGNAGE AND WAY-FINDING

- Install maps and informational kiosks around the Park.
- Create a mobile phone application providing Park information.
- Install entrance signs at the canoe and kayak launches.
- Install directional signs in downtown Auburn directing tourists/visitors to Park.

PASSIVE RECREATION

- Promote bird watching and construct osprey nest platforms.
- Establish a more comprehensive, parkwide system of paths for pedestrians, bicycles, and rollerblades.
- Incorporate a lakeshore “promenade” along the Owasco Lakeshore Site various landscape plantings, sculptures, opportunities for activity, entertainment, seating/eating and other points of interest along the walkway.
- Improve existing and establish new nature trails in the area north of White Bridge Road.

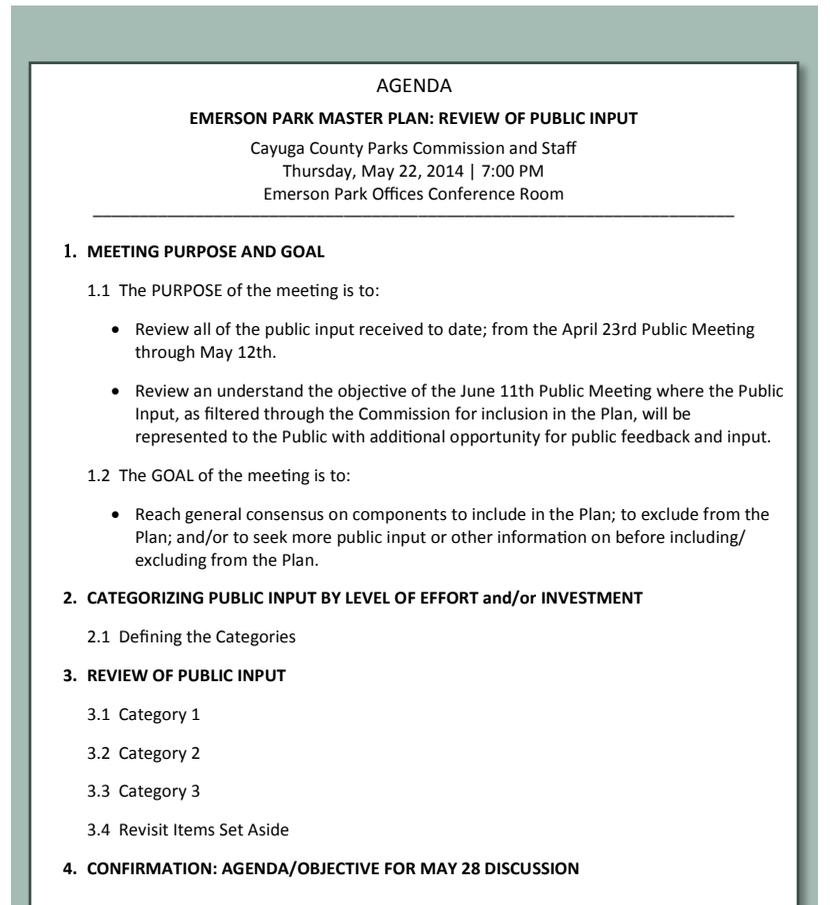


Figure 30: Image of the agenda for the May 22, 2014 meeting with the Parks Commission.

- Encourage year round use of the park by providing for ice skating, ice fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.

SWIMMING

- Explore ways to improve the existing swimming areas on Deauville Island and the Owasco Shoreline.
- Expand life guard hours.
- Provide better access to the water for swimming.

EVENT PLANNING

- Open the gates on White Bridge Road after events for exiting when safe and practical.
- Keep security and parking staff on duty until the end of evening events to direct traffic as was done previously.

SITE ASSESSMENT AND PREPARATION

- Clean up / grade / drain the area north of White Bridge Road.

FOOD AND CONCESSIONS

- Arrange and encourage leases with food truck operators.
- Provide more options for year round food and dining from casual to upscale and locate boat-accessible casual restaurant options near the lakeshore or on Deauville Island.

POLICY GUIDELINES

- Make Environmental Stewardship and Public Education a foundational goal.
- Establish a design and development review process which places a high priority on aesthetics and lake views.

PARKING POLICY

- Provide local hotel guests with a one-time parking voucher.
- Look for alternatives to parking fees to raise revenue.

SITE AMENITIES

- Install/upgrade electrical service to shelters on Deauville Island.
- Install café-style tables and chairs, benches and a shade shelter near the swimming area.
- Create an enhanced picnic area near the boat launch.
- Update the playground and provide areas for adults to sit.
- Provide playground areas and equipment for seniors as well as handicapped persons and consider including spray features.
- Permit the creation of a dog park.
- Maintain and upgrade the existing bath house/restrooms near the swimming area.
- Maintain and upgrade the existing restrooms near the Ticket Booth/Entrance.

ENTERTAINMENT

- Host concerts within the Park.
- Promote and develop facilities for concerts, dances and other fun entertainment; and construct an amphitheater or band shelter.
- Allow/encourage/solicit boat rides.
- Allow/encourage/solicit dinner boat cruises.



Figure 31: Example of snowshoeing and winter access in a public park.



Figure 32: Example of a spray park feature in a public park.

- Consider including waterpark or “spray park” features in playground upgrades.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Construct bio-swales, native plant communities, pervious pavement, and bio-filter systems to catch and filter storm water.
- Install stream bank stabilization and natural planting buffers along streams.

CAMPING

- Explore options for limited camping

PARK LODGING / CONFERENCE FACILITY

- Promote the private development of lodging/conference center, scaled to the site and market that does not block lake views or degrade existing view-sheds. Engage in the preliminary work needed to support, inform, prepare and circulate a quality Request for Proposals for lodging/conference center development.



Figure 33: Example of a bio-swale in a parking area.



Figure 34: Example of stream bank stabilization and the use of native plantings along a stream to help prevent erosion.

PUBLIC MEETING #2 – PRESENTING AND FINE-TUNING THE MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

With the list of public ideas and recommendations that would be incorporated into the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan, the Steering Committee and staff prepared for the second Public Participation Meeting where the summary of all public input would be reviewed and the key elements for the Master Plan would be presented.

While some of the public recommendations were quite specific or straightforward, needing little additional input for inclusion in the Master Plan, there were some suggestions that were broadly stated or generalized and therefore needed to be fine-tuned with the public, so to speak, before they were incorporated into the Plan. The Steering Committee and staff determined that the second Public Participation Meeting would provide an excellent opportunity for the meeting participants to break out into focus groups to fine-tune these key recommendations.

Public Meeting #2 was held on Wednesday, June 11, 2014 at 7:00 PM at the Emerson Park Pavilion. Like the first meeting, the second meeting was well-attended with over seventy-five participants. Many participants from the first meeting returned, but the meeting also included new people joining the park planning process for the first time.

An overview of all the initial public input was presented to the participants followed by a summary of the ideas and suggestions that the Steering Committee agreed should be incorporated in the 2015 Master Plan. From this list, staff outlined the project elements that the Steering Committee was asking the meeting participants to consider during the break-out sessions, providing the public with an opportunity to expand on the proposed improvements and define the projects and programs that will be the focus of the Master Plan.

This meeting resulted in a confirmed list of key park projects and programs supported enthusiastically by the public. The break-out sessions provided input on all aspects of the proposed elements and helped staff and the Steering Committee define project locations, design themes and operational considerations.

Throughout July, Planning Staff continued to receive additional public input via the project website, through emails, phone calls and personal visits. In an attempt to reach a younger demographic of park users, staff contacted IGNITE, the Cayuga County young professionals group supported by the Chamber of Commerce, and asked to meet with the group to discuss the future of Emerson Park. The IGNITE group enthusiastically responded by not only meeting with staff, but agreeing to prepare and circulate a digital survey to it's membership about their use of the park, and to garner suggestions for improvements and ideas about making a revitalized Emerson Park responsive to younger users.



Figure 35: Photograph of Nick Colas, member of the Planning Staff, facilitating a break-out session during the June 11, 2014 meeting.

“Cayuga County Director of Planning and Economic Development Steve Lynch told attendees their input was essential for “the preparation and adoption of a renewed set of goals and objectives.” Ideally, these would be achievable in five years.”

“Lynch said the scope and methodology of the park’s future improvements relies upon responsible public input. He emphasized ideas should keep several priorities in mind, chiefly, cost efficiency, year-round accessibility, protection of natural resources, respect for park history and attractive facilities.”

Quotes from The Auburn Citizen news coverage by reporter Carrie Chantler of the June 11, 2014 meeting, published June 12, 2014 in the article *Could a miniature golf course be in Emerson Park’s future?*

PRESENTING THE DRAFT PLAN: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING #3

Staff compiled all of the input and ideas distilled through the first two rounds of public participation and brought them together in a draft conceptual plan of the park for presentation to the Steering Committee in July of 2014. With the Steering Committee's review and approval, staff then prepared a public presentation to debut the proposed Master Plan - including the key projects and programs, and set a date for the third Public Participation Meeting.

At 7:00 PM on Wednesday, August 22nd, a large crowd gathered at the Emerson Park Pavilion for the public presentation of the final draft concept plan. After a recap of the public participation process, Planning staff conducted a visual "walk-thru" of the proposed Emerson Park Master Plan using graphics, maps and images from other parks to illustrate the concept plan and provide examples of the level of design detail the proposed Emerson Park projects should aspire to.

During the Master Plan "walk-thru", an overview of the following Five (5) Overarching Themes for Park Development were highlighted as slideshow examples of proposed projects were illustrated:

1. Establish a "Design-Focused" Approach to Project Development;
2. Provide Programming and Marketing Support for Park Programs and Amenities;
3. Establish & Model Environmentally Sound Design, Practice and Education;
4. Address Infrastructure and Capital Planning Needs; and
5. Incorporate Public Art, Amenities and Outdoor Furniture

Taken together, these five themes will promote the main goal while providing park staff, the Parks Commission, and other County officials with a common and consistent frame of reference when planning, designing, and constructing any new addition or alteration. These themes, and their essential relationship to park projects and programming, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

At the conclusion of the proposed Master Plan presentation, the response from the meeting participants was immediate and positive. The proposed projects and programs for a revitalized Emerson Park were well received overall. The general consensus was that the proposed plan for park improvements was realistic and within reach, provided there was a willingness to support a plan of change with continued programming and funding support from the County Legislature; from local, state and federal grants; from the private sector and from park revenues.

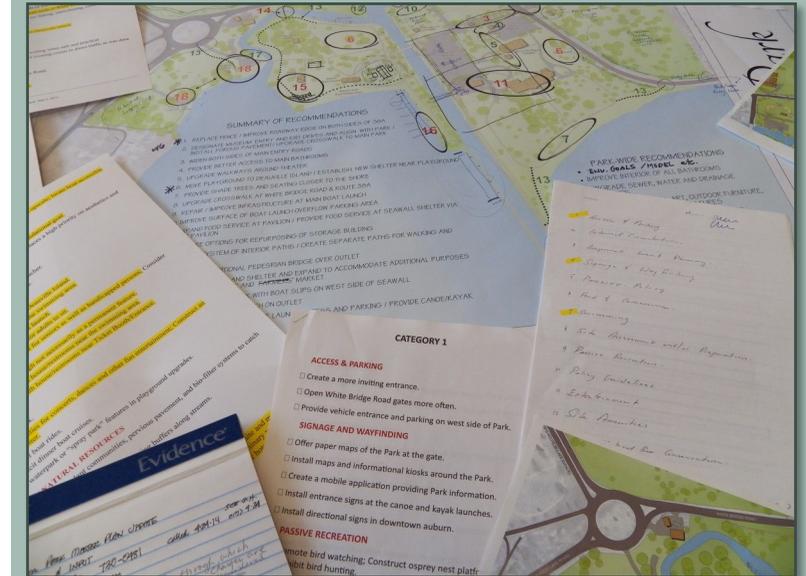


Figure 36: Photograph of all of the public input, notes, maps and proposed improvements gathered by staff prior to the August 22, 2014 meeting.



Figure 37: Photograph of Stephen Lynch, Director of the Cayuga County Planning Department, presenting the concept plan for the park during the August 22, 2014 meeting.

4. THEMES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The main goal for the future of Emerson Park is to provide cost effective year-round park and recreation facilities and programs that are: attractive, well-maintained, accessible, protective of natural resources, respectful of the Park's cultural history, and that continue to provide memorable experiences for visitors of all ages for many years to come. The purpose of this plan is to create a useful framework for assessing how various future proposals might fit into the community's objectives, not to provide a step by step design of Emerson Park.

While individual projects will be described in greater detail in Chapter 5, the following sections outline five (5) overarching "Themes for Implementation". When applied to park development, these five themes will promote the main Master Plan goal and provide park staff, the Parks Commission, and other County officials with a common and consistent frame of reference when planning, designing, and constructing any new addition or alteration.

ESTABLISH A DESIGN-FOCUSED APPROACH TO PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

A Design-Focused Approach considers foremost how a product will be utilized and experienced by visitors. Only when a project is carefully designed do all of its components fit together with one another and its larger context in an appropriate manner.

Development of Emerson Park should be undertaken using an approach which places a high priority on how well individual projects relate both functionally and aesthetically to the entire park facility. All proposed improvements should be designed in accordance with a consistent theme,

incorporate similar quality materials, and be maintained at a uniformly high standard. Ad-hoc additions or alterations to any park facility are discouraged. Scenic views, and especially those of Owasco Lake, should be preserved and enhanced whenever possible.

In support of the Design-Focused Approach, the Plan proposes the County establish the following resources:

- Designate the County Planning Department staff as the resource for design review of projects and improvements.
- Procure a general contract for design services from a qualified landscape architecture firm, and utilize their expertise to design and develop projects as funds are available.

PROVIDE PROGRAMMING AND MARKETING SUPPORT FOR PARK PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES

Programmed recreation is used to draw new visitors as well as repeat patrons. According to attendance numbers from the Department of Parks and Recreation, approximately 55% of the visitors to Emerson Park in the 2013 season visited the Park to attend a programmed event. Attractions such as the Merry-Go-Round Theatre, Fourth of July Fireworks, Little League games, and the Father's Day Car Show each bring a significant number of visitors from the community to the park. By providing even more opportunities for visitors to take advantage of park programs, visitor loyalty and park revenues can be increased.

Themes for Implementation

- *Establish a Design-Focused Approach to Project Development*
- *Provide Programming and Marketing Support for Park Programs and Amenities*
- *Establish and Model Environmentally Sound Design, Practice and Education*
- *Address Infrastructure and Capital Planning Needs*
- *Incorporate Public Art, Amenities and Outdoor Furniture*

This plan encourages the continuation and expansion of programmed events. In order for the full potential of the Park as a County resource to be realized, the resources to secure dedicated personnel available to schedule events, market the park to vendors and other event planners, and generally be responsible for maintaining the high quality programming and events that the community has come to expect and enjoy, must be explored.

ESTABLISH & MODEL ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DESIGN, PRACTICE & EDUCATION

The popularity, visibility, and location of Emerson Park on the shore of a lake which serves as a major source of drinking water puts it in a unique position to serve as a showcase for environmentally sound practice and design. When any project is considered, opportunities for environmental education and stewardship should be thoroughly explored.

For example, future developments and improvements should model Low Impact Development (LID) techniques. LID techniques strive to preserve and recreate the function of natural landscape features to create site drainage that treats stormwater as a resource to be managed, rather than a waste product to be disposed of. Bio-retention, vegetated rooftops, permeable pavements, and rain gardens are all examples of Low Impact Development systems. Utilizing LID techniques, the impacts of the built environment are reduced in favor of improving the natural movement of water within a watershed.

All proposed additions or alterations to Emerson Park should be designed to minimize its environmental impact and demonstrate practical conservation measures that can be implemented in other areas throughout the County.

ADDRESS INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL PLANNING NEEDS

The provision of suitable, adequate buildings and infrastructure including parking facilities, roadways, signage, and lighting serve to encourage the use of the park by ensuring safe and orderly means to access, enjoy, and depart park facilities.

Capital planning is critical to the maintenance of a community's infrastructure and the services it provides. It should also be an important component in the future development of Emerson Park. A multi-year capital plan is necessary to address long-term needs and maintain the financial health of the Park. Although not within the scope of this Master Plan, developing such a Park Capital Plan would clearly identify major building, infrastructure, equipment and maintenance needs, funding options, and the impacts on operating budgets.

INCORPORATE PUBLIC ART, AMENITIES AND OUTDOOR FURNITURE

Public art has the potential to invigorate public spaces and give the communities they are in a stronger sense of place and identity. It can take the form of architecture, monuments, memorials, sculpture, street furniture or lighting, but it need not be limited to objects. Public displays of art can also include parades or performances of dance, street theater, music, or poetry. Since public art can be seen as reflecting community values, its installation must be carefully conceived and undertaken with a high degree of sensitivity.

