

**P.2 Special Whirlpool Street
Neighborhood Meeting (July 15, 2015)**

Niagara Gorge Corridor

Robert Moses Parkway Removal Project:

Main Street to Findlay Drive

Whirlpool Street

Neighborhood Meeting

July 15, 2015

DeVeaux Woods State Park - DeVeaux Theater

Summary of Events

This neighborhood meeting was the second public outreach event held during the Preliminary Design and Environmental Review Stage to provide project information and exchange ideas on the options related to the improvements proposed for Whirlpool Street. An initial Public Information Meeting was held on February 19, 2015 for the general public at the Niagara Falls Conference Center

Announcement

A post card was prepared by Parsons and hand delivered by the City of Niagara Falls Planning Department staff to approximately 50 residents along the 4 blocks of Whirlpool Street between Bellevue and Findlay. See **Attachment A** for a copy of the post card and a location map indicating where the post cards were distributed.

Technical Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation was given which included the following agenda:

- Project Objectives
- Scoping Report - Retained Alternatives (2013)
- February 19, 2015 Public Meeting - Concepts

- Comments - February Public Meeting
- Options - After the Public Meeting
- Traffic Simulation
- Other Treatment Options

A hard copy of the slides is included in **Attachment B**.

Handout

The meeting handout given during the February 19, 2015 Public Meeting was given out during this meeting to be used as reference with regard to the Project Objectives and Concepts developed and presented at the Feb Meeting.

A copy of the Handout and Program are included in **Attachment C**.

Display Boards

A total of 8 display boards were available for viewing. They included:

- Bellevue Avenue to Spring Street
- Spring Street to Chasm Avenue
- Chasm Avenue to Chestnut Avenue
- Chestnut Avenue to Findlay Avenue
- Artist rendering – view looking north near Spring Street
- Artist rendering – view looking south near Chestnut Avenue
- Artist rendering – view looking north along sidewalk
- Park Road Typical Section

Copies of the boards are included in **Attachment D**.

Meeting Attendance

The neighborhood meeting started at 6:30 PM with the presentation starting at 7:00 PM.
Attendance during the meeting totaled 17 people from the neighborhood.

A copy of the Sign-in Sheet is included in **Attachment E**.

Comments Received

Upon conclusion of the presentation the following comments and concerns were made by the attendees:

1. Subsurface Drainage Issues
 - a. Subsurface drainage appears to be a major issue along the last four blocks of Whirlpool Street. Residents indicated that they believe water must be flowing underground from the higher elevation of Lewiston Road down to Whirlpool Street. Representatives from the project staff noted that an investigation of this problem will be undertaken during the final design phase of the project.
 - b. There is a perpetual sink hole in the middle of the street at #2813 Whirlpool Street. This sink hole has been an issue for years and is covered by a steel plate that is continually struck by cars resulting in a loud noise every time it is run over. The subsurface drainage issue noted above may be what is causing this sink hole. Representatives from the City of Niagara Falls noted that they are aware of this issue and that the city has not spent a lot of their resources on Whirlpool Street pending the results of this project. Under this project Whirlpool Street will be completely reconstructed.
2. Traffic - Whirlpool Bridge
 - a. Residents indicated that traffic congestion at the Whirlpool Bridge is a problem. Traffic sometimes backs-up along Whirlpool Street starting at Third Street.
 - b. Traffic entering Whirlpool Street from Ontario Street is sometimes blocked by the congested traffic waiting to get onto the Whirlpool Bridge. Options suggested for consideration are to cut Ontario Street off from accessing Whirlpool Street or make Ontario Street one-way eastbound.
 - c. The NGC Project needs to take into account any improvements planned by the NFBC at the entrance to the Whirlpool Bridge. Timing of the two projects will be important. Representatives from the project staff noted that they are in contact with the NFBC and as both projects progress, they will continue to be coordinated.
3. Traffic – Tour Buses
 - a. Residents are concerned that tour buses currently using the RMP will be on Whirlpool Street. These large buses will pose a problem with noise and vibration as they will be traveling close to the houses under the proposed project. Traffic counts should be taken to determine the volume of these buses. Keeping the buses as far away from the houses will be very important. Representatives from the project staff noted that they will investigate the issue of the tour buses and obtain information on the

- frequency of their trips along the RMP. They also noted they will investigate to see if tour buses may also take Main Street in lieu of Whirlpool Street.
- b. Currently the tour buses that take the RMP are far way from the houses and the RMP is somewhat lower (depressed) as compared to Whirlpool Street thereby muffling the noise they make.
 - c. The proposed parking lane along the east side of Whirlpool Street may not be safe with the large tour buses traveling along Whirlpool Street. People exiting their cars from the parking lane may not have enough space to get out of the car with a wide bus coming down the road.
4. Traffic – General
- a. A dedicated left turn arrow should be provided at Third & Main Streets.
 - b. Traffic counts should be taken during Canadian Holidays as well. Many Canadians use Whirlpool Street to access the Whirlpool Bridge during those holidays. Representatives from the project staff noted that additional holiday traffic counts are proposed to be taken as part of this project.
 - c. During the summer, and regularly on weekends, many large groups of motorcycles currently use the RMP that will eventually take Whirlpool Street. These large groups of motorcycles are loud and will be very noticeable when they travel in front of the houses.
 - d. What will the improvements at Depot Street do to traffic?
5. Parking Lane
- a. Using bump-outs (or curb extensions) at the corners may not be a good idea.
 - i. It seems like there would be sight distance issues for cars coming out from the sidestreets onto Whirlpool Street.
 - ii. The rendering shows a lot of sidewalk at the bump-outs that would need to be shoveled by the home owners.
 - iii. Would garbage pick-up and snow removal be more difficult with bump-outs?
 - iv. Perhaps just sign the area as “no parking here to corner” near the side streets. This would help with the problems at Chasm and Chestnut where parking up to the intersections creates blind spots for cars pulling out from the side street onto Whirlpool.
 - b. Advantages of having a bump-out – offered by the representatives of the project staff.
 - i. It provides a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross the road.

- ii. It provides better sight distance between the traveling vehicles and the pedestrian crossing the road.
- iii. It helps serve as a traffic calming device.
- iv. It should help slow traffic down.
- v. The angle of the curbs at the bump-outs that are proposed would be gentle enough to make access to the spaces and snow removal easier than the bump-outs constructed along Third Street (Niagara Street to Main Street).