Opportunities for collaboration with arts organizations and artists in the creation and installation of appropriate public art should be explored whenever new park projects are being considered.

“The popularity, visibility, and location of Emerson Park on the shore of a lake which serves as a major source of drinking water puts it in a unique position to serve as a showcase for environmentally sound practice and design.”

“Public art has the potential to invigorate public spaces and give the communities they are in a stronger sense of place and identity.”

5. MASTER PLAN GOALS

BUILDING ON EMERSON PARK'S STRENGTHS

There are three overarching goals for future development and programming at Emerson Park and all three goals build on Emerson Park's strengths:

1. TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND ACTIVE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL USES WITHIN THE PARK;
2. TO PROTECT THE PARK'S NATURAL SETTING AND ENHANCE PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USES WITHIN THE PARK; and
3. TO ADD NEW AMENITIES FOR EXPANDED USES.

For each of these three goals, the Parks Commission has identified several major projects to undertake, and each major project is supported with smaller sub-projects. In this chapter, each goal will be described in detail followed by a brief listing of all of the proposed park projects and program developments that should be implemented by the Parks Commission.

There are three main types of activities within the park: active recreation, passive recreation, and cultural uses. The park itself has been largely shaped by where these types of activities fit naturally into the park setting along the lake. For example, Deauville Island and the Fleming Lakeshore areas of the park are the primary center of active recreational activities; the area east of the Owasco River adjacent to the Pavilion, including the Merry-Go-Round Theater, is the cultural center of the park; and the east side of the park across NYS Route 38A and the area north of White Bridge Road are predominately passive recreational areas.

The goals and projects for the park are designed to refocus these programmatic areas by removing and relocating activities to more appropriate locations, and by providing new facilities/activities throughout the park.

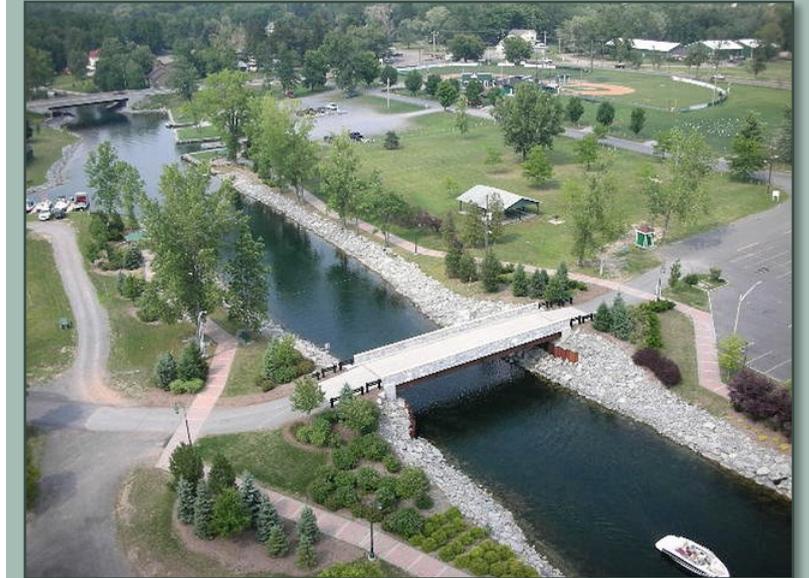


Figure 38: Aerial view of Emerson Park over the Owasco River.



Figure 39: View of the Owasco River looking towards the lake from White Bridge Road.

GOAL 1

ENHANCE AND EXPAND ACTIVE RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL USES

Emerson Park currently has several areas and structures for active recreational and cultural uses. The major attractions for park users include Little League Baseball, the swimming areas, the disc golf course, the walking trails, the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum, and the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse Theater. However, there are opportunities to upgrade existing facilities and expand current uses/areas within the park in order to provide a better experience for park users.

Many of the public meeting participants stressed the need for improvements to the beach areas, restrooms, and access to the park in general (for cars, boats and pedestrians). Additionally, participants also wanted to see a parkwide multi-use path system that had the feel of a promenade with amenities such as enhanced landscaping, public artwork, lighting and possibly opportunities for entertainment along the pathway. This type of pathway system would connect all portions of the park and help to create a cohesive feel to the park and help to break the public perception that the park is "...exclusive and only for people attending weddings, the theater or little league". By enhancing and expanding the two major activity categories in the park, active recreation and cultural uses, Emerson Park can re-establish itself as the gem of Cayuga County and increase the number of annual park visitors. Each of the projects listed below will increase the usability and desirability of the various recreational and cultural areas in the park.

MAJOR PROJECTS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

1. UPGRADE & IMPROVE PLAYGROUND FACILITIES

The current playground area adjacent to the Pavilion contains outdated equipment, does not have a picnic shelter, and is too close to NYS Route 38A to be considered safe for children unless surrounded by safety fencing. The playground should be relocated to Deauville Island, north of the restrooms and adjacent to the small playground under the large Cottonwood trees. As a result, the area along NYS Route 38A can be opened up by replacing the institutional chain link fencing with attractive sections of landscaping and split-rail fencing (for example), creating a more inviting and welcoming experience for visitors to the park.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Relocate the main Playground Facilities adjacent to the Pavilion to the Deauville Island Playground Area.
- Design and install shade/weather shelters, with seating, for the consolidated playground at Deauville Island; and include amenities for picnicking.
- When developing a long-term plan for the Deauville Island playground expansion, consider including spray-park features either now or in the future.
- Include equipment for seniors and handicapped persons at the consolidated playground area, i.e. swings and exercise equipment.



Figure 41: Existing playground equipment by the Pavilion.



Figure 42: Existing playground equipment by the Pavilion.

1. UPGRADE & IMPROVE PLAYGROUND FACILITIES (continued)



Figure 43: Existing playground equipment on Deauville Island.



Figure 44: Example of a shelter near the proposed playground for Deauville Island.



Figure 45: Example of type of playground equipment envisioned for Deauville Island.



Figure 46: Example of a shelter near the proposed playground for Deauville Island.

1. UPGRADE & IMPROVE PLAYGROUND FACILITIES (continued)



Figure 47: Conceptual schematic of the approximate location of the consolidated playground area and new shelter.

2. IMPROVE THE BEACHES AND SWIMMING AREAS

There are two beach swimming areas at the park, the main swimming area on Deauville Island and an alternate swimming area on the Owasco Lakeshore beach that is only used when the restroom facilities on the island are not open or when there is a large event on the island that occupies the beach area. While the beach area on Deauville Island is notably nicer and more appropriate for a swimming area than the beach on the Owasco Lakeshore, the swimming area is quite shallow. A comment that was emphasized repeatedly by the public during meetings was the desire to explore the feasibility of dredging a portion of the Deauville Island swimming area so that it would be more suitable for adult swimming. Other concerns include the current conditions of the restrooms on the island and their need for upgrades, the short swimming season and hours of lifeguards, and the lack of a dedicated first-aid station or emergency services on the island. By improving access to the swimming areas and upgrading support services/structures families will have a greater enjoyment of the lake and use these areas more often.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Explore ways to improve the existing swimming areas and provide access to deeper water for swimming on both Deauville Island and on the Owasco Lakeshore. Improvements to consider include:
 - ◆ Conduct an analysis of the feasibility of dredging deeper swimming areas, identifying the cost of the initial dredging and the anticipated frequency for re-dredging to maintain the deeper waters.
 - ◆ Explore opportunities to replace the current “rip-rap” installed along and adjacent to the swimming areas (see Fig. 47) with shoreline materials that would facilitate lakeshore seating and access for bathers and boaters.
 - ◆ The creation of small, movable, café-style seating areas near the swimming areas, expanding the lakeshore picnic opportunities beyond the traditional laying out of a beach blanket.
 - ◆ Maintain and upgrade the interior and exterior of the existing restrooms near both the Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore swimming areas.
 - ◆ Expand life guard hours.
 - ◆ Prepare a wildlife management plan to control the bird populations and their waste around the swimming areas.



Figure 48: Deauville Island beach area.



Figure 49: Owasco Lakeshore beach area (used when Deauville Island beach area is closed).

2. IMPROVE THE BEACHES AND SWIMMING AREAS (continued)



Figure 50: Exterior of existing restrooms on Deauville Island by the swimming area.



Figure 51: Example of a park swimming area with seating close to the beach and water deep enough for adults to swim in.



Figure 52: 2006 aerial image of the park showing the two swimming areas and how shallow the water is near the shoreline. The beach on the Owasco Lakeshore is at the bottom of the photo and Deauville Island is in the top right hand corner of the photo.

3. EXPAND BOATER AND BOAT ACCESS TO AND FROM OWASCO LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER

There are currently 35 boat slips available for public rental at the park marina accessible from the service road on Deauville Island and, on average, 30 to 35 of those slips are rented each year for the entire season. The County recognizes the need to increase the number of seasonal and temporary boat dock space at the park; and has applied for state grant funding in 2013 and 2014 to repair some dock facilities and to provide additional dock space at the public boat launch area.

In addition to the plans to provide more seasonal boat slips at the existing park marina off the north end of Deauville Island, a seasonal floating dock system installed along the western side of the seawall just south of the Deauville Island bathing beaches would provide temporary boat access to the park for boaters that do not have a seasonal boat slip (see figures 58 & 59). This docking system would also increase the number of visitors coming to the park from other areas of Owasco Lake whether they come for an event, to have lunch, or to enjoy any number of the other amenities the park has to offer without the need to travel the length of the Owasco River up to White Bridge Road.

In addition to increasing the number of seasonal and temporary boat slips available to the public discussed above, the Parks Commission should upgrade and improve the existing parking areas and boat launch areas. These areas are currently in a varied state of disrepair and could benefit greatly from some improvements including resurfacing/grading of the parking areas and the boat launch. The County has already secured schematic plans for these improvements, including preliminary cost estimates. As a compliment to improvements at the boat launch area, a number of the public comments suggested the idea of providing additional places to sit and/or picnic along the

Owasco River between the boat launch area and the interior park bridge connecting the main parking area to Deauville Island with access off of the landscaped walkway and views of the Owasco River and boat traffic.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Install boat slips on floating docks along west side of seawall off Deauville Island providing boater and boat access to and from Owasco Lake to the park.
- Improve the existing White Bridge Road boat launch area.
- Design and install temporary floating and permanent docks at the White Bridge Road boat launch.
- Improve the White Bridge Road Boat Launch parking areas and adjacent car overflow parking area serving the Boat Launch.
- Sponsor, or allow others to program, promote and sponsor, dinner boat and/or lake cruises as a park amenity.



Figure 53: Area west of the seawall on Deauville Island as a potential location for expanded boat access to and from Owasco Lake.



Figure 54: Existing parking, loading and boat launch access from the main section of the park (Pavilion side).

3. EXPAND BOATER AND BOAT ACCESS TO AND FROM OWASCO LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER (continued)



Figure 55: Existing boat docks in the Owasco River on Deauville Island.

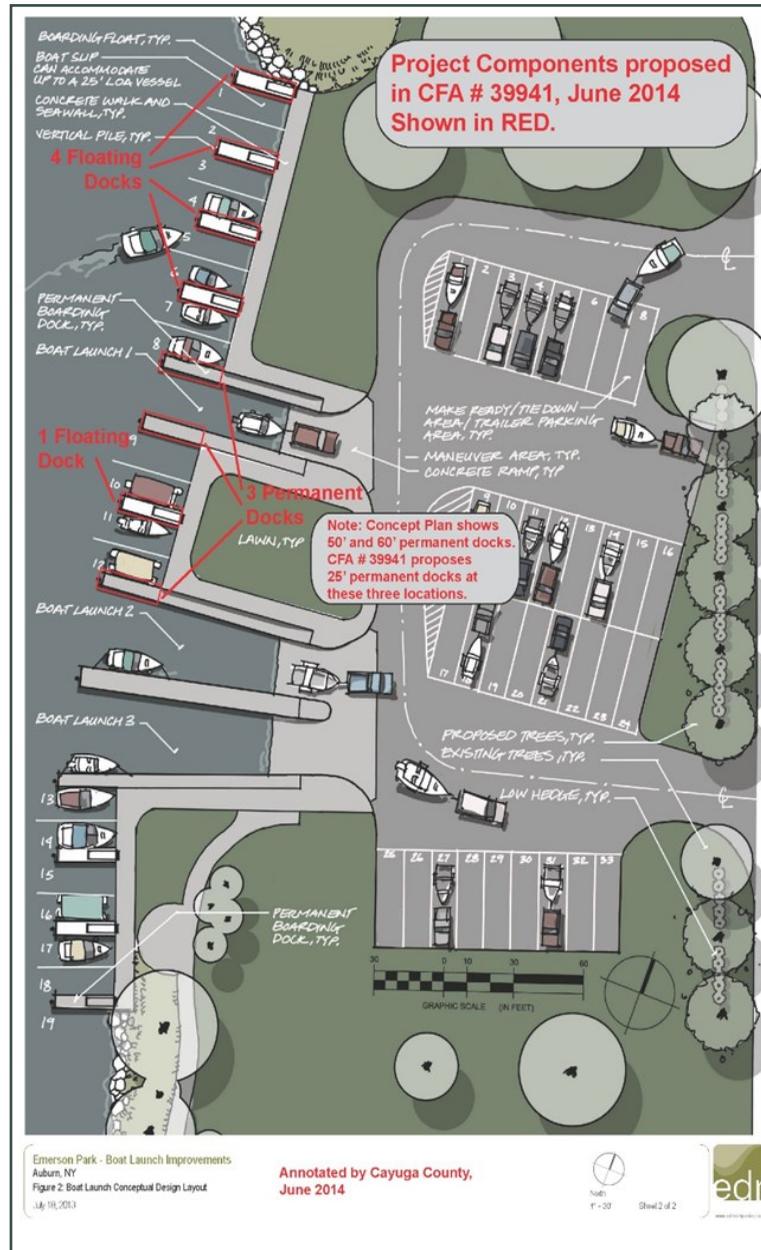


Figure 57: Proposed improvements to the main boat launch area from the 2014 County CFA grant application.



Figure 58: Seasonal floating docks along the seawall (removable) in the Village of Skaneateles on Skaneateles Lake.



Figure 56: Existing boat use of the Owasco River between the seawalls at the park.



Figure 59: Pedestrian walkway on seawall adjacent to seasonal docks on Skaneateles Lake.

4. CREATE A PARKWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM

During the public meetings for this park plan, both the Parks Commission and the public expressed their interest in establishing a parkwide multi-use pathway system suitable for walking, running, biking, etc. The pathway system should be an all-weather surface wide enough to accommodate multiple users/uses at one time and it should have various amenities along the path throughout the park such as benches, landscaping, lighting, public art, etc. By providing an appropriate surface for both active and passive recreational use throughout the park, with connections to NYS Route 38A and White Bridge Road, the park should see an increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Maintenance of this path system will be key to the longevity of the path and its amenities as well as the level of use.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Incorporate a lakeshore “promenade” on the Owasco Lakeshore near the Pavilion as an integral component of the parkwide multi-use pathway with landscape plantings and sculptures; opportunities for activity, entertainment, seating/eating; and other points of interest along this portion of the pathway.
- Install a pedestrian bridge over the Owasco River near the foot of western seawall connecting the proposed lakefront floating docks and Deauville Island to the Owasco Lakeshore by the Pavilion
- Install a pedestrian bridge over the Deauville Island Channel east of the Express Mart station connecting Deauville Island to the path system south of White Bridge Road.
- Design and install a parkwide lighting system.
- Install maps and informational kiosks at strategic locations around the Park.
- Create a mobile application providing Park information to users.



Figure 60: Existing pathways look and feel more like service roads than pedestrian and bicycle park paths.



Figure 61: Existing pathways look and feel more like service roads than pedestrian and bicycle park paths.

4. CREATE A PARKWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM (continued)



Figure 62: Example of amenities and landscaping along a park path system.



Figure 63: Example of amenities and landscaping along a park path system.



Figure 64: Example of a lakeshore park path system.



Figure 65: Example of decorative and functional lighting along a park path.



Figure 66: Example of public art along a park path system.



Figure 67: Example of public art along a park path system.

4. CREATE A PARKWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM (continued)



Figure 68: Existing and conceptual schematic of the approximate location of the parkwide path system.

5. MAINTAIN & PROMOTE THE DISC GOLF COURSE

The Disc Golf Course on the east side of NYS Route 38A is well utilized throughout the year, is a use that is well suited for this area of the park, and requires little maintenance from park staff. The Parks Commission will continue to support the use of this space for disc golf by maintaining the course and equipment, promoting the sport of disc golf at the park, and by continuing to allow the community to host tournaments.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Meet with the Central New York Disc Golf Association and users of the Emerson Park disc golf course to assess the needs for enhancement and/or growth of the course.
- Provide course enhancements as identified by users that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design.