6. Roadway Alignment

- a. The grade along both Chasm and Chestnut is very steep as it approaches Whirlpool Street. This makes it very difficult to stop on icy pavement during the winter. Many times cars end up sliding through the intersection. Perhaps something can be done to lessen the grade or use a pavement that has better stopping characteristics.
- b. It was generally considered by the neighborhood group that a stop sign on Whirlpool Street, with a through movement on Findlay Drive, would be better for the neighborhood. This would help slow traffic down as they come off the RMP heading south onto Whirlpool Street. Representatives from the project staff noted the option of a stop on Whirlpool Street is contrary to the comments received by the general public at the February 19, 2015 Meeting. Comments received as a result of the February meeting suggested the through movement for Whirlpool Street was favored 5 to 1. Representatives also noted that the major traffic movement would be from the RMP to Whirlpool Street and not from the RMP to Findlay Drive.
- c. Spring Street is very narrow. Cars parking along Spring Street create a problem with two-way traffic. Can Spring Street be made one-way northbound? Representatives from the City of Niagara Falls noted that this can be done and there is a procedure for doing that. The neighborhood would need to create a petition and submit it to the City Traffic Commission. They would in turn investigate the issue and make a recommendation to the City Council, who would then make a decision on whether to change the city ordinance for Spring Street to make it one-way.

7. Miscellaneous

- a. Currently several homeowners along Whirlpool Street cut the grass across the street to make it visually pleasing and accessible. Will State Parks maintain this area in the future or let it go back wild again? Representatives from State Parks noted that they will take a good look at the situation and will develop a plan for how to maintain all the improvements planned for the new park space under this project.
- b. This area in the park, west of Whirlpool Street, used to be active space. Will it be returned to active space as part of this project? Representatives from State Parks noted that it is the intent to make this newly formed space active and accessible by all park users.
- c. Will the new park space be open all year round? Representatives from State Parks noted that it will be open all year.
- d. Additional dust control is needed at the ongoing project on Depot Street.
- e. The abandoned DeVeaux Manor (nursing home) property, last used by a construction company, is an eyesore. It has debris, standing barrels, railroad ties, broken fences and is an unsafe area. Representatives from the City of Niagara Falls noted they are trying to attract a developer to take over the property. Hopefully, when this NGC project is completed developers would be very interested in this property and create something good for the neighborhood and the city.
- f. When will this be built? Representatives from the project staff noted that there is still a ways to go to complete this phase and begin the final design phase. Hopefully, and with funding secured in the near future, the construction could start as early as the summer of 2017.

ATTACHMENT A



PARSONS
 40 LaRiviere Drive – Suite 350
 Buffalo, NY 14202



So we can properly plan for the meeting,
 if you are planning on attending,
 please RSVP by **July 8, 2015** to
 Mr. Tom Donohue. Thank you.

Telephone:
(716) 541-0733

Email:
Thomas.Donohue@parsons.com





**Niagara Gorge Corridor
Robert Moses Parkway Removal Project:
Main Street to Findlay Drive, Niagara Falls, NY**

Neighborhood Meeting

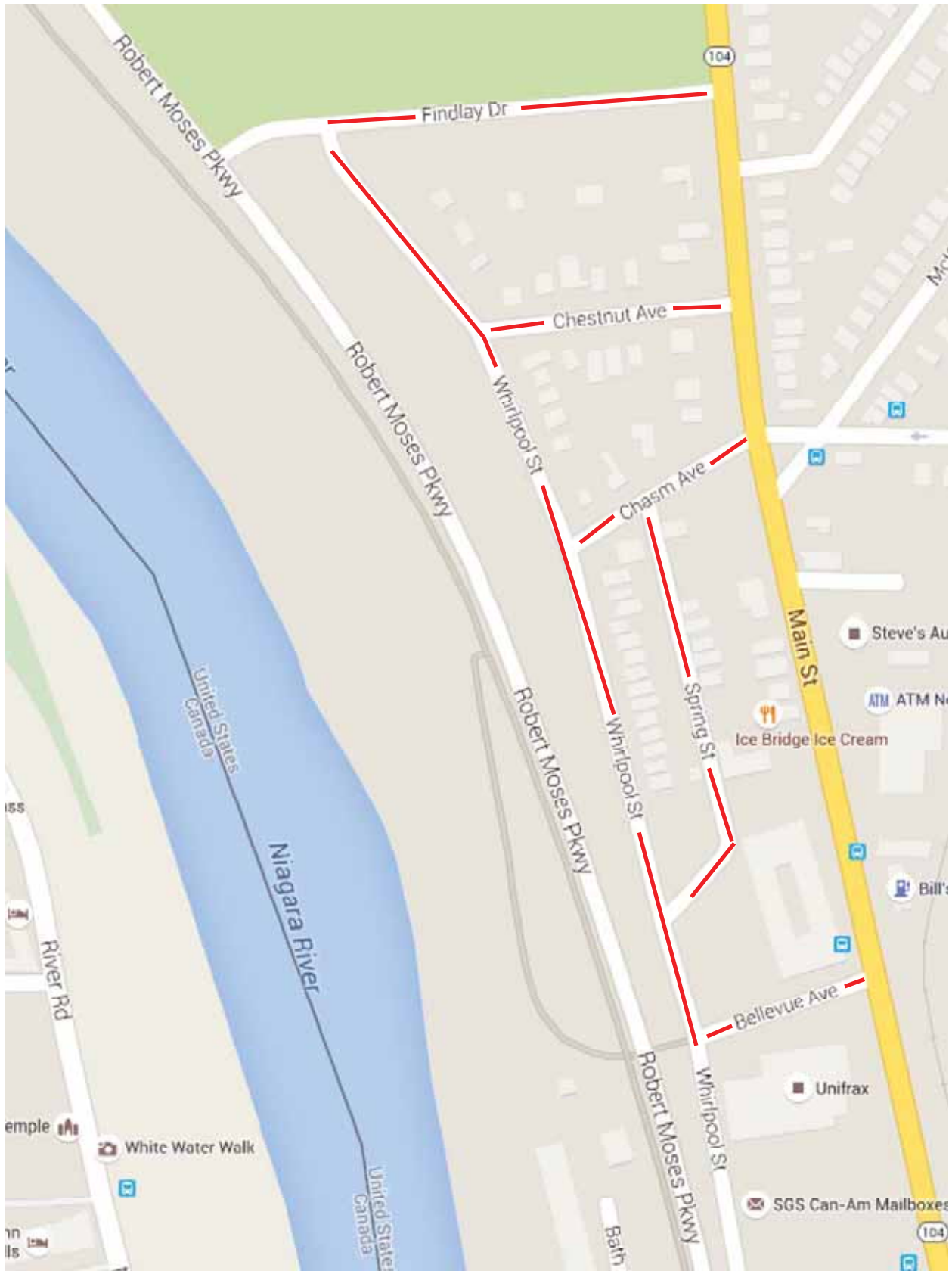
**Whirlpool Street: Bellevue Avenue to Findlay Drive
Wednesday, July 15, 2015, from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
DeVeaux Theater, @ DeVeaux Woods State Park**

Please join us to learn about the proposed reconstruction of Whirlpool Street as part of the Niagara Gorge Corridor, Robert Moses Parkway Removal Project in Niagara Falls, NY. Our focus for this meeting will be on the section of Whirlpool Street between Bellevue Avenue and Findlay Drive.