Figure 69: Sign at the first hole of the disc golf course (adjacent to the log cabin at the museum).



Figure 70: View from Hole #2 on the Disc Golf Course looking at Owasco Lake.



Figure 71: Logo for the Central New York Disc Golf Association's 2013 tournament at Emerson Park.

6. SUPPORT AND EXPAND KAYAK & CANOE RENTALS AND ACCESS TO THE LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER

Canoe and kayak access to the lake has increased significantly in the past few years with the establishment of the Owasco Paddles rental and launch site on the Fleming Lakeshore in the park. This small, locally-owned business provides canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards and paddleboats for hourly, half-day or full-day rental at the park. This service has become so popular that in an interview on July 11, 2014 one of the owners of Owasco Paddles said that they will be working with park staff and the Parks Commission to get permission to expand their operation and possibly build a larger storage shelter at their launch site. The owners also mentioned that there have been requests from customers and other kayak users to add storage racks open to the public where people could rent a space to store their own canoe or kayak for the season and have it available to them at the lake whenever they wish. The addition of the Owasco Paddles company to the park has increased activity on the lake and in the Owasco River and the channel by both experienced and novice paddle craft users and as a result has produced an increase in park visits.

The Parks Commission should leverage this expanded use while ensuring that improvements are thoughtfully considered and executed, as opposed to ad-hoc implementation. Specifically, the Parks Commission should expand on the facilities that Owasco Paddles has established by creating additional low impact launch sites on the lake, the Owasco River, and the channel ; and by exploring opportunities to provide seasonal rental storage racks to further support the use of paddle craft at the park. An example of an additional low impact launch site onto the channel by the Fleming Lakeshore is shown on the plan graphics (see figure 79 on page 37). This expansion might be supported in part or whole by seasonal rental revenues for the storage.

In addition to the success of Owasco Paddles, the recently established Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail will bring more paddle craft users to Cayuga County. Owasco Lake is a short drive from any of the Cayuga County launch sites along the Blueway Trail and the Parks Commission can capitalize on the increase of recreational tourism the trail will bring by marketing the paddle craft facilities at the park to users of the Blueway Trail.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Install park entrance signs at the Fleming Lakeshore entrance areas that note the availability of canoe and kayak launches.
- Create a canoe and kayak launch area at the Deauville Island Channel on east side of the Fleming Lakeshore.
- Improve and expand the existing parking areas on the Fleming Lakeshore and restrict parking on the grass areas at the Fleming Lakeshore site, reserving this areas for pedestrian and picnic uses.
- Establish a seasonal storage/retrieval service for paddle-craft at the Fleming Lakeshore and ensure the design and development are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design.



Figure 72: Existing storage shed for Owasco Paddles on Deauville Island.



Figure 73: Existing canoe launch site used by Owasco Paddles on Deauville Island.

6. SUPPORT AND EXPAND KAYAK & CANOE RENTALS AND ACCESS TO THE LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER (continued)



Figure 74: Example of a public canoe and kayak storage rack at a public park.



Figure 75: Example of a public canoe and kayak storage rack at a public park.



Figure 76: Example of a public canoe and kayak storage rack at a public park.

7. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DOG PARK

The Parks Commission and Cayuga County Legislature will continue to support the development of a dog park at Emerson Park. On May 22, 2012 the County Legislature passed Resolution No. 212-12 that authorized the establishment of a capital reserve fund for the Parks Department to collect donated money to build a dog park at Emerson Park; and on September 25, 2012 the County Legislature passed Resolution No. 355-12 that authorized the Parks Department to apply for any available grants to help fund the development of the dog park. Since that time a volunteer citizen group called the Central New York Dog Owners Group (CNYDOG) has been working to raise funding for the dog park as well as develop preliminary design plans and a proposed location for the dog park within Emerson Park. The Cayuga County community has participated in the Bark for Your Park grant funding competition, making it into the finals, for several years. There is clear community support and passion for a dog park in Cayuga County, especially if located in Emerson Park. The preliminary location chosen for the dog park is in the western most corner of the Fleming Lakeshore area of the park south of White Bridge Road. This area seems suitable for the development of a dog park, but this use should be carefully located next to other uses in order to reduce any potential conflicts. A maintenance agreement between CNYDOG and the Parks Commission should also be considered so that the dog park area is a clean, safe and enjoyable place for county residents to bring their dogs.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Meet with CNYDOG to conduct a site walk through prior to final design for dog park area.
- Identify any siting opportunities and/or constraints at proposed location in the park.
- Seek professional design services for the final design of the dog park to ensure compatibility with the rest of Emerson Park and water quality in the lake.



Figure 77: Example of an active dog park.



Figure 78: Example of a spray feature in an active dog park.

7. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DOG PARK (continued)



Figure 79: Conceptual schematic of the approximate location for the dog park and for a new canoe launch in the channel.

8. ENHANCE THE MERRY-GO-ROUND THEATER PLAYHOUSE

The Merry-Go-Round Playhouse at Emerson Park brings thousands of visitors to the park for plays, musicals and off-Broadway productions annually. The 501 seat theater is the anchor of the Finger Lakes Musical Theater Festival. The Merry-Go-Round Theater’s mission “is to enrich, through the arts, the lives of all residents of the state of New York”. While the members of the Merry-Go-Round Theater group maintain the interior of the theater building, the exterior and surrounding landscape is the park staff’s responsibility.

Given the large number of patrons that visit the park solely for the purpose of attending an event at the theater, the Parks Commission should pay particular attention to the aesthetics and functionality of the landscape and ancillary facilities, such as the restrooms and concession area, surrounding the theater and its connection to the Pavilion. By making some minor improvements around the site, the experience for theater goers, and its integration with the rest of the park, will be greatly enhanced.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Maintain and upgrade the existing restrooms near the ticket booth and main park entrance.
- Improve and expand café seating outside the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse Theater building.
- Build upon and expand the concession offerings available to Merry-Go-Round patrons adjacent to the theater.
- Improve the landscaping and access paths outside of the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse Theater building.
- Allow or solicit valet service at the pavilion and theater for events.



Figure 80: Main restrooms adjacent to theater, by the main entrance and ticket booth.



Figure 81: Restrooms adjacent to theater, between theater and pavilion (only open when there is a show or if the beach by the pavilion is open).

8. ENHANCE THE MERRY-GO-ROUND THEATER PLAYHOUSE (continued)



Figure 82: Lack of landscaping at the front of the theater facing NYS Route 38A.



Figure 83: Existing side entrance to theater.



Figure 84: Existing main entrance to theater.

9. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL USE AT THE PARK

Little League Baseball has been played on the two baseball fields in Emerson Park, located at the intersection of White Bridge Road and Owasco Road (NYS Route 38A), for decades and has been one of the major draws for visitors to the park. The Parks Commission should continue to work with the Little League to provide adequate facilities for the children of Cayuga County to learn and play baseball. In addition to supporting the Little League as an important active use within the park, the Commission should also explore opportunities to enhance the appearance of the ball fields, concession stand and other facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and complement the overall design aesthetic of the park.

One aspect that needs to be addressed by the Commission and the organizers of the Little League is the current practice of cars pulling off on NYS Route 38A to drop off players because parents do not want to pay the parking fee to drop off their children (or pay again to pick them up). The interface and roadway between the Boat Launch area and the Little League facilities, off of White Bridge Road, should be considered with regard to setting, shared facilities and improvements to allow parents to drop off and pick up players at no charge. This may mean having someone from either park staff or the Little League organization staff the entrance to monitor who should pay to enter and who can pull in briefly to drop off players.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Meet with representatives from the Auburn Little League program to assess the needs for enhancement of the ball field area in the park, including opportunities to address the safe and secure pick-up and drop-off of players.
- Provide enhancements as identified by the Auburn Little League program that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design.

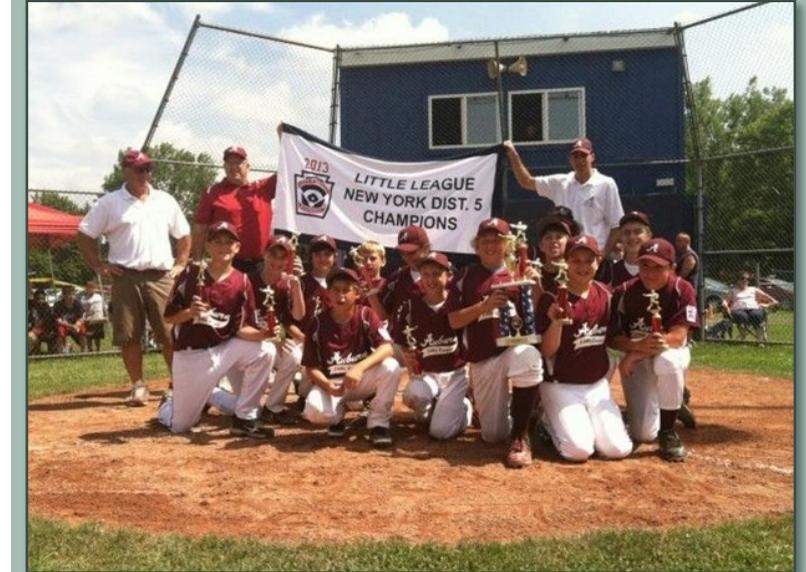


Figure 85: Photo at Emerson Park of the 2013 New York State District 5 Little League Champions, team from Auburn.



Figure 86: Little League players at Emerson Park.

10. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE WARD W. O'HARA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND DR. JOSEPH F. KARPINSKI, SR. EDUCATIONAL CENTER

The Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum and Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski, Sr. Educational Center is well-managed and an enhancement to the overall Emerson Park experience. In 2014, an addition was built onto the museum that will be available as public space for any number of uses including as a training facility, allowing the County to provide more training opportunities to the public and its employees. In addition to the main museum building, there is a small log cabin south of the museum on NYS Route 38A that is currently used by museum staff to showcase antique farm equipment. If additional display space is provided for the museum elsewhere in the park, the cabin can also be rented for small receptions, parties or training events. There is also a small picnic shelter behind the museum that is currently underutilized. The museum is quite successful at bringing in a large number of visitors each year. Improvements to the parking area, driveway, pedestrian crossings and general landscaping (discussed further below) should be made to enhance the overall appearance and "curb appeal" of the museum and its associated structures as an integral part of the park. These improvements are also an important component of a comprehensive "parkway" improvement to NYS Route 38A as it moves through the park, as discussed in Project 11 below.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Meet with the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum Board of Directors to assess the needs for enhancement and/or growth of the museum.
- Provide museum site enhancements as identified by the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum Board of Directors that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design.



Figure 87: Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum and Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski, Sr. Educational Center.



Figure 88: Log cabin at the Museum.

10. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE WARD W. O’HARA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND DR. JOSEPH F. KARPINSKI, SR. EDUCATIONAL CENTER (continued)



Figure 89: Antique farm equipment display inside the log cabin at the museum.



Figure 90: Picnic shelter behind the museum.



Figure 91: Visitors enjoying the museum.



Figure 92: Exhibit space in the museum.

10. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE WARD W. O'HARA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND DR. JOSEPH F. KARPINSKI, SR. EDUCATIONAL CENTER (continued)



Figure 93: Map of the existing location of the agricultural museum and cabin.

11. ENHANCE AND UPGRADE THE IMAGE OF THE PARK ALONG NYS ROUTE 38A

NYS Route 38A divides the park into two distinct pieces and currently neither the entrance to the main park or to the Ward W. O’Hara Agricultural Museum are very inviting. To the extent practical, NYS Route 38A should look and feel like an interior boulevard that passes through the park and not like a State Highway with no character or curb appeal. While this is a substantial undertaking in coordination, capital and effort, the potential long-term park benefits would be well worth the effort.

Some members of the public expressed their desire to see a grand entrance or sign at the main entrance of the park to help make it clear to visitors that there is a park there. The Park’s Commission can achieve this same objective by developing parkwide design guidelines for buildings, entrances, signage, landscaping, etc. By incorporating more attractive landscaping, fencing and signage along NYS Route 38A, the Parks Commission can create a more inviting entrance and boulevard feel to NYS Route 38A without constructing a large statement piece or arch at the main entrance. The park already has a partial theme/design by using the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s historic paint color Oatlands Shutter Green (5009-3) manufactured by Valspar on all of the buildings in the park. This color has also been used on many of the accessory furniture pieces including benches, trash cans, fencing, light poles, etc. This color has become one major component of the identity of the park and should remain so.

In addition to fencing, signage, landscaping and vehicular and pedestrian circulation, improvements at the park entrances are key to making the park more inviting and will capitalize on the creation of a “park boulevard” down NYS Route 38A along the park property. Improvements to the traffic flow, drainage and pedestrian crossings need to be

made at all park entrances/access points but these upgrades are especially important at the main entrance to the park and to the Ward W. O’Hara Agricultural Museum.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Design and install Park Entry (parkway) Signs at key locations along access roads (Lake Ave., West Lake Rd., White Bridge Rd, Owasco Rd., and NYS Route 38A).
- Widen the lanes, improve crosswalks, and add/replace curbing along the median strip for the main entrance road at NYS Route 38A.
- Replace the fencing and improve the roadway edge on both sides of NYS Route 38A by adding curbing, plantings and/or visual amenities; and integrate these improvements where appropriate with the parkwide pedestrian and bicycle path.
- Install porous pavement at the Ward W. O’Hara Agricultural Museum, align the southernmost entrance to this lot with the main entrance of park across the street, and upgrade the crosswalk to the main park.



Figure 94: View of NYS Route 38A as it passes through the park.



Figure 95: Rendering from the 2001 Park Master Plan of an enhanced pedestrian crossing and boulevard treatment of State Rote 38A.

12. ENHANCE AND UPGRADE THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PARK ENTRANCES

In addition to the improvements that are necessary for the main park entrances along NYS Route 38A mentioned above, the same design and access considerations should be made for all other entrances and access points at the park. A key recommendation here is to provide a consistent look or theme along the edges of the park and at entrances, providing for a pleasing and unified appearance. There are other considerations that should be made for the park entrances besides design, drainage and “normal” functionality. Particularly, allowing secondary access points to be open to traffic leaving the park after large events.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Improve the existing vehicle entrances and parking areas at Fleming Lakeshore area of the park.
- Install directional signs in downtown Auburn directing tourists and visitors to the park.
- Open the gates on White Bridge Road after events for exiting when safe and practical.
- Upgrade the crosswalk at White Bridge Road and NYS Route 38A.



Figure 96: Landscaping in the crosswalk over White Bridge Road at Green Shutters.



Figure 97: Aerial image of the crosswalk over White Bridge Road at Green Shutters showing that the crosswalk does not line up with sidewalk or handicap ramps.

GOAL 2

PROTECT THE PARK'S NATURAL SETTING & ENHANCE PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USES WITHIN THE PARK

The Emerson Family had a strong respect and appreciation for the natural beauty of the park's setting and sought to enhance and secure the lakeshore and natural areas for the health and benefit of Cayuga County residents. Emerson Park provides a unique experience for the public by being a publicly owned county park surrounded by natural wooded areas along with lake access. The natural setting of the park also provides treasured views of Owasco Lake and the areas of the park along the lakeshore should be protected from future construction that would eliminate or degrade the quality of these view sheds. The park also maintains some opportunities for passive recreation throughout all areas of the park. The passive recreational uses linked throughout the Park must be enhanced and maintained while still preserving the natural resources and setting of the park.

MAJOR PROJECTS NEEDED TO ACHIVE GOAL:

1. ENHANCE AND PROTECT LAKESHORE ACCESS AND VIEWS FROM THE PARK

It is important to maintain a balance of adequate and varied recreational activities while preserving the natural view sheds along the lakeshore in Emerson Park. The wide open view of Owasco Lake from the entire lakeshore in the park as well as the amount of public access to the water that is provided in the park is not only a gift to Cayuga County from the Emerson family, but a treasured resource that needs to be protected and maintained for public access.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Establish erosion-controls along with lake access improvements at the Fleming Lakeshore.
- Design and install improved lakeshore access between the west side of the seawall and the beach area at Deauville Island which currently consists of rubble and rip-rap.
- Provide small, seasonal café-style tables and chairs along the lakeshore areas to enhance picnic and seating areas.
- Replace the Island Shelter on Deauville Island, which is beyond reasonable repair and investment, with a newly designed shelter suitably located on the island to compliment the long-term re-programming of Deauville Island with regard to expanding active and cultural uses while maintaining shore access and lake vistas.



Figure 98: View of the large willow tree and the seawall from Deauville Island.



Figure 99: View of Owasco lake from the fountain flowerbed at the Pavilion.