A presentation will be given at 7:00 PM. An open discussion and question period will follow the presentation. Before and after the presentation, the public may review the latest designs, ask questions, and provide input to project designers.

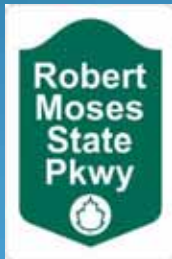
PROJECT PARTNERS: New York State (NYS) Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, USA Niagara Development Corp., NYS Department of Transportation, New York Power Authority, and the City of Niagara Falls.





ATTACHMENT B

Niagara Gorge Corridor
Robert Moses Parkway Removal Project:
Main Street to Findlay Drive
Niagara Falls, NY



Whirlpool Street
Neighborhood Meeting
July 15, 2015



Welcome

Agenda

- Project Objectives
- Scoping Report - Retained Alternatives (2013)
- February 19, 2015 Public Meeting - Concepts
- Comments - February Public Meeting
- Options - After the Public Meeting
- Traffic Simulation
- Other Treatment Options

Project Objectives:

1. Improve Access and Transportation

- Remove barriers that impede access between the NGC and adjacent business / residential districts.
- Provide an attractive multimodal trail.
- Link parks, communities, and attractions adjoining the NGC.
- Remove temporary appearances (cones, barrels, etc.) of the current RMP along with any surplus pavement.

2. Promote and Conserve the Ecology and Environment of the NGC

- Reduce environmental impacts of transportation related activities.
- Utilize areas of pavement removal to help restore (expand) natural habitat.
- Promote eco-tourism and heritage-tourism.
- Provide additional areas for enjoyment of the NGC's natural and scenic beauty.
- Protect existing areas of natural habitat and restore new areas to a native plant based landscape.

3. Support Local Economic Vitality

- Encourage visitor migration into local business districts.
- Create an atmosphere that encourages visitors to remain in the NGC region longer.
- Reduce the current RMP's function as a bypass route while maintaining an attractive scenic link between communities.
- Link a multimodal trail with the adjacent communities.
- Provide effective wayfinding information.

4. Minimize Impacts to Adjacent Neighborhoods

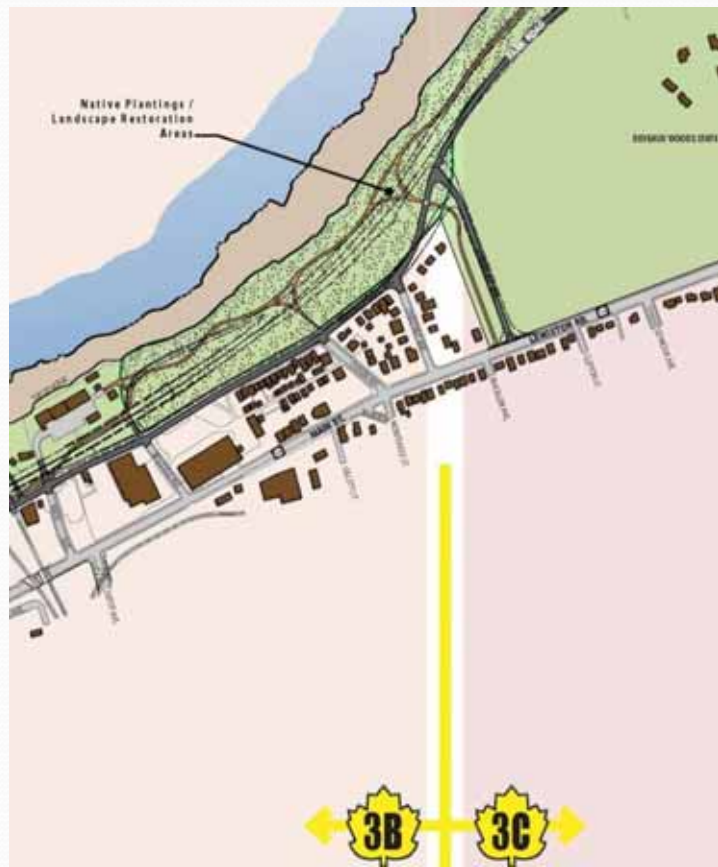
- Promote vehicle travel patterns that minimize traffic impacts in residential areas.
- Improve the fringe areas between the parkland and adjacent residential properties.

5. Support NR Greenway Plan

- Increase access to and connections between the Niagara River region's many resources.
- Celebrate and interpret our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and heritage resources in the NGC area and provide access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.

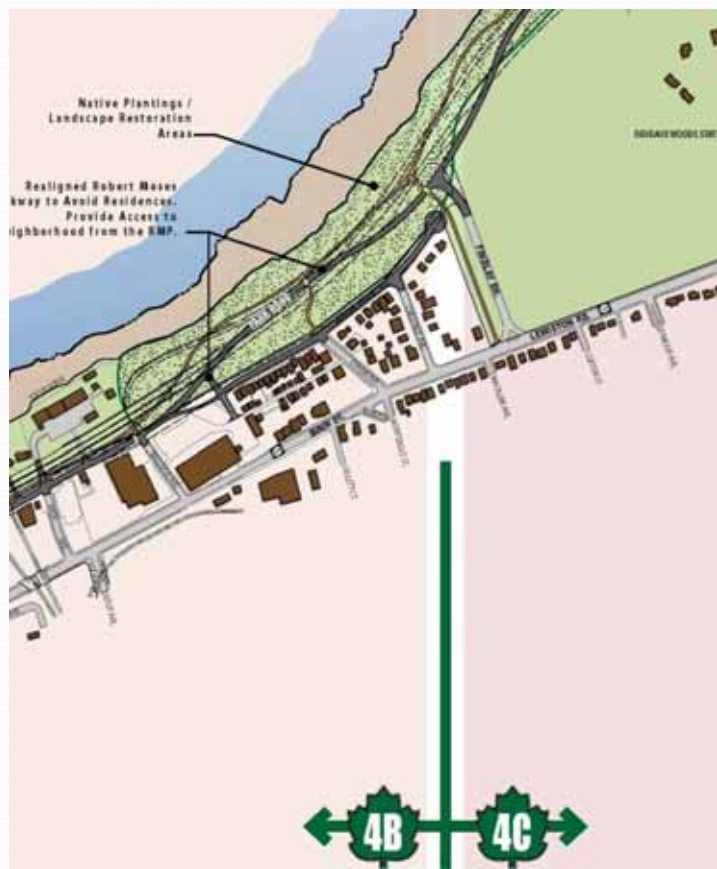
Scoping Report Retained Alts (2013)

(Alts 3, 4 and 6)