2. UPGRADE AND IMPROVE THE PARK'S NATURAL SYSTEMS AND ECOLOGY

The position of the park along Owasco Lake and the Owasco River is key to the health of the lake and the lake's watershed. Currently, the catch-basins in the main parking lot by the Pavilion drain directly into the Owasco River, bringing with it pollutants from the parking surface and walkways. In order to maintain a healthy public park in a natural setting with a clean shoreline and swimming areas, the man-made and natural drainage systems as well as the overall ecology of the park need to be improved and then maintained at a higher standard to reduce, as much as possible, the amount of potential pollutants reaching the lake and the Owasco River. Bio-swales, rain gardens and other similar natural systems can filter out many of the pollutants that would otherwise end up in the lake, as well as significantly reduce the volume of water that is discharged into the channel and Owasco River by allowing the water to infiltrate the ground and plant roots. Future projects to make the infrastructure of the park more "green" and "Eco-Friendly" can also serve the dual function as educational demonstration areas to help the public understand the importance of water quality for the lake and how beautiful and natural these systems can be.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Create a system to catch and filter stormwater surface drainage in the main parking areas before discharging into the channel and Owasco River.
- Construct bio-swales, native plant communities, pervious pavement, and bio-filter systems to catch and filter storm water throughout the park.
- Install stream bank stabilization and natural planting buffers along streams within the park.
- Promote bird watching and construct osprey nest platforms.



Figure 100: Bio-swale Rain Garden at Cornell Plantations that filters water from the parking areas.



Figure 101: Example of a Bio-swale in a natural park-like setting.

2. UPGRADE AND IMPROVE THE PARK'S NATURAL SYSTEMS AND ECOLOGY (continued)



Figure 102: Example of a natural stream bank buffer.



Figure 103: Educational signage at a State Park in Massachusetts on the benefits of their porous pavement system.



Figure 104: The Rediscovery Forest is a dynamic demonstration forest located in the park-like environment of The Oregon Garden.



Figure 105: Osprey nest platform installed at Robert H. Treman Marina at the base of Cayuga Lake in Ithaca, NY.

3. UPGRADE AND ENHANCE PICNIC AND RELAXATION AREAS THROUGHOUT THE PARK

Upgrading and enhancing the picnic and relaxation areas in the park, and linking them via a well-designed parkwide bicycle and pedestrian path system, will expand park offerings and increase park use. All of the shelters throughout the park should be maintained and upgraded to provide safe places for families and groups to gather. Some existing shelters need upgrades to their water or electrical service, while others have structural issues ranging from minor to major (as is the case with the Island Shelter on Deauville Island). While it may not be practical to provide additional large covered shelter spaces in the park, smaller shelters and picnic areas should be provided for smaller gatherings.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Upgrade electrical service to the shelters on Deauville Island.
- Replace the Island Shelter on Deauville Island. The roof system currently has significant structural problems. Locate and site the replacement shelter in a manner that compliments other new programming and site upgrades on Deauville Island.
- Create attractive identification name signs for all Park Shelters so that people can easily identify them when attending events or reserving the spaces.
- Purchase and install tables, benches and a shade shelter near the Deauville swimming area. In addition to the larger picnic tables typically found within the park, the availability of small, café-style tables and chairs which could be easily moved and arranged to suit small and large parties, would be a welcome improvement.
- Create an enhanced picnic area near the boat launch.
- Provide shade trees and seating closer to the lakeshore by the Pavilion.
- Connect the new and enhanced picnic areas to the parkwide bicycle and pedestrian path where appropriate.



Figure 106: Existing park bench near the lakeshore by the Pavilion with little to no sun protection from trees.



Figure 107: Group of park goers that have moved portable picnic tables under a cluster of shade trees near the Pavilion, but far away from the water's edge. In this area of the park you are either next to the water in full sun, or pretty far away from it in the shade.

3. UPGRADE AND ENHANCE PICNIC AND RELAXATION AREAS THROUGHOUT THE PARK (continued)



Figure 108: Example of a park bench under a shade tree near the water's edge.



Figure 109: Example of shaded relaxation areas near the water's edge.



Figure 110: Example of seating provided in a tranquil and relaxing setting near the water's edge.



Figure 111: Example of an enhanced picnic area.

4. CREATE FAMILY-FRIENDLY AND EDUCATIONAL NATURE TRAILS IN THE PARK

There are relatively few public opportunities in the center of the county for a peaceful walk in a natural setting on public lands. Emerson Park presents the perfect opportunity to provide a network of nature trails with little to no impact on the environment in the park. The area north of White Bridge Road along the Owasco River and the southeast wooded corner of the park along NYS Route 38A are two areas where family-friendly nature trails should be created and/or upgraded to provide a sense of adventure, quiet, and exploration. These trails should also include educational signs or kiosks along the paths to encourage people to reconnect with and gain a greater appreciation for the diverse ecosystem in the park. The nature trail system should be designed so that it can be used year round.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Improve existing and establish new nature trails in the area north of White Bridge Road and other areas of the park as appropriate.
- Encourage year round use of the park by providing for ice skating, ice fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.



Figure 112: Example of a nature trail system in a community park.



Figure 113: Example of a nature trail system in a community park.

GOAL 3

PROVIDE NEW AMENITIES FOR EXPANDED USES

In addition to park improvements for active and passive recreational uses, park users and the Parks Commission identified a number of critical projects and park amenities that will complement existing uses and expand the park user base that should be implemented at the park.

MAJOR PROJECTS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

1. EXPAND FOOD CONCESSIONS AND OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PARK

Currently, the park lacks any consistent opportunity to buy food within the park. For example, on the Fleming Lakeshore, park users often default to pre-packaged fast food from the nearby Express Mart Service Station because there are no concessions or other food options available on Deauville Island. The County does allow food trucks to operate in the park, however this opportunity is not well marketed and few food trucks vendors take advantage of selling to park visitors. The current options include the concession stand at the Little League which is open when there is a game, various vendors providing concessions for Merry-Go-Round Theater patrons during shows, and the Pavilion which provides catering for weddings and events. The only other time that concessions of any type are provided is during large community events such as the Fourth of July Celebration, Tomato-Fest, Car Show or the Great Race. Public input during the development of this plan consistently called for attracting a range of concession options to the park, from low-cost hot dog and soda stands to a casual lakeshore restaurant serving park users and Owasco Lake boaters. People indicated that they might visit

the park and/or stay longer if there were food options available to the general public on a consistent basis in the park.

Increasing the number and frequency of Food Trucks permitted in the park, and hosting Food Truck Rodeo Events are ideas for increasing the food concession options at the park that were brought up and well received during public participation meetings and should be explored. Other ideas from the public meetings included bringing back a seasonal concession stand over on Deauville Island, the development of a casual, lakeshore dining restaurant that would be open to the public, and the possibility of expanding public food service at the Pavilion. Like many programs being proposed for the park, an individual focused on attracting, managing, marketing and promoting these amenities is an essential component for successful implementation.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Arrange and/or expand leases with food truck operators.
- Provide concession options for seasonal food and picnicking within the park.
- Develop a Public/Private Development Proposal for a Lakeshore Dining Facility as a park amenity.
- Expand food service at the Pavilion and/or provide food service at the Seawall Shelter via the Pavilion.



Figure 114: Example of a concession stand in a public park.



Figure 115: Example of a concession stand in a public park.

1. EXPAND FOOD CONCESSIONS AND OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PARK (continued)



Figure 116: Example of a food truck rodeo.



Figure 117: Example of lakefront dining and concessions.



Figure 118: Example of a food truck rodeo.



Figure 119: Example of a lakefront dining with access for boaters.

1. EXPAND FOOD CONCESSIONS AND OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PARK (continued)

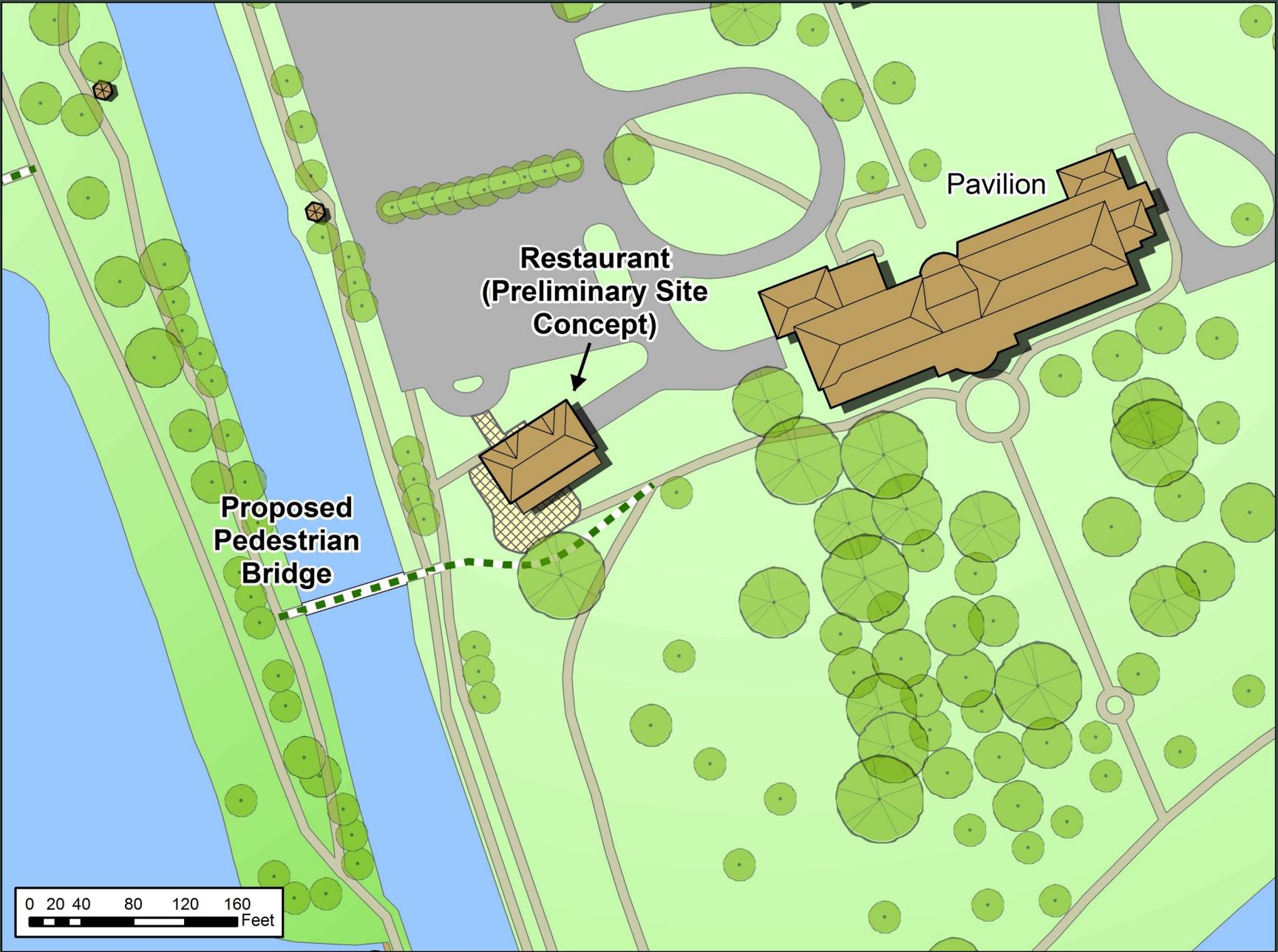


Figure 120: Conceptual schematic of the approximate location for a lakeside restaurant (replacing existing Seawall Shelter).

2. CREATE A MULTI-PURPOSE LAKESHORE PERFORMANCE AND MUSIC VENUE

There was consistent public input calling for a range of public performance and music options within the park. It was clear that the public wanted to have the opportunity to experience everything from small, intimate performances (e.g. acoustic music and other small shows) to larger performances (e.g. occasional regional or national acts) within the park setting while taking advantage of exceptional Lake views. This will require careful assessment and planning to establish. One approach would be to establish the support infrastructure (well-designed lighting, power, support operations) in advance of actually undertaking the capital project of designing and constructing a public performance space.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Promote and develop facilities for concerts, dances and other entertainment. Consider a phased approach to performance infrastructure which builds the essential support infrastructure first, while ensuring that this work fits in with a master plan for full build-out as programming and resources expand.
- Construct an amphitheater or band shelter. Ensure that lake views and vistas are taken into consideration and multi-purpose uses are supported.
- Sponsor, or allow others to program, promote and sponsor, a variety of music and performance concerts within the park.



Figure 121: Example of a small venue public park performance space.



Figure 122: Bradenton, Florida Riverwalk Amphitheater.

2. CREATE A MULTI-PURPOSE LAKESHORE PERFORMANCE AND MUSIC VENUE (continued)



Figure 123: Aerial view of a public performance space along the waterfront that does not detract from the view of the water.



Figure 124: Conceptual schematic of the approximate location for a lakeside multi-use structure and performance space.

3. ESTABLISH A FIRST AID-SAFETY STATION IN THE PARK

Meeting participants identified a need for at least one dedicated first aid station within the park, particularly on Deauville Island where the majority of family-oriented active recreational activities occur. Currently, the only place to receive first aid assistance is either at the main Ticket Booth near the entrance to the park or during office hours at the park office building. In order to provide a safe and fun environment for all visitors to the park, the Parks Commission needs to establish a first aid station closer to the main activity centers (Deauville Island and the main Boat Launch). This type of service should be considered essential to park operations for the continued safety of patrons. The Parks Commission should explore the feasibility of providing either a staffed first aid station, a volunteer staffed station, and/or one or more unstaffed kiosks/call centers where people could still receive assistance. While it may not be feasible to expand current staff's duties to include staffing a first aid station, the Parks Commission should explore all avenues available to provide such a service.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Explore the feasibility of providing a designated building or area of a building, centrally located, within the park for a First Aid-Safety Station.
- Ensure that all public events at the park are served by a First Aid-Safety Station, either in a permanent structure or in a temporary event tent or emergency services vehicle.



Figure 125: Example of a first aid station building in a park.



Figure 126: Example of a temporary first aid station tent for events.

4. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCORPORATE A MULTI-USE PUBLIC MARKET / FARMER'S MARKET IN THE PARK

Lakefront Farmer's Markets have proven to be extremely successful in areas around the Finger Lakes, including the long established venue in the City of Ithaca located on the Cayuga Inlet. Despite the limited access to the market in Ithaca via the Cayuga Inlet, the market does draw paddle boaters and some boat tour visitors weekly. A Farmer's Market—or similar public market, at Emerson Park would have far more open lakefront access for patrons of a market than the one in Ithaca and could draw just as many, if not more, visitors.

The Auburn Farmer's Market has a long-established and viable market presence in the City of Auburn. With regular patrons and a central location in downtown Auburn, they may not wish to relocate to Emerson Park at this time. For the purposes of this Master Plan, we wish to provide an open invitation and opportunity to the Auburn Farmer's Market, and other county market venues, to consider a collaborative approach to future development of a Farmer's Market or Open Air public market at the park. A promising location in the park would expand on the Big Six celebration and establish a flexible market space on park lands just east of NYS Route 38A, with proximity to Owasco Lake and the Ward H. O'Hara Agricultural Museum (figure 129 on page 59). If there is interest in collaboration and coordination, the Parks Commission would consider expanding the weekend draw of visitors to the park by establishing a farmer's market or a "public market" adjacent to the museum. This could be achieved by using a temporary tent structure similar to what is used for the Big Six celebration at a minimal cost for the park at first in order to further evaluate the market demand for such a facility at the park. If successful, the Parks Commission could pursue resources to establish a permanent multi-use structure either in the same location or over on Deauville Island that could accommodate a Farmer's Market.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Promote collaboration and coordination with the Auburn Farmer's Market and other regional market organizations and explore the development of a multi-use public market or farmer's market in the park where all participating groups could expand their services and market offerings.
- Explore the feasibility of starting the market in a temporary seasonal structure, such as a tent, to measure the use and popularity of such a space prior to developing a permanent structure in the park.
- Ensure that the placement and design of the market, whether temporary or permanent, is compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design.



Figure 127: Example of a public open air market in a public park.



Figure 128: Example of an open air market.

4. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCORPORATE A MULTI-USE PUBLIC MARKET / FARMER'S MARKET IN THE PARK (continued)



Figure 129: Conceptual schematic of the approximate location for an open air market or farmer's market.

5. ATTRACT AND DEVELOP A LODGE/CONFERENCE CENTER IN THE PARK

There is a historic precedence for lodging and accommodations along the Owasco Lakeshore and previous plans for Emerson Park have considered incorporating a conference center within the park, including the 2001 Master Plan which proposed a small conference center along the Fleming Lakeshore area. When the subject of a Lodge and Conference Center was brought up by participants in the public meetings that were held in 2014 for the development of this plan, the concept of allowing such a development to exist within the park was generally supported by the majority of park users. However, there were a few conditions and considerations that were echoed by the public for future development of a Lodge/Conference Center including: maintaining and not significantly impacting lake views or lake access; maintaining sufficient site and design control to ensure that the facility compliments the natural setting of the park; and ensure that the development of Lodge/Conference Center does not lead to the overall commercialization of the park.

The Parks Commission has identified the area north of White Bridge Road as the potential location of the Lodge/Conference Center (see concept location in figure 131, right and concept schematic in figure 132 on page 61). The Cayuga County Legislature should explore the feasibility and economic benefit of a Lodge/Conference Center development within the park. Throughout the country there are many regional and national parks that incorporate lodging and accommodations within parks as a significant park amenity. This type of development would spur economic development in the County while bringing more tourists and visitors to the park. The County will need to engage in the preliminary work needed to support, inform, prepare and circulate a quality Request for Proposals for a Lodge/Conference Center development.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Begin the Alienation of Parkland Process and establish a timetable for future development.
- Produce a detailed site survey for the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area.
- Conduct an archeology study at the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area.
- Conduct a wetland assessment of the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area.
- Acquire funding for hiring a consultant to assist with the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) solicitation for the Lodge/Conference Center development.
- Identify prospective Lodge/Conference Center development investors by circulating a well-developed Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) solicitation.
- Conduct a market analysis and pro-forma development / ROI & CAP Rate for a potential Lodge/Conference Center development.
- Develop a deal structure to be executed with the developer/owner of a potential Lodge/Conference Center development.



Figure 130: Historic postcard of the Island Hotel on the Deauville Island shores.



Figure 131: Conceptual schematic of the approximate footprint of a potential Lodge/Conference Center.

5. ATTRACT AND DEVELOP A LODGE OR CONFERENCE CENTER IN THE PARK (continued)



Figure 132: Concept design for a possible location for a Lodge/Conference Center in Emerson Park, designed by Environmental Design & Research, Landscape Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Services, D.P.C. (EDR) from Syracuse, NY.

6. KEY PLAN ELEMENTS

GETTING FROM PLAN TO PARK IMPROVEMENTS

This Emerson Park Master Plan Update is poised to build on a decade of public and private investment in Emerson Park, leveraging successful redevelopment projects that have been realized at the park since the 2001 Master Plan was prepared, including:

- The Seawall Restoration and Construction Project
- Stabilization, Landscaping and Site Amenities along the Owasco River
- Relocation of the Park Maintenance Yard to the New Maintenance and Office Facilities
- Rebuilding of the Deauville Island Bridge
- White Bridge Road Improvements and Connections to the City of Auburn Owasco River Trail
- Establishment of a Kayak and Water Craft Rental Business at the Park
- Expansion of the Merry-Go-Round Theater
- Expansion of the Ward O’Hara Agricultural Museum including the addition of the Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski, Sr. Educational Center
- Emerson Park Pavilion Renovations, Site Improvements, and Public-Private Partnerships

This Master Plan Update process resulted in significant public participation and enthusiastic input on how to leverage these successful park investments and secure a bright future for Emerson Park. Further, while the 2001 Master Plan and the majority of earlier Park Plans were design driven, the publicly-driven, goal-oriented approach undertaken for this Master Plan Update has established three (3) overarching Project Development Goals to guide

the selection and implementation of future Emerson Park Projects:

1. Enhance and Expand Active Recreational and Cultural Uses in the Park.
2. Protect the Park’s Natural Setting and Enhance Passive Recreational Uses.
3. Add New Amenities for Expanded Uses and Programs.

Although the well-attended public participation process resulted in many projects and programs that support one or more of these three overarching goals, the Parks Commission and staff have identified five (5) Key Priority Park Improvements we believe are essential to pursue first. Collectively, the following “threshold projects” support each of the overall park development goals, set the stage for expanded public amenities and increased park use, and establish a strong foundation on which the remaining projects and programs can build:

1. Establish a Parkwide Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway System
2. Pavilion Area Playground Relocation and Expansion of Playground at Deauville Island
3. Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore Beach Area & Swimming Area Upgrades
4. Expand Boater Access and User Base with Seawall Docks and Pedestrian Bridge
5. Development and Expansion of Food Concessions in the Park

The following section takes each of these priority Threshold Projects in turn and outlines the actions needed to take them from Plan to Park Improvement.

Threshold Projects

- *Establish a Parkwide Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway System*
- *Pavilion Area Playground Relocation and Expansion of Playground at Deauville Island*
- *Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore Beach Area and Swimming Area Upgrades*
- *Expand Boater Access and User Base with Seawall Docks and Pedestrian Bridge*
- *Development and Expansion of Food Concessions in the Park*

FROM PLAN CONCEPT TO PARK IMPROVEMENT: MASTER PLAN UPDATE PRIORITY PROJECTS

1. ESTABLISH A PARKWIDE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM

There is strong public support for a project that would unify and connect the separate areas within the park and expand connections to the park from the surrounding community. A Parkwide Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway System will not only address the need to connect this large and sprawling lakeshore park in a practical and active manner, it will provide a functional spine upon which most other park amenities, such as lighting, seating, picnic and play areas, concessions and performance areas can be incorporated and expanded.

PROJECT APPROACH

The Parkwide Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway System as outlined below, is put forth in very general terms in response to public input. In concept, the pathway system provides an all-weather, durable path throughout all of Emerson Park suitable for bicycles, strollers, and pedestrians alike. Connecting the various areas of the park and providing a continuous pathway will require the construction of at least one pedestrian bridge over the Owasco Channel to Deauville Island as well as a number of intersections with internal and external roadways where the pedestrian pathway must safely connect to the vehicular circulation system. Finally, in addition to the pathway itself, there will be opportunities to provide low-level lighting along the pathway and to create nodes along the pathway where passive and active recreational activities can be designed and developed.

To move the project from concept to execution while ensuring this threshold project sets a new standard for materials and design at Emerson Park, a three-phase

development approach is recommended:

- PHASE 1 – Schematic Layout and Professional Scope of Work
- PHASE 2 – Detailed Design, Permitting and Cost Estimates
- PHASE 3 – Bidding and Construction

PHASE 1 – SCHEMATIC DESIGN & PROFESSIONAL SCOPE OF WORK

The first step in this project is to create a detailed layout of the proposed pathway system at Emerson Park. To begin, County Planning staff, in cooperation with the Parks Department, will prepare a comprehensive schematic layout within the park and incorporate the layout into a digital base map of the park. Planning staff will use this base map to generate a detailed scope of work necessary for professional landscape architects to prepare detailed design drawings, undertake required permitting and generate reliable project cost estimates.

PHASE 2 – DETAILED DESIGN, PERMITTING AND COST ESTIMATES

An RFQ/RFP for Professional Services will be developed and circulated to local and regional firms that provide landscape architecture, engineering and site development services. After securing funding and a contract for professional services, the selected firm will proceed with development of detailed designs, including the pathway system and the related pedestrian bridge(s), lighting system, roadway interconnects and active/passive activity nodes.

Phase 2 work will also include identifying and undertaking the required permitting necessary to construct the



Figure 133: Existing gravel path system along the Owasco Lakeshore.

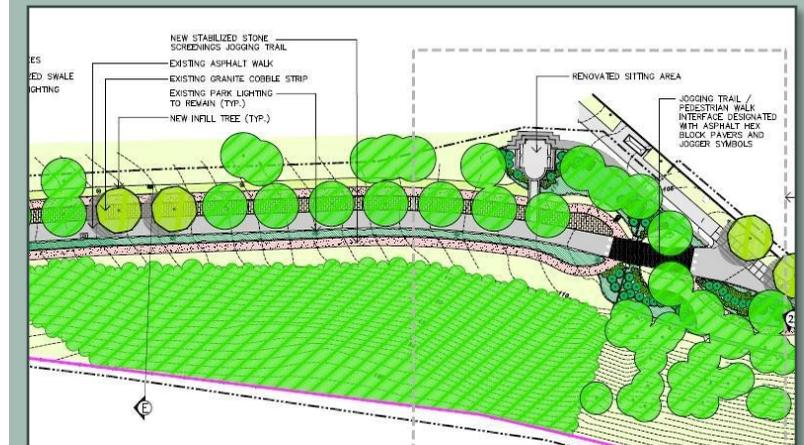


Figure 134: Example of a public park pedestrian trail design schematic.

pathway system and related site amenities. In the best case scenario, the permitting will be limited to routine administrative permits, however, if past experience holds true, permitting may be extended to Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 Archeological Assessment and Reports with permitting through New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (SHPO). Fortunately, there have been a series of archeological reports prepared for previous site work in the park which may reduce or eliminate the need for additional reviews and permitting.

Finally, Phase 2 work will address the development of detailed cost estimates for construction of the parkwide pathway system and the component parts of the system such as pedestrian bridges, lighting and site amenities.

The completed Phase 2 Design Package, with detailed design and schematics, permitting and well-defined cost estimates will provide County staff with the materials needed to identify and secure full or staged-funding to bring the project from the planning stages through construction.

PHASE 3 – BIDDING AND CONSTRUCTION

This phase is self-explanatory. Assuming funding is secured for the full project, or portions of the project if constructed in phases, the project would be placed out to bid by the County in compliance with county procurement policies. Project costs and bidding documents should include an individual or firm to provide construction oversight and management on behalf of the County.

2. PAVILION AREA PLAYGROUND RELOCATION AND EXPANSION OF PLAYGROUND AT DEAUVILLE ISLAND

This project involves removing the existing, older children’s playground area adjacent to the Merry-Go-Round Theater and Pavilion, and creating an expanded and enhanced

playground area on Deauville Island where a small playground facility is currently located. Taking on this threshold project early on sets the stage for a number of park redevelopment initiatives, including:

- Positioning Deauville Island as the primary active recreation area within the park, taking advantage of beach and swimming access, existing and new boater access, upgraded restroom facilities and enhanced picnic facilities. Likewise, relocating the playground from the Pavilion Area, allows the reprogramming of this space for passive recreational uses and shifts this section of the park from active recreation toward picnicking, strolling, arts and cultural, and related passive uses.
- Removing the existing playground from the Pavilion Area adjacent to the heavily traveled State Route 38A eliminates the need for the institutional chain link fencing along this portion of the park that can be replaced with a more appropriate park-like fencing and landscaping in conjunction with and complementing the parkwide pedestrian and bicycle pathway system.
- Upgrading the playground facilities at Deauville Island provides an opportunity to incorporate playground amenities that have been called for in the park for years, including seating and shelter areas for supervising adults and their children; and the creation of play and exercise stations that cater to more than young children, providing recreational opportunities for “children of all ages”.

PROJECT APPROACH

The project approach for removing the Pavilion Area Playground and replacing it with an expanded and enhanced playground at Deauville Island is quite straightforward. The primary emphasis will be on



Figure 135: Example of adult fitness stations.



Figure 136: Example of an improved perimeter of a public park with the addition of landscaping and a split-rail style fence.

integrating the new playground with related improvement projects at Deauville Island while ensuring that the new playground facilities provide for a range of ages; and are of high quality and incorporate comfortable seating and shelter facilities for those using the playground area. Another aspect of the project that needs to be addressed is ensuring that a plan for the former playground area be prepared. This can be as simple as grading and seeding the area in anticipation that future park improvements, such as new fencing and landscaping, the bicycle and pedestrian pathway or expanded picnic areas, will incorporate site specific improvements when they are developed.

Like all new projects at Emerson Park, the playground relocation and expansion project would benefit from a design-focused approach utilizing the services of a site designer or landscape architect, especially when working to integrate the new playground area into the overall redevelopment plan for Deauville Island.

3. DEAUVILLE ISLAND AND OWASCO LAKESHORE BEACH AREA & SWIMMING AREA UPGRADES

Throughout the entire public participation process, residents and park users called for improving the Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore Beach Areas. Characterized at public meetings as the “people’s lakeshore”, residents and park users called for improving the swimming experience by providing increased depth in the swimming areas, upgrading the beachfront edges of the lake, expanding the swimming areas and hours of operation, and enhancing passive and active recreation areas adjacent to the beaches.

This Plan proposes to continue using the Deauville Island beach area as the primary swimming beach within the park and the emphasis will be on improvements and upgrades to this beach area, including the restroom facilities and adjacent picnic and recreation areas. On the Owasco

Lakeshore, which is currently used only when the Deauville Island beach area is closed or unavailable, the plan calls for improvements to the beach area at the shoreline and enhancements to the adjacent picnic areas between the Pavilion and the lakeshore.

PROJECT APPROACH

As with other projects on Deauville Island and throughout the park, executing these improvements should focus on integrating the beach and beach-area improvements with related improvement projects on the Island while ensuring that the new beach facilities result in a swimming area that will attract new users to the park and provide high quality amenities for individuals, groups and families using the beach and swimming area. Swimming and beach area improvements fall into two broad categories:

- Beach and Lakeshore Improvements; and
- Restroom and Picnic Area Improvements.

BEACH AND LAKEFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Increasing the Swimming Area Depth. While the extensive shallow swimming areas at Deauville Island and the Owasco Lakeshore provide safe and enjoyable wading and water play areas for young children, there was a consistent public request for creating a swimming area with deeper waters to allow swimming, diving and the like for other, older users. Many of the prior Emerson Park Plans have also called for increasing the depth of these swimming areas and incorporating floating diving platforms and similar amenities. The challenge then, and now, is that the topography and natural systems existing at the northern end of Owasco Lake work against efforts to dredge and deepen the lake bottom, filling in the excavated areas over time. With an ample budget, it would be possible to undertake the required dredging on a



Figure 137: Example of a park swimming area with seating close to the beach and water deep enough for adults to swim in.



Figure 138: Example of a floating diving platform in a public park swimming area.

recurring schedule to maintain ample swimming depth. In order to assess the ongoing operational costs for this effort and balance that cost against other park development needs, a pilot program of dredging and depth monitoring could be conducted to measure the time it takes the natural wave action of the lake to fill in the excavated swimming areas.

Other Beach Area and Lakeshore Improvements. Focus group and meeting participants emphasized the importance of expanding and maintaining the sand beach along the lakeshore swimming areas. This would include extending the depth of the sand beach between the shoreline and the grass areas and increasing the depth of the sand within this zone. While the sand beach is maintained on a scheduled basis, many meeting participants noted that a daily cleaning of the beach area is necessary due to the amount of natural and manmade materials that tend to wash up on the beach.

Beyond the sand beach area, the lakefront edge adjacent to the swimming areas currently consists of old rip-rap and rubble that is not only unattractive, but creates an unsafe barrier between the lakeshore areas and the water. This material should be removed and replaced with an alternative, user-friendly lakeshore edge. Historic photos of the Deauville Island shoreline (see figure 139 on right) show a low, concrete seat wall creating an easy, two-step transition between the grassy lakeshore picnic areas and the shallow waters at the island's edge. This type of shore treatment may be cost-prohibitive to install in light of other needed improvements at the Park. An alternative to consider would be the creation of a natural stone edge, using large, flat rock shelves strategically arranged to provide a natural, assessable transition from shore to water.

The last component of the beach and lakeshore improvements brought up at the public meetings was for

expanding both the defined swimming areas (those sections cordoned off by ropes and buoys) and the expansion of hours of operation for supervised swimming by lifeguards. Providing that the beach and swim area improvements are undertaken, and anticipating that other park improvements at Deauville Island and throughout the park successfully increase overall park use and activity, the expansion of operational hours for the swim areas could be tailored to accommodate demand.

RESTROOM AND PICNIC AREA IMPROVEMENTS

Restroom Facilities. The existing restroom facilities at Deauville Island are adequate and serviceable but they are showing their age. A plus for these facilities is that their plumbing systems were designed to deal with the level of sand and similar elements typically found in heavily used recreational facilities.

Notwithstanding the commercial plumbing system, an assessment of the facility's infrastructure, including plumbing, lighting and electric, fixtures and structural components, should be undertaken to identify improvement needs prior to undertaking any cosmetic or site improvements.

Assuming that that facility infrastructure outlined above is addressed, the project focus should shift to cosmetic and functional improvements of the restroom and the area immediately surrounding the structure. On the interior, upgrades to the fixtures, finishes and restroom amenities should be identified, budgeted and installed with attention to a balance of user comfort and ease of maintenance.

On the exterior, accommodation should be made for an improved "waiting area" incorporating a trellis-like structure for shelter and shade, hardscape flooring and the installation of appropriate seating and lighting.



Figure 139: Historic image of the seat wall on Deauville Island.



Figure 140: Existing gravel "waiting area" outside of restrooms.

Completing the exterior improvements would be the installation of low maintenance ground cover and landscape areas to enhance the overall setting.

When considering comprehensive facility upgrades and site improvements for the restroom areas, future facility use to accommodate the varied needs of larger crowds attending public performances and events on Deauville Island should be kept in mind.