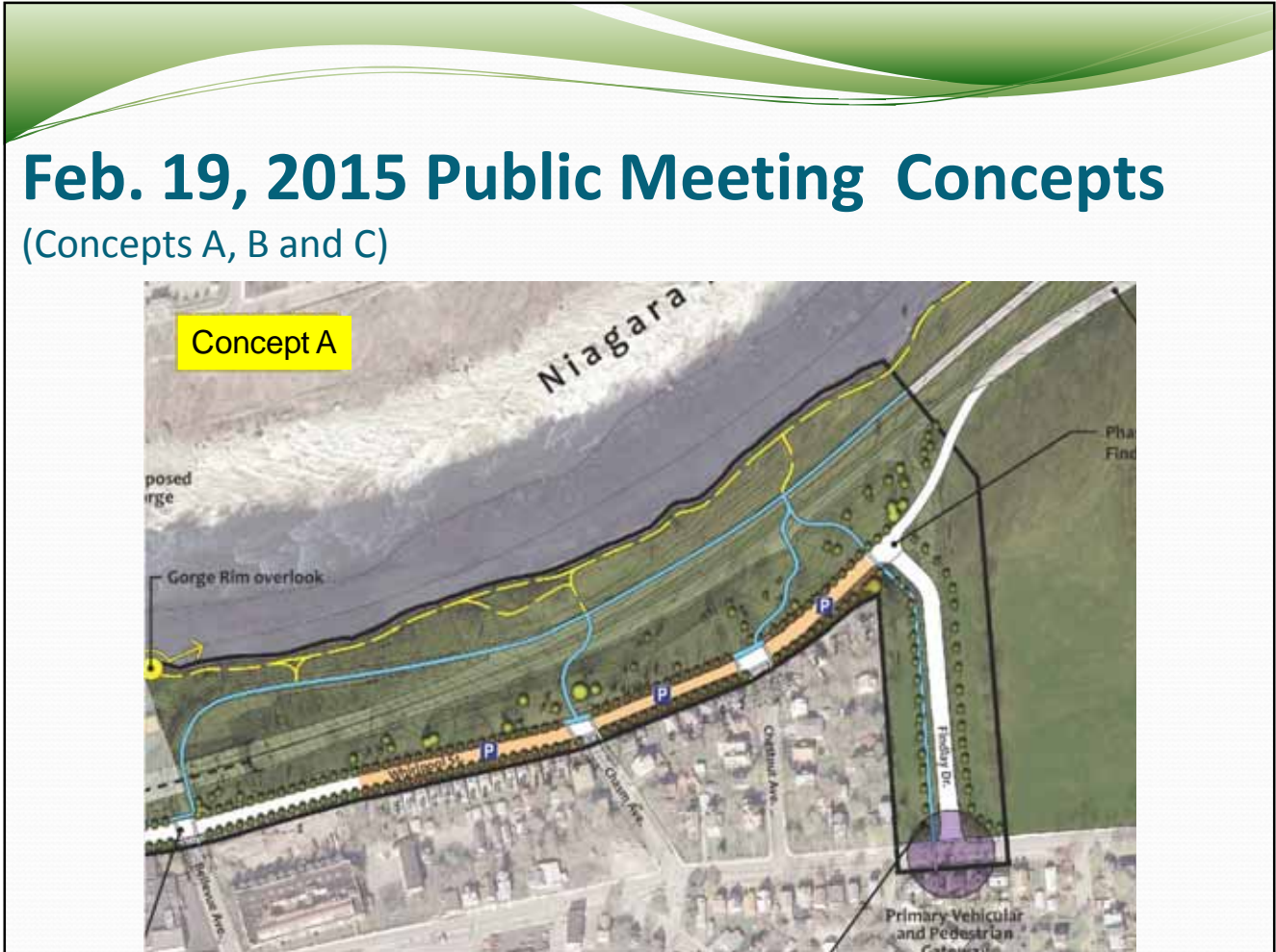
Scoping Report Retained Alts (2013)

(Alts 3, 4 and 6)



Feb. 19, 2015 Public Meeting Concepts

(Concepts A, B and C)



Feb. 19, 2015 Public Meeting Concepts

(Concepts A, B and C)



Feb. 19, 2015 Public Meeting Concepts

(Concepts A, B and C)



Comments - Feb Public Mtg

North end of Whirlpool Street – 4 Major Comments

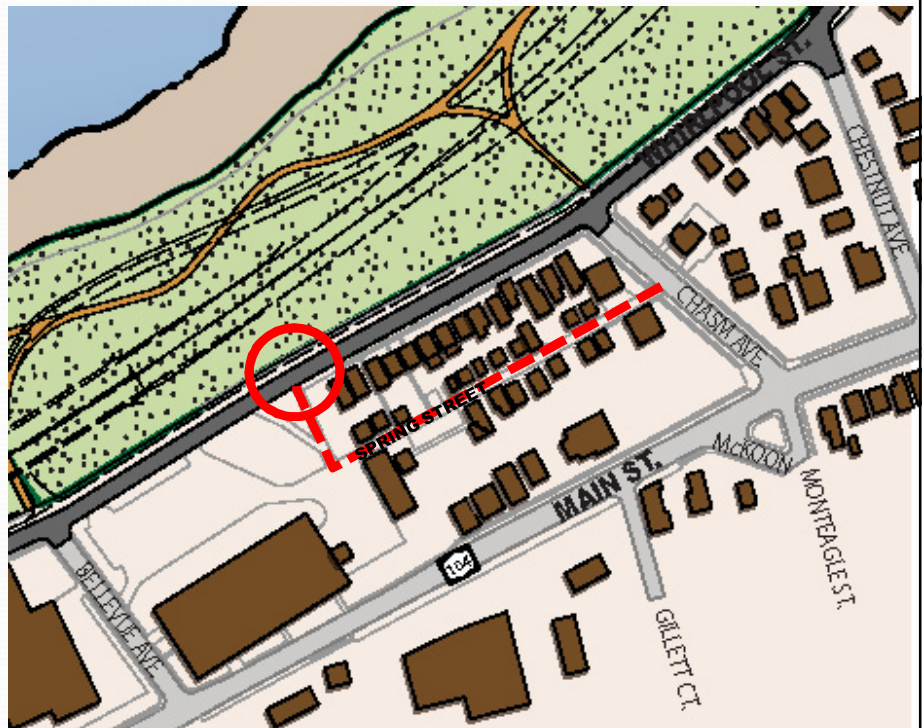
1. Preference for a thru movement on Whirlpool Street and a stop for Findlay Drive, similar to either Concept A or C above.