4. EXPAND BOATER ACCESS AND USER BASE WITH SEAWALL DOCKS AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

The majority of the previous Emerson Park Plans going back to the earliest plan in 1968, all called for the establishment of lakeshore boat docks providing increased access to Emerson Park for boaters on Owasco Lake. It was not surprising that public participants brought up this idea time and again at each of the three public meetings, and submitted the concept through the focus group surveys and via email from the project website. During the public meeting breakout sessions, many Owasco Lake boaters pointed out that taking the time to bring their boats all the way down the Owasco River to temporarily dock near the White Bridge Road public launch site, where they would find themselves on the periphery of the park and its amenities, was enough of a constraint to often keep boaters out on the lake and out of the park. On a related note, many boaters indicated that the establishment of easily accessible lakeshore boat docks should be complimented by access to expanded food concessions and improved restroom facilities (see Key Projects 3 and 5, above and below).

Understandably, many park users suggesting the establishment of lakeshore boat docks point to the seasonal, docks installed adjacent to the Village of Skaneateles pier during the boating season and the enhanced access this

provides between the Village, the lake, and boaters in addition to being an essential feature of the annual Antique Boats Show. While the Village of Skaneateles provides considerably more in terms of food and services for boaters docking along the Village Pier, the concept is the same.

An additional consideration for the lakeshore floating docks is finding a location with suitable depth for safe and convenient access. The conceptual plan included in this Plan places the docks on the Deauville (west) side of the western seawall pier. Although this particular site would provide easy access to enhanced and improved activities centered on Deauville Island and would offer boaters easy access to the Pavilion Area and Merry-Go-Round Theater via an additional pedestrian bridge over the channel, the functional and technical limitations for installation in this shallow section of the lakeshore would need to be assessed and addressed.

PROJECT APPROACH

Lakeshore Docks. There are many local and regional companies whose sole business and expertise focuses on the installation of permanent and floating docks on Finger Lakes waters. Enlisting the technical and advisory assistance from a firm experienced in design and installation of municipal-scaled dock systems to assess the siting opportunities and constraints within the park is the first step in project development. After an appropriate project site is determined and accurate and reliable cost estimates for this major project component is identified, a determination can be made on the need and value of expanding the project to incorporate the pedestrian connections between Deauville Island and the Pavilion Area (see below).

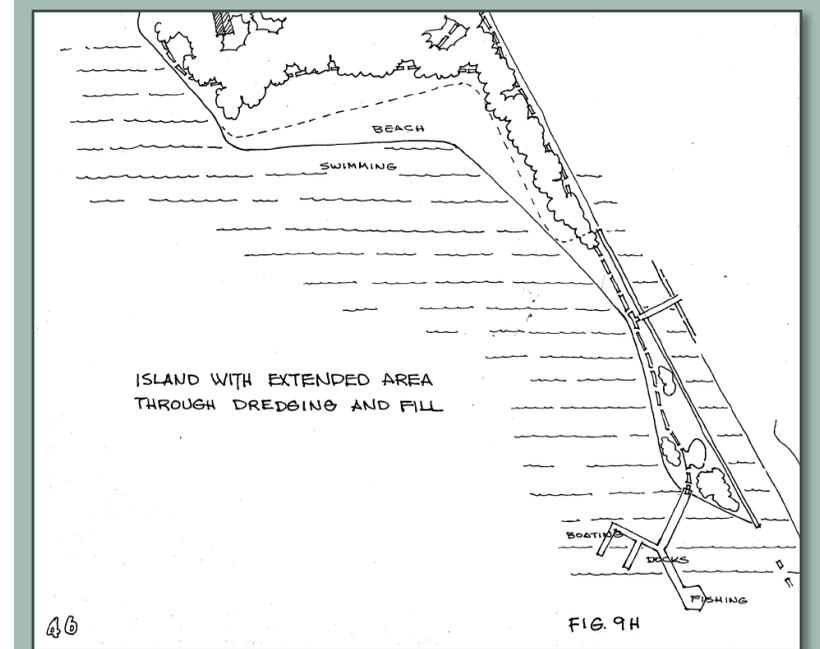


Figure 141: Beach and Seawall area plan from the 1975 Emerson Park Plan.



Figure 142: Skaneateles Chamber Community Docks, installed annually in mid June and removed in early October.

Clearly, a major capital project such as installation of seasonal or permanent docks along the lakeshore must address many practical considerations, including but not limited to long term maintenance and upkeep, seasonable durability, park security and county liability. That said, this type of boater access is certainly not unique among successful municipal and state parks throughout the Finger Lakes and would be a significant addition and asset for one of the premier County parks in the region.

Pedestrian Bridge. In its current location and configuration shown in the Plan, the installation of seasonal or permanent lakeshore docks off the west pier south of Deauville Island is complimented by the installation of a pedestrian bridge over the Owasco River at the foot of the seawall. This connecting link between lakeshore boater access and the Pavilion complex also creates a setting for the potential lakeshore restaurant discussed in Section 5, below. It is reasonable to question the creation of a pedestrian bridge at the foot of the seawall when an existing bridge connecting Deauville Island to the Pavilion Area is approximately 1,000-feet further into the park. In considering the viability and cost of installing this pedestrian bridge, project developers and funders would have to weigh the 2,000-foot distance down to the existing Deauville Bridge and back up to the Pavilion Area or potential lakeshore restaurant sites in light of the ease of immediate user access to the Pavilion Area, the theater and potential restaurant site. In addition, extending the number of connecting pathways through the park, especially pedestrian connections immediately adjacent to the lakeshore, will only enhance the park experience for the user and increase opportunities to expand park amenities.

If the planned installation and location of the lakeshore docks supports the creation of an additional pedestrian bridge connecting the Deauville Island to the Pavilion Area along the shoreline, an engineering and site design firm

should be retained to provide for design, permitting, final cost estimates and bid preparation. With this project development work in place, County Planning staff can explore federal and state funding resources for project implementation. While the total project anticipates both the lakeshore docks and the connecting pedestrian bridge, these project components can be approached individually provided their design and execution accommodates integration into a single comprehensive plan.

5. DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF FOOD CONCESSIONS IN THE PARK

There was not a single, consistent recommendation brought up more frequently during the public participation process than the call for developing and expanding food concessions in the park. While this is clearly an amenity that must be supported by a demonstrated market need, the absence of available concessions within the park is clearly seen as a lost opportunity by the majority of park users, including daily park users and occasional park users.

User input favored a broad range of concession opportunities within the park from low-cost, simple concession vendors; to Food Truck Vendors; to the consideration of a casual, waterfront restaurant. Bringing this range of concessions to the park will require a multi-faceted approach that falls easily into two areas:

- Soliciting, staging and promoting simple concessions and vending opportunities; and
- Soliciting and developing a lakeshore restaurant through a public-private partnership

While these two focus areas differ in scale and complexity, they both require the ongoing, active dedication of county staff and resources to bring these projects from concept to



Figure 143: Example of a pedestrian bridge over navigable water in a public park.



Figure 144: Example of a concession stand in a public park.

development. The general project approach for each of these efforts is outlined below.

PROJECT APPROACH

Soliciting, Staging and Promoting Simple Concessions and Vending Opportunities. For many years, the Parks Commission has made low-cost vending licenses available at Emerson Park, providing opportunities for small or large vendors to operate within the park and, consequently there are and have been limited mobile vendors operating seasonal concessions within the park from time to time. Currently, there are no consistent vendors providing food concessions on a day-to-day schedule. Clearly, vendors need a viable market of consistent park users to support their business, while the absence of available concessions within the park inhibits expanded park use and attendance. While this creates a classic “chicken and the egg” situation, successful development of the previous four key projects looks to increase park use, attendance and activity, setting the stage for expanded concessions.

Like many programs being proposed in the Plan, an individual focused on attracting, managing, marketing and promoting concessions within the park is an essential component for successful implementation. Although affordable vending licenses are available for park concessions, the active promotion of the vending opportunities must be coupled with management and incentives in order to solicit new, consistent vendors to the park.

Incentives for vending can take many forms, including the following:

- Availability of water, electricity and storage;
- Promotion through an enhanced Emerson Park website;

- Coordination and scheduling assistance with park activities, festivals and events;
- Availability of low-cost financing through County economic development loan funds; and
- Creating attractive and well-maintained staging areas in key park activity locations, with lighting, signage, Wi-Fi availability, café seating and nearby restrooms.

One aspect of simple, mobile concessions favored during public participation meetings that should be explored is the relatively new phenomena of “Food Truck Rodeos”. Food Truck and Food Truck Rodeo Events are gaining widespread popularity in urban settings throughout the Finger Lakes. The incentives listed above, along with an active effort by dedicated personnel to solicit, attract and stage these food events, either alone or in connection with various park festivals, must be pursued for concessions in the park to grow along with the proposed park improvements and park users.

Soliciting and Developing a Lakeshore Restaurant Through a Public-Private Partnership. During public discussions on expanding food concession options within the park as a key amenity for all park users, there were many recommendations to establish a casual, sit-down restaurant near the lakeshore with views out to Owasco Lake. Clearly the participating public believed that access to a lakeshore restaurant serving lunch, dinner and beverages would increase attendance in the park. Many participants noted the fact that there is only a single lakefront restaurant on Owasco Lake, located at the far, south end of the lake in Moravia, pointing out that if a lakefront restaurant in Emerson Park provided easy pedestrian access for boaters coming in off the lake, it could enjoy a steady stream of boating customers for three seasons. Other meeting participants identified the



Figure 145: Example of a food vendor in a public park.



Figure 146: View from inside a lakeshore restaurant.

many patrons of the Merry-Go-Round Theater in the park as a natural source of steady restaurant customers both before and after the musical performances.

Naturally, the discussion of a lakeshore restaurant during the public meetings extended to questions regarding the availability of the Pavilion to serve this function. While there were times in the past that seasonal public dining at the Pavilion was attempted, the primary use of the Pavilion then, and now, has been for catered events such as weddings, parties and meetings. Currently, the Pavilion is under a license from the County to H&J Hospitality, providing the company with full use of the Pavilion as a catering facility, continuing the long tradition of hosting weddings within the Park and similar catered events. The current license extends to 2018 with the opportunity for extensions thereafter. While dedication of the Pavilion to catered events under a license between the County and a private hospitality company precludes the opportunity for the Pavilion to function as a lakefront restaurant serving park users and the public, it does showcase the opportunities that exist when a public-private partnership is created in a joint effort to expand amenities within the park.

There are both opportunities and challenges associated with creating the public-private partnership needed to develop a lakeshore restaurant serving park users. The opportunity lies in utilizing private sector expertise, business skill and private financing to create a significant park amenity that may generate additional park use and revenue. The challenge lies in balancing the risk of funding the pre-development work needed to catalyze the project against the possibility that the project may not be fully realized. The project approach detailed below outlines the pre-development steps that should be taken to position the project for partnership and development. Whether the County undertakes the pre-development work, or a private

developer takes on these tasks—or a some combination of the two, it is the recommendation of this Plan that the minimal risk in pre-development work and effort by either partner is certainly worth the potential reward associated with successful development of a lakeshore restaurant within Emerson Park.

PROJECT APPROACH

The project approach detailed below outlines four (4) pre-development steps needed to position the project for development or, with the completion of a market feasibility study and pro-forma economic analysis, to determine that the project is not financially viable at this time. They are:

1. Schematic Design and Layout Options
2. Facility Construction and Equipment Cost Estimates
3. Market Feasibility Study and Pro-Forma Economic Analysis
4. Circulation of Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) and Follow-Up Negotiations

Schematic Design Through Cost Estimates. The project concept put forth in the Plan calls for siting the restaurant in the general area of the Seawall Shelter, adjacent to the Owasco River and close to the west end of the Pavilion. In this site scenario, the Seawall Shelter and surrounding asphalt “picnic areas” would be removed and the restaurant would be developed in this general area with landscaping and lakeshore deck dining facing Owasco Lake. Benefits to this location are the direct access to existing parking, proximity to the Pavilion grounds and the Merry-Go-Round Theater, and pedestrian access to the Seawall walkways with the option of a new pedestrian bridge over the Owasco River leading to lakeshore docks.



Figure 147: H & J Hospitality’s logo.

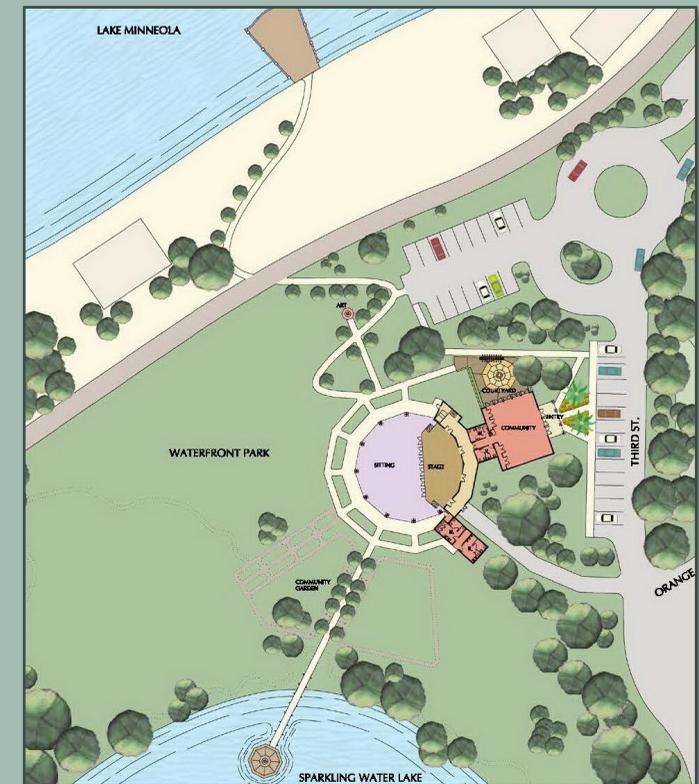


Figure 148: Example of a site design for a lakeside restaurant.

Although the location described above benefits from a number of positive attributes, it is not the only option to explore. The Plan recommends securing the services of an architecture or engineering firm with expertise in commercial restaurant development with a scope of services to include two pre-development tasks:

- Site Assessment, Schematic Design and Layout Options
- Facility Construction and Equipment Cost Estimates

These pre-development steps provide the necessary site and financial information to secure and conduct a market feasibility study, support pro-forma economic analysis to assess the potential for the project to be economically viable, and provide a suitable return on investment for a development partner.

Market Feasibility Study and Pro-Forma Economic Analysis. Using the schematic layout and development cost estimates from steps 1 & 2 above, the third pre-development task is to solicit and secure a market feasibility study for the restaurant and subsequent pro-forma economic analysis of the full development to assess market viability and potential return on investment. If the market feasibility and economic pro-forma do not support project development and return on investment, the project will be suspended. If the analysis yields positive results and indicates a suitable return on investment, the project will proceed to the final pre-development phase outlined below.

Circulation of Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) and Follow-Up Negotiations. With positive indicators, and the public support documented in the Plan, the final pre-development phase focuses on identifying a viable private sector restaurant-developer to partner with the County on the project. An excellent means of identifying potential partners and securing a good fit for the project is by

developing and circulating a Request for Expression of Interest, or “RFEI”. The RFEI would outline the project proposal in general terms, providing the information gathered in the pre-development phase including schematic layouts, construction and facility costs, a market feasibility study, and pro-forma economic analysis. The RFEI presents the opportunity for a public-private partnership and the general scenarios available for pursuing the development project.

With a successful pre-development phase and positive response to a RFEI, including productive negotiations and careful deal structuring, the proposed project would be prepared for final development. It is beyond the scope of this Plan to detail the development scenario beyond the pre-development work outlined here—which could be undertaken by the County, by a project partner or a combination of both. With the support of the public, county leadership and/or private investment in pre-development analysis, the proposed development of a lakeshore restaurant within Emerson Park, serving the users of the park and expanding park amenities, is possible.

IN CLOSING

The Emerson Park Master Plan Update process provided an excellent forum for park users and the general public to come together, look at the park as it is today, build on the park’s strengths and establish a clear set of overall goals to guide the future development of this outstanding lakeshore park. During this public participation process a great number of project and program ideas were brought forward, with many of the ideas representing recurring themes and projects from past plans which were never implemented.



Figure 149: Photograph from the August 22, 2014 meeting.

Park users and the general public then worked with the Parks Commission and staff to filter these collected ideas, programs and project opportunities, through the overarching park goals, distilling over one-hundred possible projects and programs into the twenty-one proposed park improvements and initiatives included in this Plan. When the draft concept plan was presented on August 27, 2014, the participating public was enthusiastic, energized and optimistic that the 2015 Emerson Park Master Plan would result in positive and proactive improvements to Emerson Park.

The five (5) Key Projects detailed in this chapter are true threshold projects that will jump-start the redevelopment and improvement of Emerson Park and build on the positive public support generated during the Master Plan process.



Figure 150: Concept Plan of Emerson Park highlighting the approximate location of the 5 Key Projects referenced in the plan.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

PRIORITIES FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

There are twenty-one (21) main projects proposed in this plan for future development and programming at Emerson Park. As outlined in Chapter 5, each of these projects has several key project components (smaller sub-projects) that collectively accomplish the larger project. Each project has been classified into one of four priority levels based on their immediate importance, impact and scope of work needed to develop the project.

The first priority level, **Key Plan Element**, categorizes the projects that should be undertaken first and that are considered “threshold projects” that set the stage for expanding other park amenities and programs at a future date. More detail on these five (5) projects is provided in Chapter 6.

The second priority level, **Primary Plan Element**, categorizes projects that are still a high priority and should be undertaken at the beginning of the implementation process for this plan, but after the Key Plan Elements have been established. There are six (6) projects in this priority level.

The third priority level, **Support Plan Element**, categorizes seven (7) projects and programs that either already exist and function fairly well, but that could benefit from additional support and enhancements from the County; or once established will provide support amenities for park users and the overall function of the park.

The fourth and final priority level, **Provisional Plan Element**, categorizes three (3) projects that are larger in scope, including the time required for design and construction, than the others recommended in the plan.

The implementation matrix, on the following pages, purposefully does not include specific time frames for completion, allowing for flexibility in project development as funding opportunities become available. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development staff will function as the design review committee for all future development projects in the park to ensure that a cohesive design theme is adhered throughout the park and that all future development is complementary to other amenities in the park.

PROJECT	KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS	PRIORITY LEVEL
<p>1. CREATE A PARKWIDE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate a lakeshore “promenade” on the Owasco Lakeshore near the Pavilion as an integral component of the parkwide multi-use pathway with landscape plantings and sculptures; opportunities for activity, entertainment, seating/eating; and other points of interest along this portion of the pathway. • Install a pedestrian bridge over the Owasco River near the foot of western seawall connecting the proposed lakefront floating docks and Deauville Island to the Owasco Lakeshore by the Pavilion. • Install a pedestrian bridge over the Deauville Island Channel east of the Express Mart station connecting Deauville Island to the path system south of White Bridge Road. • Design and install a parkwide lighting system. • Install maps and informational kiosks at strategic locations around the Park. • Create a mobile application providing Park information to users. 	<p>KEY PLAN ELEMENT</p>
<p>2. UPGRADE & IMPROVE PLAYGROUND FACILITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate the main Playground Facilities adjacent to the Pavilion to the Deauville Island Playground Area. • Design and install shade/weather shelters, with seating, for the consolidated playground at Deauville Island; and include amenities for picnicking. • When developing a long-term plan for the Deauville Island playground expansion, consider including spray-park features either now or in the future. • Include equipment for seniors and handicapped persons at the consolidated playground area, i.e. swings and exercise equipment. 	<p>KEY PLAN ELEMENT</p>
<p>3. IMPROVE THE BEACHES AND SWIMMING AREAS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways to improve the existing swimming areas and provide access to deeper water for swimming on both Deauville Island and on the Owasco Lakeshore. Improvements to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conduct an analysis of the feasibility of dredging deeper swimming areas, identifying the cost of the initial dredging and the anticipated frequency for re-dredging to maintain the deeper waters. ◆ Explore opportunities to replace the current “rip-rap” installed along and adjacent to the swimming areas with shoreline materials that would facilitate lakeshore seating and access for bathers and boaters. Increase the width of the beach area between the lakeshore and grass as well as the sand depth. ◆ The creation of small, movable, café-style seating areas near the swimming areas, expanding the lakeshore picnic opportunities beyond the traditional laying out of a beach blanket. ◆ Maintain and upgrade the interior and exterior of the existing restrooms near both the Deauville Island and Owasco Lakeshore swimming areas. ◆ Expand life guard hours. ◆ Prepare a wildlife management plan to control the bird populations and their waste around the swimming areas. 	<p>KEY PLAN ELEMENT</p>
<p>4. EXPAND BOATER AND BOAT ACCESS TO AND FROM OWASCO LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install boat slips on floating docks along west side of seawall off Deauville Island providing boater and boat access to and from Owasco Lake to the park. • Improve the existing White Bridge Road boat launch area. • Design and install temporary floating and permanent docks at the White Bridge Road boat launch. • Improve the White Bridge Road Boat Launch parking areas and adjacent car overflow parking area serving the Boat Launch. • Sponsor, or allow others to program, promote and sponsor, dinner boat and/or lake cruises as a park amenity. 	<p>KEY PLAN ELEMENT</p>
<p>5. EXPAND FOOD CONCESSIONS AND OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PARK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange and/or expand leases with food truck operators. • Provide concession options for seasonal food and picnicking within the park. Create concession amenity areas for vendors to access. • Develop a Public/Private Development Proposal for a Lakeshore Dining Facility. • Expand food service at the Pavilion and/or provide food service at the Seawall Shelter via the Pavilion. 	<p>KEY PLAN ELEMENT</p>

PROJECT	KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS	PRIORITY LEVEL
6. ENHANCE AND UPGRADE THE IMAGE OF THE PARK ALONG NYS ROUTE 38A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and install Park Entry (parkway) Signs at key locations along access roads (Lake Ave., West Lake Rd., White Bridge Rd, Owasco Rd., and NYS Route 38A). • Widen the lanes, improve crosswalks, and add/replace curbing along the median strip for the main entrance road at NYS Route 38A. • Replace the fencing and improve the roadway edge on both sides of NYS Route 38A by adding curbing, plantings and/or visual amenities; and integrate these improvements where appropriate with the parkwide pedestrian and bicycle path. • Install porous pavement at the Ward W. O’Hara Agricultural Museum, align the southernmost entrance to this lot with the main entrance of park across the street, and upgrade the crosswalk to the main park. 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT
7. ENHANCE AND UPGRADE THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PARK ENTRANCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the existing vehicle entrances and parking areas at Fleming Lakeshore area of the park. • Install directional signs in downtown Auburn directing tourists and visitors to the park. • Open the gates on White Bridge Road <u>after events</u> for exiting when safe and practical. • Upgrade the crosswalk at White Bridge Road and NYS Route 38A. 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT
8. ENHANCE AND PROTECT LAKESHORE ACCESS AND VIEWS FROM THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish erosion-controls along with lake access improvements at the Fleming Lakeshore. • Design and install improved lakeshore access between the west side of the seawall and the beach area at Deauville Island which currently consists of rubble and rip-rap. • Provide small, seasonal café-style tables and chairs along the lakeshore areas to enhance picnic and seating areas. • Replace the Island Shelter on Deauville Island, which is beyond reasonable repair and investment, with a newly designed shelter suitably located on the island to compliment the long-term re-programming of Deauville Island with regard to expanding active and cultural uses while maintaining shore access and lake vistas 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT
9. UPGRADE AND IMPROVE THE PARK’S NATURAL SYSTEMS AND ECOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a system to catch and filter stormwater surface drainage in the main parking areas before discharging into the channel and Owasco River. • Construct bio-swales, native plant communities, pervious pavement, and bio-filter systems to catch and filter storm water throughout the park. • Install stream bank stabilization and natural planting buffers along streams within the park. • Promote bird watching and construct osprey nest platforms. 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT
10. UPGRADE AND ENHANCE PICNIC AND RELAXATION AREAS THROUGHOUT THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade electrical service to the shelters on Deauville Island. • Replace the Island Shelter on Deauville Island. The roof system currently has significant structural problems. • Create attractive identification name signs for all Park Shelters so that people can easily identify them when attending events or reserving the spaces. • Purchase and install tables, benches and a shade shelter near the Deauville swimming area. In addition to the larger picnic tables typically found within the park, the availability of small, café-style tables and chairs which could be easily moved and arranged to suit small and large parties, would be a welcome improvement. • Create an enhanced picnic area near the boat launch. • Provide shade trees and seating closer to the lakeshore by the Pavilion. 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT
11. SUPPORT AND EXPAND KAYAK & CANOE RENTALS AND ACCESS TO THE LAKE AND THE OWASCO RIVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park entrance signs at the Fleming Lakeshore entrance areas that note the availability of canoe and kayak launches. • Create a canoe and kayak launch area at the Deauville Island Channel on east side of the Fleming Lakeshore. • Improve and expand the existing parking areas on the Fleming Lakeshore and restrict parking on the grass areas at the Fleming Lakeshore site, reserving this areas for pedestrian and picnic uses. • Establish a seasonal storage/retrieval service for paddle-craft at the Fleming Lakeshore and ensure the design and development are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design. 	PRIMARY PLAN ELEMENT

PROJECT	KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS	PRIORITY LEVEL
12. ESTABLISH A FIRST AID-SAFETY STATION IN THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the feasibility of providing a designated building or area of a building, centrally located, within the park for a First Aid-Safety Station with personnel to administer required first aid services. Ensure that all public events at the park are served by a First Aid-Safety Station, either in a permanent structure, a temporary event tent or dedicated vehicle. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
13. CREATE FAMILY-FRIENDLY AND EDUCATIONAL NATURE TRAILS IN THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve existing and establish new nature trails in the area north of White Bridge Road. Encourage year round use of the park by providing for ice skating, ice fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
14. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DOG PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with CNYDOG to conduct a site walk through prior to final design for dog park area. Identify any siting opportunities and/or constraints at proposed location in the park. Seek professional design services for the final design of the dog park to ensure compatibility with the rest of Emerson Park and water quality in the lake. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
15. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE WARD W. O'HARA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND DR. JOSEPH F. KARPINSKI, SR. EDUCATIONAL CENTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum Board of Directors to assess the needs for enhancement and/or growth of the museum. Provide museum site enhancements as identified by the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural Museum Board of Directors that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
16. ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL USE AT THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with representatives from the Auburn Little League program to assess the needs for enhancement of the ball field area in the park, including opportunities to address the safe and secure pick-up and drop-off of players. Provide enhancements as identified by the Auburn Little League program that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
17. ENHANCE THE MERRY-GO-ROUND THEATER PLAYHOUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and upgrade the existing restrooms near the ticket booth and main park entrance. Improve and expand café seating outside the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse Theater building. Build upon and expand the concession offerings available to Merry-Go-Round patrons adjacent to the theater. Improve the landscaping and access paths outside of the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse Theater building. Allow or solicit valet service at the pavilion and theater for events. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT
18. MAINTAIN & PROMOTE THE DISC GOLF COURSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with the Central New York Disc Golf Association and users of the Emerson Park disc golf course to assess the needs for enhancement and/or growth of the course. Provide course enhancements as identified by users that are compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design. 	SUPPORT PLAN ELEMENT

PROJECT	KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS	PRIORITY LEVEL
19. CREATE A MULTI-PURPOSE LAKESHORE PERFORMANCE AND MUSIC VENUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and develop facilities for concerts, dances and other entertainment. Consider a phased approach to developing performance infrastructure. • Construct an amphitheater or band shelter. • Sponsor, or allow others to program, promote and sponsor, a variety of music and performance concerts within the park. 	PROVISIONAL PLAN ELEMENT
20. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCORPORATE A MULTI-USE PUBLIC MARKET / FARMER'S MARKET IN THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote collaboration and coordination with the Auburn Farmer's Market and other regional market organizations and explore the development of a multi-use public market or farmer's market in the park where all participating groups could expand their services and market offerings. • Explore the feasibility of starting the market in a temporary seasonal structure, such as a tent, to measure the use and popularity of such a space prior to developing a permanent structure in the park. • Ensure that the placement and design of the market, whether temporary or permanent, is compatible with the Themes for Implementation for Emerson Park and the overall park design. 	PROVISIONAL PLAN ELEMENT
21. ATTRACT AND DEVELOP A LODGE / CONFERENCE CENTER IN THE PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the Alienation of Parkland Process and establish a timetable for future development. • Produce a detailed site survey for the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area. • Conduct an archeology study at the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area. • Conduct a wetland assessment of the potential Lodge/Conference Center location area. • Acquire funding for hiring a consultant to assist with the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) Solicitation for the Lodge/Conference Center development. • Identify prospective Lodge/Conference Center development investors by circulating a well-developed Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) solicitation. • Conduct a market analysis and pro-forma development / ROI & CAP Rate for a potential Lodge/Conference Center development. • Develop a deal structure to be executed with the developer/owner of a potential Lodge/Conference Center development. 	PROVISIONAL PLAN ELEMENT

8. APPENDIX A

ANNOTATED HISTORY OF EMERSON PARK

April 1, 1850 Oliver Hubbard sold a strip of land on "Hubbards Island" to the State of NY.

On April 1, 1852, two years later to the day, the NY State Legislature appropriated \$7000 for creating the channel.

1852 "Two Mile House" Tavern, situated on the old channel, is built by Charles S. Peet. Two Mile House Tavern was a 2-story structure with sweeping verandas. This early commercial endeavor was prompted by creation of the Auburn-Moravia Plank Road. Later that same year, Charles S. Peet sold the tavern to George W. Taladay.

1862 - 1898 According to the records, for nearly four decades, a Mr. Townsend operated the Tavern.

1868 The state created the island by constructing the channel.

June 1890 Haines "skipped out", apparently leaving some bad debts behind. According to the record, the property reverted back to Helen Stewart Crocker and Robert W. Forbes. It was at this time they sold the land to the East of the Island, (now Emerson Park) to the Auburn City Railroad Company.

1893 The "Island" is leased to Mr. Thomas Quinn and Mr. Dennis McCarthy and is now serviced by the trolley which ran along Lake Ave.

June 1895 Crocker and Forbes reserved a roadway from 38A over to the Island. Crocker and Forbes in turn at this time sell this right of way and the island to Mr. John J. Smith of the Inter-Urban Railway Co.

1895 The original lakeside pavilion at Owasco Lake is constructed. This grand wooden pavilion hosted big bands and dancing every afternoon and evening during the summer season.

1897 John J. Smith, reportedly undergoing financial problems, sells the Island at public auction. The records show that the property reverts back once again to Helen Stewart Crocker and Robert W. Forbes. Then later, Helen Stewart Crocker and Robert W. Forbes offered to give the island to the City of Auburn under certain conditions. The City of Auburn denied the offer.

1899 Mr. Michael Carmody then bought the Island and for 20 years it was called "Carmody's Island Park"

April 1889 The Island is sold to Charles D. and Elmer T. Haines.

July 1, 1889 The "Owasco Lake Park", replete with a "Coney Island Atmosphere" opened and included the Merry-Go-Round. This was also the debut of the miniature train ride which included 350 linear feet of track.

July 21, 1899 Carmody's Island Park opened with fanfare, and colored lights on the exhibits.

1900 At the turn of the century, with the Island Park in full swing, the dance hall was created out of the old merry-go-round.

1904 The Island Theater is built. Mr. James Hennessy was the theater manager. Mr. Hennessy was a well-known businessman with a talent for getting top acts to play at the Burtis Opera House in Auburn, which he also managed.

1905 According to the record, this is when the seawalls on the island are constructed by Carmody. At the same time, the ice cream cone, a new introduction from the Saint Louis Fair - is introduced in the Park.

1908 The Trolley is extended to White Bridge Road, then to Owasco Road. During this time, the "Figure 8 Roller Coaster" is constructed at Lakeside Park.

May 1912 The Island Pavilion burns to the ground. The owner at that time, the Auburn and Syracuse Electric Railroad Company, decides to rebuild on the same site. A new pavilion opens just a few months later in July 1912. It featured new amenities, like the 5,200 square foot dance floor, an orchestra platform, a fully-equipped restaurant the iconic fountain, and the new Pavilion is the setting for the largest "pleasure park" pavilion veranda in the United States. According to reports, a crowd of 3,500 attended the official opening.

1920 Welcome to the Roaring 20's. The Merry-go-round building is converted again to a roller skating rink.

1926 Merry-go-round building-rink used for Monday night boxing accommodated 800 fans.

1929 -1935 During the Depression many people flocked to the park on weekends.

In 1930, the trolley line ceased to operate and Lakeside Park went bankrupt. Fred Emerson, from the Dunn & McCarthy Shoe Company,

purchased the park for \$250,000 and renamed it Enna Jettick Park, after a brand name line of women's shoes that were manufactured in Auburn.

July 1935 Bills, the owner of the park at that time sold the Island to Edward F. Brayer who named it Deauville Island Park.

The Enna Jettick Park continued to operate until World War II, when it was closed for several years due to rationing. It closed for the last time **in 1944**, and on **June 17, 1941** The Emerson Foundation deeded the Park then called "Enna Jettick" to Cayuga County for \$1, with the stipulation it would be free for the benefit of the people of Cayuga County.