Traffic stops on Findlay Drive

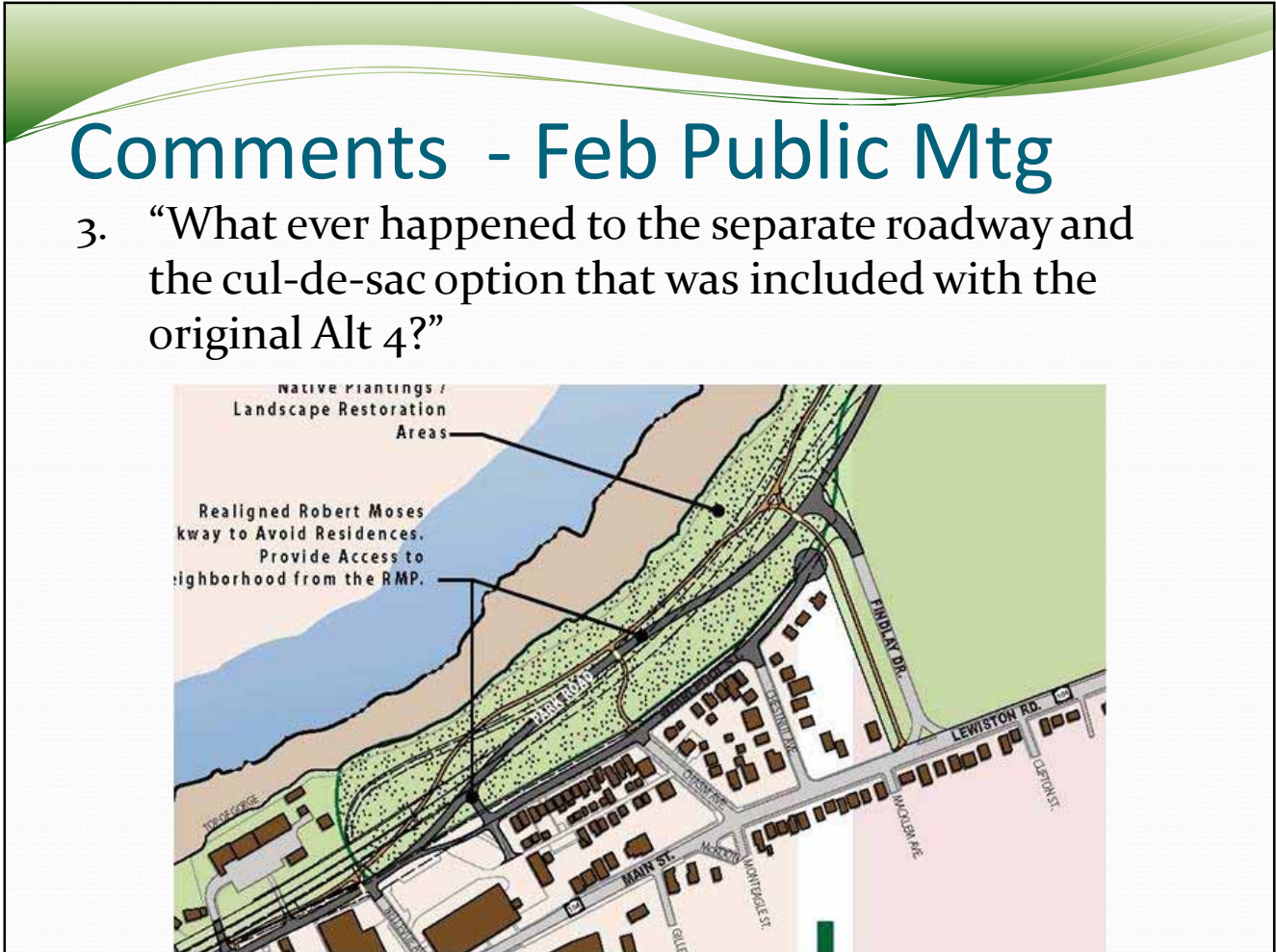
Comments - Feb Public Mtg

- 2. Spring Street



Comments - Feb Public Mtg

3. “What ever happened to the separate roadway and the cul-de-sac option that was included with the original Alt 4?”



Comments - Feb Public Mtg

4. Concern with the volume of traffic that will be forced to travel along Whirlpool Street in front of the homes.



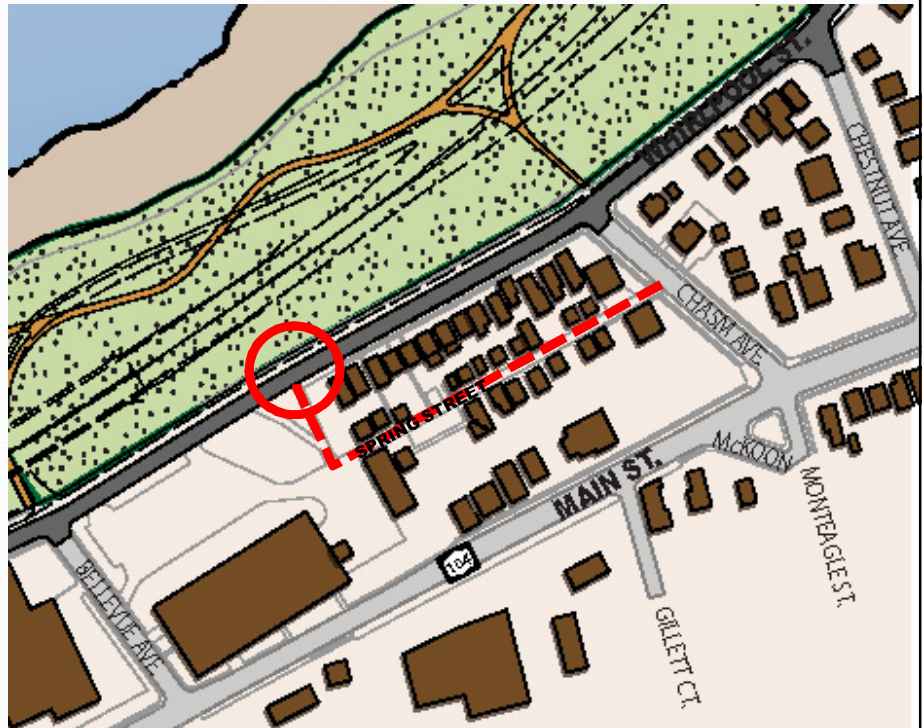
Options - Post Public Meeting



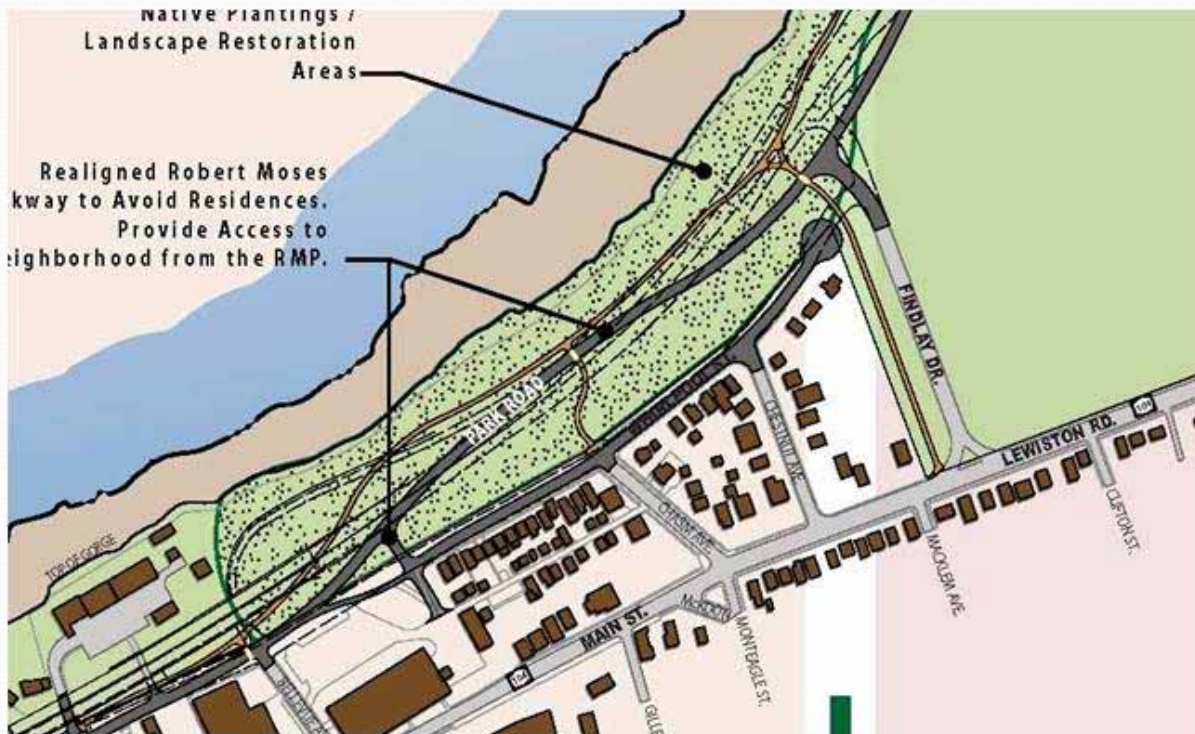
Traffic stops on Findlay Drive

Options - Post Public Meeting

- 2. Spring Street



Options - Post Public Meeting



Options - Post Public Meeting

- Minimize impacts to adjacent neighborhoods - promoting vehicle travel patterns that minimize traffic impacts in residential areas.



Traffic

- Traffic - What is anticipated to happen and what needs to be done?



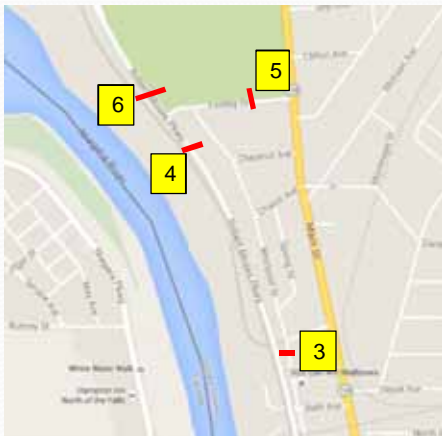
Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day