1947 John and Mary Padlick bought the Island, expanded to include the Ferris wheel and dodge-em cars. July 4th and-or Labor Day Padlicks began the fireworks display on the Island.

By the **early 1960s**, the amusement park had significantly deteriorated. County officials redefined the role of the park to emphasize the accessibility of the lake and the park ceased to be used as an amusement park.

July 14, 1963 Fire in the Deauville Hotel on the Island.

January 1967 The Cayuga County Board of Supervisors condemned the Island and property for "an expanded Emerson Park". It was at this time that all the concessions were removed and many of the Maple and Poplar trees were cut down.

Sources: W. J. Lee, G. F. & P. A., Auburn & Syracuse Elec. R. R. Co., Auburn, N. Y.; [Postcard History Series: Owasco Lake](#) by Paul K. Williams and Charles N. Williams, 2002, Arcadia Publishing; [Emerson Park & Island Park](#) by Laurel Auchampaugh; and The Merry-Go-Round Theater, Auburn, NY.

8. APPENDIX B

LETTER FROM FRED L. EMERSON TO THE CAYUGA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, JUNE 12, 1944

COPY

Auburn, New York
June 12, 1944

To the Honorable,
The Board of Supervisors of
Cayuga County,
Auburn, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

In all the country there is probably nothing that excels Central New York for the just homey livable loveliness, and the Finger Lakes region is one of its gems, and Owasco Lake, wholly within Cayuga County, is a gem amongst gems, yet there is not a foot of publicly owned land along Owasco's shores, dedicated to the perpetual and free use of Cayuga's citizens, for outings and leisurely wholesome enjoyment.

If the people of Cayuga County desire to remedy this situation and I believe they do, I will have conveyed to the County the property known as Enna Jettick Park. This conveyance naturally will be subject to any outstanding leases, agreements and easements, which, however, are few and minor.

This conveyance will include all personal property owned by The Enna Jettick Corporation which is now on the property or is out on temporary loans, and the cash value of the same I believe will run into a few thousand dollars.

There have been many requests that the Park be opened this season for outings and if the Supervisors see their way clear to promptly accept the conveyance and appoint the necessary Park Commissioners I will have the sum of Fifteen Thousand (15,000) Dollars made available for the use of the Commission for the immediate "cleaning up" of the property and its maintenance for the balance of the year.

There will be no onerous conditions attached to the conveyance as I have full confidence that the people of the County and its Officers will adequately maintain the property as a friendly and lovely Park for the free use and enjoyment of the Public, forever.

So far as I am concerned the present name of the Park can be continued or it may be renamed by the Board.

I am told that the extreme north end of the property (near White Bridge Road) is the site of an old Indian Village, and I would suggest that the Park Commissioners consult with the Cayuga County Historical Society as to the care and preservation of this site.

-2-

Board of Supervisors

June 12, 1944

Running along practically the entire east line of Enna Jettick Park, with only the State Road intervening, is vacant land of several acres belonging to the Owasco Country Club Park Corporation and if this land can be bought at a reasonable price I will see that it is purchased and conveyed to the County without cost, if the Supervisors express a desire to own the same. I have nothing in mind for the immediate use of this property except that it should be incorporated with Enna Jettick Park and be kept in a reasonably clean condition for such future Park development as the Commission may decide.

I am hopeful that the proper authorities can "parkify" the State road that runs through these properties, and also that eventually a reasonably good bathing beach with the proper facilities can be provided, possibly off the southwestern corner of the property.

Cordially,
(signed) Fred L. Emerson

* * * * *

COPY OF CONVEYANCE CLAUSE IN DEED FROM FRED L. EMERSON FOUNDATION, INC. TO CAYUGA COUNTY

This conveyance is made to the County of Cayuga for the establishment and maintenance of a recreational park for the public free from commercial features (except such as may be necessary or incidental to a public recreational park) and in accordance with a communication made by Fred L. Emerson to the board of supervisors, June 13, 1944, to which communication reference is hereby made for a statement of the purpose of this conveyance. In case, at any time in the future, second party abandons or fails to use said premises for the purposes named in such communication, then the said premises shall revert to the first party, or, in case of a renunciation by the first party, to the State of New York.

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover Image		Source: http://www.fingerlakes.com/parks/emerson-park
Figure 1	pg iii	Photo taken by Carrie Chantler, reporter at The Auburn Citizen Newspaper
Figure 2	pg iii	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 3	pg iv	Source: http://fingerlakes.wikia.com/wiki/Owasco_Lake
Figure 4	pg iv	Source: http://tourcayuga.com/blog/jump-into-the-finger-lakes/
Figure 5	pg v	Source: http://www.wrtdesign.com/projects/detail/georgetown-waterfront-park/76
Figure 6	pg v	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 7	pg vi	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 8	pg vii	Photo taken by John McCarthy; Source: http://photo.net/photodb/photo?photo_id=7280884
Figure 9	pg viii	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 10	pg 2	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 11	pg 3	Source: Image from Postcard History Series: Owasco Lake by Paul K. Williams and Charles N. Williams, 2002, Arcadia Publishing, pg. 10
Figure 12	pg 3	Source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/516999232193793144/
Figure 13	pg 4	Source: Image from Postcard History Series: Owasco Lake by Paul K. Williams and Charles N. Williams, 2002, Arcadia Publishing, pg. 12
Figure 14	pg 4	Source: https://aerial-ny.library.cornell.edu/taxonomy/term/60/all?page=9
Figure 15	pg 5	Source: Scanned image from the 1972 Owasco River Plan
Figure 16	pg 5	Source: Scanned image from the 2001 Park Master Plan
Figure 17	pg 6	Source: https://www.pinterest.com/michellenanna/auburn-ny/
Figure 18	pg 8	Source: http://www.cayugacounty.us/Doing-Business/Planning-and-Economic-Development/Local-Planning-Assistance/Community-Development/EmersonParkMasterPlan
Figure 19	pg 8	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 20	pg 9	Photo taken by Sarah Jean Condon, staff at The Auburn Citizen Newspaper
Figure 21	pg 9	Source: Agenda created for January 22, 2014 meeting with Parks Commission by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 22	pg 10	Source: Slide from the April 23, 2014 PowerPoint presentation prepared by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 23	pg 10	Source: http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/276130
Figure 24	pg 11	Source: http://www.localsyr.com/story/d/story/emerson-park-parking-and-boat-slip-fees-to-stay-th/34802/zcRdEC3luEq-Thf3oJ5tSw
Figure 25	pg 11	Source: http://historystarproductions.com/blog/emerson-lake-park-a-rich-part-of-owasco-lakes-history/
Figure 26	pg 12	Source: http://www.americanparkfurniture.com/
Figure 27	pg 12	Source: http://www.dallasparcs.org/112/2759/Environmental-Stewardship
Figure 28	pg 13	Photo courtesy of Cayuga County Parks Department
Figure 29	pg 13	Source: http://www.genevaonthelake.com/guest_comments.html
Figure 30	pg 14	Source: Agenda created for May 22, 2014 meeting with Parks Commission by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff

Figure 31	pg 15	Source: http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/guide/guide-to-minnesota-snowshoeing/
Figure 32	pg 15	Source: http://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/images/fairhaven-playground-spray-park.JPG
Figure 33	pg 16	Source: http://illinoisvalleybioswale.weebly.com/what-on-earth-is-a-bioswale.html
Figure 34	pg 16	Source: http://www.conteches.com/products/erosion-control/hard-armor/a-jacks.aspx
Figure 35	pg 17	Photo taken by Carrie Chantler, reporter at The Auburn Citizen Newspaper
Figure 36	pg 18	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 37	pg 18	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 38	pg 21	Source: http://fingerlakes.wikia.com/wiki/Owasco_Lake
Figure 39	pg 21	Source: http://farm4.staticflickr.com/3263/2702569651_548b5757a5_z.jpg
Figure 40	pg 22	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 41	pg 23	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 42	pg 23	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 43	pg 24	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 44	pg 24	Source: http://www.weekendnotes.com/bonython-park-billabong/
Figure 45	pg 24	Source: http://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g33388-i28445080-Denver_Colorado.html
Figure 46	pg 24	Source: http://www.rgbstock.com/bigphoto/oGPMrWA/playground+%26+picnic+shelters
Figure 47	pg 25	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 48	pg 26	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 49	pg 26	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 50	pg 27	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 51	pg 27	Source: http://katsaleslakearrowhead.com/post/1170690/lake-arrowhead-beach-clubs
Figure 52	pg 27	Photo taken by Bill Hecht; Source: http://blog.syracuse.com/cayugacounty/2006/08/index.html
Figure 53	pg 28	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 54	pg 28	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 55	pg 29	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 56	pg 29	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 57	pg 29	Graphic prepared by EDR for Cayuga County for 2014 CFA grant application
Figure 58	pg 29	Source: http://photos.syracuse.com/post-standard/2011/07/2011_skaneateles_antique_class_6.html
Figure 59	pg 29	Source: http://www.fl360.com/wp-content/uploads/hp_photos/dock.jpg
Figure 60	pg 30	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 61	pg 30	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 62	pg 31	Source: http://www.wrtdesign.com/projects/detail/georgetown-waterfront-park/76
Figure 63	pg 31	Source: http://landscapeonline.com/research/article/19069

Figure 64	pg 31	Source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/jmotophoto/4906004580/
Figure 65	pg 31	Source: http://www.sasaki.com/project/123/charleston-waterfront-park/
Figure 66	pg 31	Source: http://classymommy.com/kids-will-love-the-boston-public-garden/
Figure 67	pg 31	Source: http://www.heiditown.com/colorado-festivals/northern-colorado/sculpture-show-weekend-loveland-co/
Figure 68	pg 32	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 69	pg 33	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 70	pg 33	Source: http://http://www.dgcoursereview.com/course_pics/57/e3245094_m.jpg
Figure 71	pg 33	Source: http://discap.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=81&t=2464&sid=afc34cff2a1e5796c62c3dd2afdc74e0
Figure 72	pg 34	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 73	pg 34	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 74	pg 35	Source: http://www.ccprc.com/1478/KayakCanoe-Storage-Rack-Rental
Figure 75	pg 35	Source: http://www.cleveland.com/bay-village/index.ssf/2012/02/bay_village_boat_club_and_boy.html
Figure 76	pg 35	Source: http://mrwilliamsburg.com/neighborhood-spotlights/governors-land/kayak-storage-in-gov-land-small/
Figure 77	pg 36	Source: http://morriscountydogpark.com/category/news/
Figure 78	pg 36	Source: http://www.dogster.com/lifestyle/10-amazing-dog-parks
Figure 79	pg 37	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 80	pg 38	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 81	pg 38	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 82	pg 39	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 83	pg 39	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 84	pg 39	Source: http://fingerlakesmtf.com/plan-your-visit/tripadvisor/
Figure 85	pg 40	Source: http://auburnpub.com/little-league/image_61c3c606-b92f-5ba3-af46-7b1a6733e57a.html
Figure 86	pg 40	Source: http://auburnpub.com/sports/local/auburn-little-leaguers-headed-to-section-i-tournament/article_468dd01f-67ee-5ca5-b602-9f486b0d4f01.html
Figure 87	pg 41	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 88	pg 41	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 89	pg 42	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 90	pg 42	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 91	pg 42	Source: http://blog.syracuse.com/neighbors/2011/06/easing_back_in_time_donation_helps_agriculture_museum_preserve_ways_of_bygone_days.html
Figure 92	pg 42	Source: http://www.cayugacounty.us/Community/ParksandTrails/AgMuseum/Information.aspx
Figure 93	pg 43	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 94	pg 44	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 95	pg 44	Source: Rendering from page 16 of the 2001 Emerson Park Redevelopment Plan
Figure 96	pg 45	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff

Figure 97	pg 45	Source: Google Earth, Aerial Imagery Date: 9/24/2013
Figure 98	pg 46	Source: http://tourcayuga.com/blog/jump-into-the-finger-lakes/
Figure 99	pg 46	Photo courtesy of Cayuga County Parks Department
Figure 100	pg 47	Source: http://www.cornellplantations.org/gallery/2383
Figure 101	pg 47	Source: http://thmp.ca/?page_id=78
Figure 102	pg 48	Source: http://www.golder.co.nz/en/modules.php?name=Newsletters&op=viewarticle&sp_id=164&page_id=709&article_id=531
Figure 103	pg 48	Source: http://www.millermicro.com/porpave.html
Figure 104	pg 48	Source: http://learnforests.org/resource_article/rediscovery-forest-education-program
Figure 105	pg 48	Source: http://www.ilovethefingerlakes.com/recreation/stateparks-tremanmarina-ospreynest.htm
Figure 106	pg 49	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 107	pg 49	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 108	pg 50	Source: http://lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu/work/Frontcountrybench.htm
Figure 109	pg 50	Source: http://mettawas-end-bed-and-breakfast.com/walks_in_the_vicinity
Figure 110	pg 50	Source: http://www.visitingcooperstown.com/special-place2.html
Figure 111	pg 50	Source: http://www.placentia.org/facilities/Facility/Details/57
Figure 112	pg 51	Source: http://www.daytrails.com/SalemAudubon.html
Figure 113	pg 51	Source: http://www.willhiteweb.com/washington/federal_way/celebration_park_215.htm
Figure 114	pg 52	Source: https://polisnyc.wordpress.com/category/urban-planning-design-and-architecture/
Figure 115	pg 52	Source: http://www.pekinparkdistrict.org/concessions.html
Figure 116	pg 53	Source: http://bellevuebusinessjournal.com/2014/08/07/downtown-bellevue-library-to-host-food-truck-chow-down-town-august-14/
Figure 117	pg 53	Source: http://www.raleighnc.gov/parks/content/ParksRec/Articles/Parks/LakeWheeler.html
Figure 118	pg 53	Source: http://raleighcitizen.com/event/downtown-raleigh-food-truck-rodeo-october-2013/
Figure 119	pg 53	Source: http://www.tahoeactivities.com/lake-tahoe-lakeview-lakefront-restaurants/
Figure 120	pg 54	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 121	pg 55	Source: https://niagararegionontariocanada.wordpress.com/2013/07/23/boat-ramp-crystal-beach-park-waterfront-concert-21-jul-2013/
Figure 122	pg 55	Source: http://www.ticketsarasota.com/slideshow/top-20-concert-venues-from-sarasota-to-tampa/
Figure 123	pg 56	Source: http://townelaketexas.com/amphitheater
Figure 124	pg 56	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 125	pg 57	Source: http://drycreek.net/lodging-facilities/
Figure 126	pg 57	Source: http://www.1staidfire.com/event-cover.html
Figure 127	pg 58	Source: http://www.enwood.com/gallery_custom_shelter_13.htm
Figure 128	pg 58	Source: http://www.greenavemarket.com/wp-content/gallery/main-gallery/opening_1.jpg
Figure 129	pg 59	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software

Figure 130	pg 60	Source: https://www.cardcow.com/244606/island-hotel-owasco-lake-auburn-new-york/
Figure 131	pg 60	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software
Figure 132	pg 61	Graphic prepared by EDR for Cayuga County August, 2014
Figure 133	pg 63	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 134	pg 63	Source: http://www.waterblogged.org/schematic-8-9-the-southside-along-reservoir-avenue/
Figure 135	pg 64	Source: http://www.estesparknews.com/fitness-equipment-along-lake-estes-trail/
Figure 136	pg 64	Source: http://annandaleva.blogspot.com/2012/05/linconia-park-rec-club-uses-county.html
Figure 137	pg 65	Source: http://backyardlifeblog.com/2011/07/willow-river-state-park-review/
Figure 138	pg 65	Source: http://kathy.thetorrences.com/?p=2088
Figure 139	pg 66	Source: https://www.cardcow.com/28334/seawall-at-lakeside-park-auburn-new-york/
Figure 140	pg 66	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 141	pg 67	Source: Scanned image from the 1975 Emerson Park Plan
Figure 142	pg 67	Source: http://www.skaneateles.com/visit/lake-activities/boating
Figure 143	pg 68	Source: http://www.johnweeks.com/minnehaha/pages/c14.html
Figure 144	pg 68	Source: http://www.centralparknyc.org/things-to-see-and-do/attractions/merchants-gate-plaza.html
Figure 145	pg 69	Source: http://www.bridgeandtunnelclub.com/bigmap/manhattan/ues/fifthave/72nd-86th/
Figure 146	pg 69	Source: http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g47848-d449464-Reviews-Hoak_s_Restaurant-Hamburg_New_York.html
Figure 147	pg 70	Source: http://www.hjhospitality.com/catering/
Figure 148	pg 70	Source: http://www.gatorsktcharchitects.com/PjWaterfrontPavilion.php
Figure 149	pg 71	Photo taken by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff
Figure 150	pg 72	Map created by Cayuga County Department of Planning & Economic Development Staff using ArcGIS software