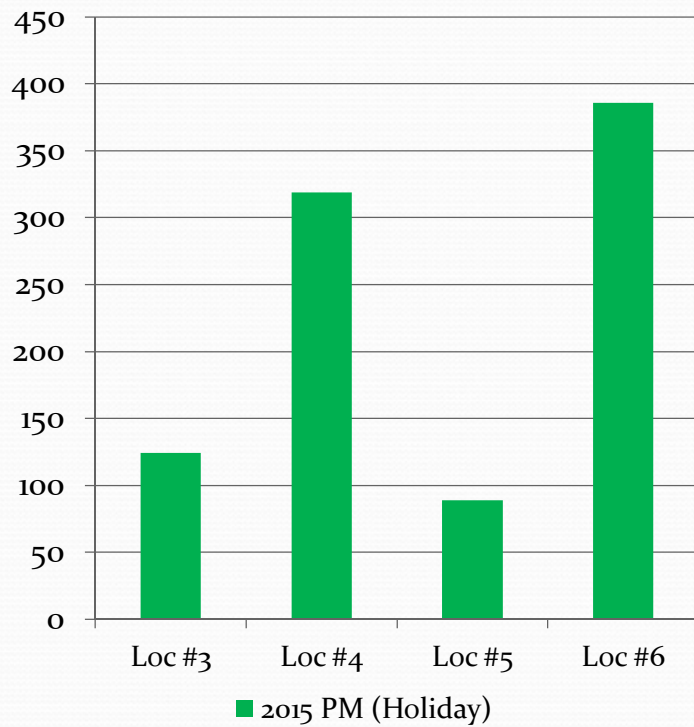


Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day



2015 PM (Holiday)

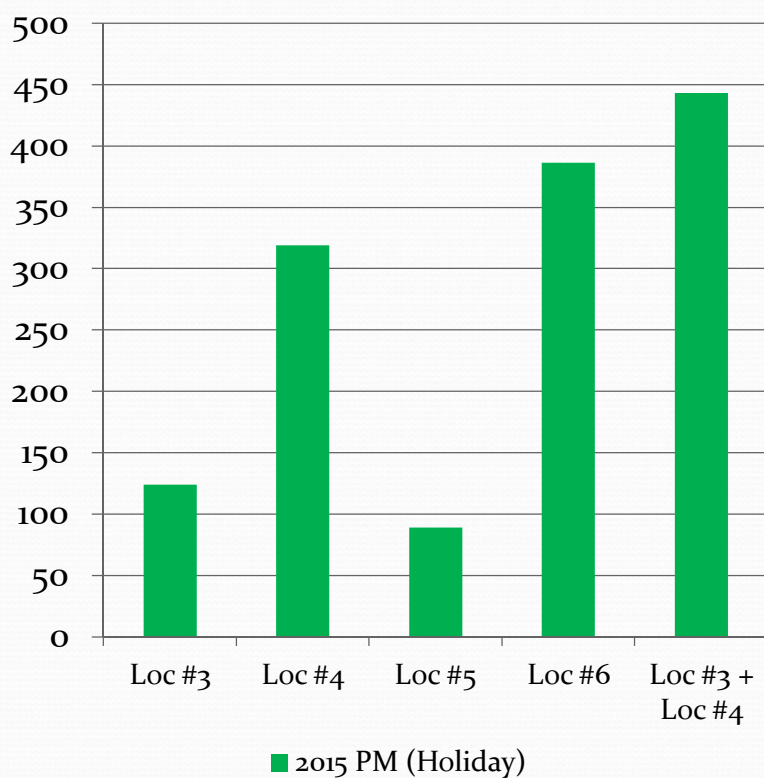


Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day

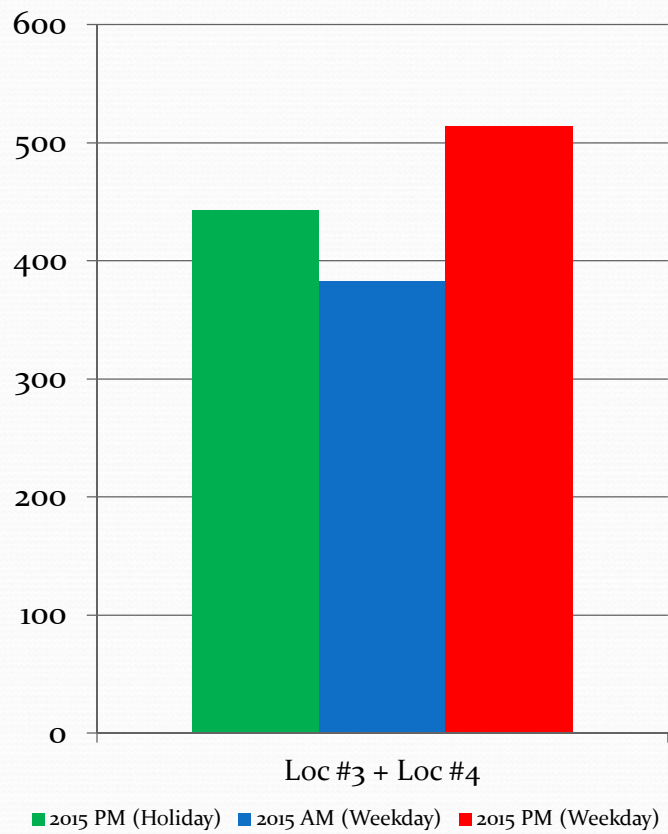


2015 PM (Holiday)



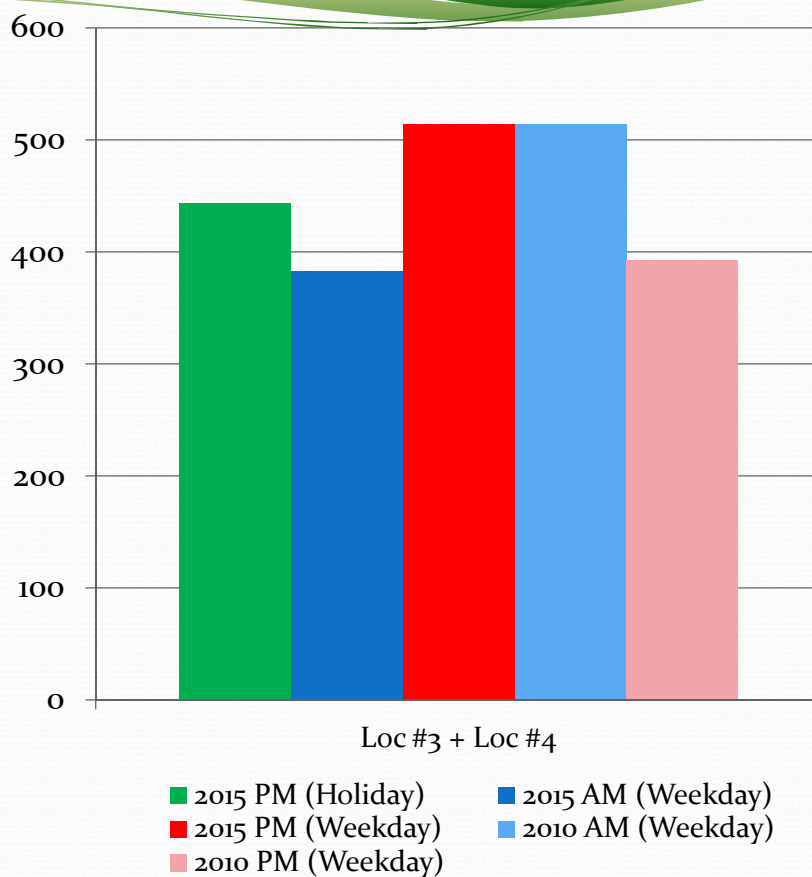
Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day



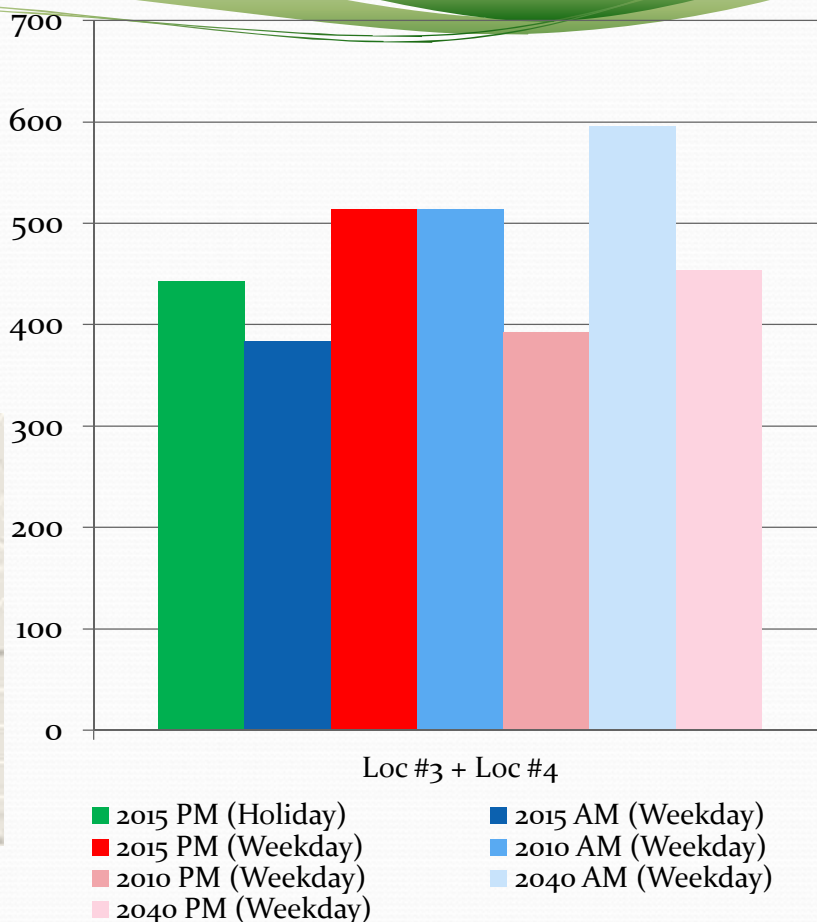
Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day



Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day



Traffic Simulation

- Simulation

Options - Post Public Meeting

- Difficulties of snow and garbage removal operations.
- Routing of school buses.



Other Treatment Options





Other Treatment Options









DISCUSSION

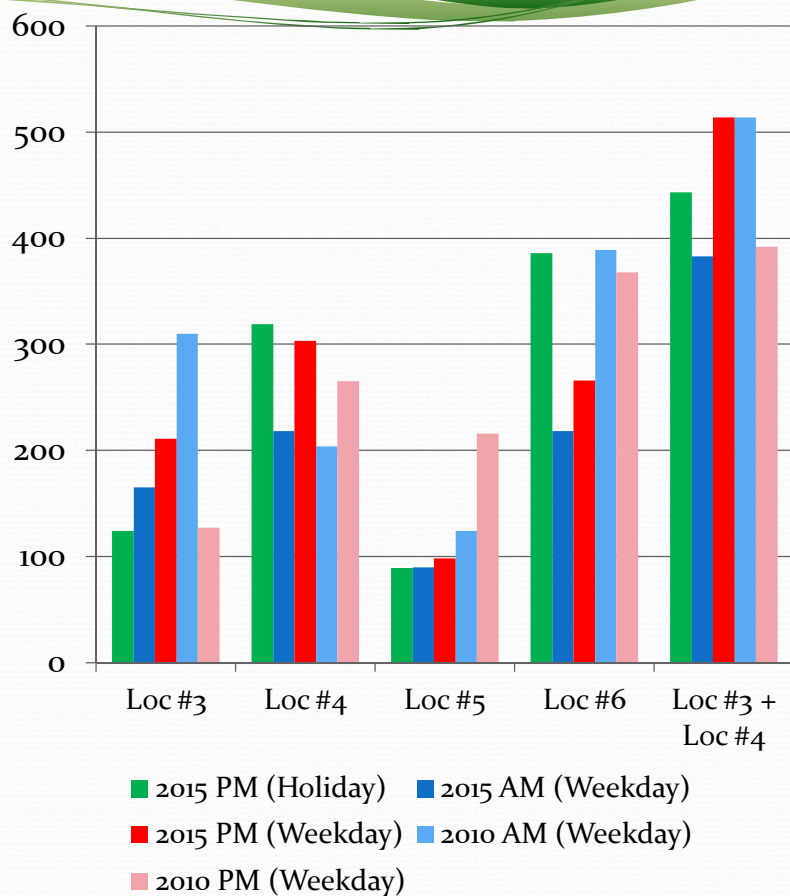






Traffic

- Additional traffic counts taken - Memorial Day



ATTACHMENT C



Niagara Gorge Corridor Project

ROBERT MOSES PARKWAY - NORTH – PHASE I

Main Street to Findlay Drive



PUBLIC MEETING

February 19, 2015
3:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Niagara Falls
Conference Center
101 Falls Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

A presentation on the project will be given at 4:00 PM and again at 6:00 PM. Before and after each presentation, the public may review the latest designs, ask questions, and provide input to project designers and agency representatives.



CONTACT US

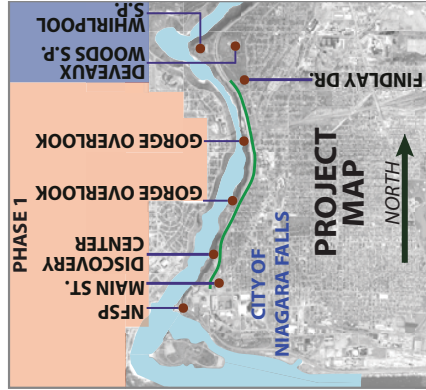
Comments on this project will be accepted through
March 31, 2015.

Mail comments to:

Niagara Gorge Corridor Project
c/o Parsons Transportation Group
40 LaRiviere Drive – Suite 350
Buffalo, NY 14202

Email comments to: thomas.donohue@parsons.com

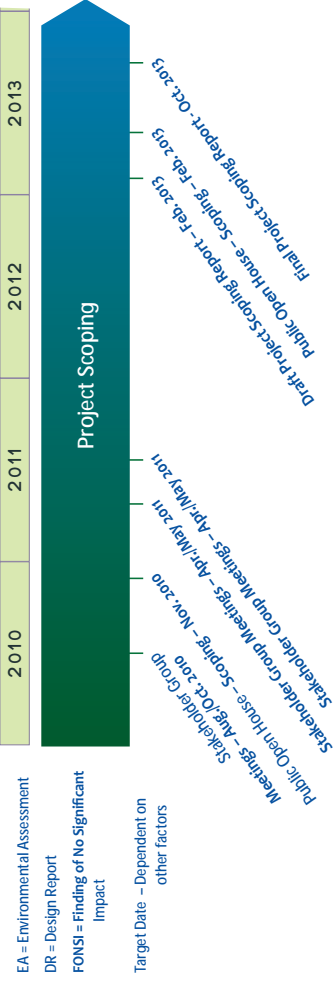
For more information, please call Paul Tronolone, Senior Project Manager for the USA Niagara Development Corporation at 716-284-2556



PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

1. **Improve Access and Transportation**
 - A. Remove barriers that impede access between the Niagara Gorge Corridor (NGC) and adjacent business / residential districts.
 - B. Provide an attractive multimodal trail.
 - C. Link parks, communities, and attractions adjoining the NGC.
 - D. Remove miscellaneous temporary appurtenances (cones, barrels, etc.) on the current RMP along with any surplus pavement.
2. **Promote and Conserve the Ecology and Environment of the MGC**
 - A. Reduce environmental impacts of transportation related activities.
 - B. Utilize areas of pavement removal to help restore (expand) natural habitat.
 - C. Promote eco-tourism and heritage-tourism.
 - D. Provide additional areas for enjoyment of the NGC's natural and scenic beauty.
 - E. Protect existing areas of natural habitat and restore new areas to a native plant based landscape.
3. **Support Local Economic Vitality**
 - A. Encourage visitor migration into local business districts.
 - B. Create an atmosphere that encourages visitors to remain in the NGC region longer.
 - C. Reduce the current RMP's function as a bypass route while maintaining an attractive scenic link between communities.
 - D. Link a multimodal trail with the adjacent communities.
 - E. Provide effective wayfinding information.
4. **Minimize Impacts to Adjacent Neighborhoods**
 - A. Promote vehicle travel patterns that minimize traffic impacts in residential areas.
 - B. Improve the fringe areas between the parkland and adjacent residential properties.
5. **Support NR Greenway Plan**
 - A. Increase access to and connections between the Niagara River region's many resources.
 - B. Celebrate and interpret our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and heritage resources in the NGC area and provide access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.

TIMELINE



Rendering of Proposed Discovery Center and Ramp - Concept A



Photo of Existing Discovery Center and Ramp

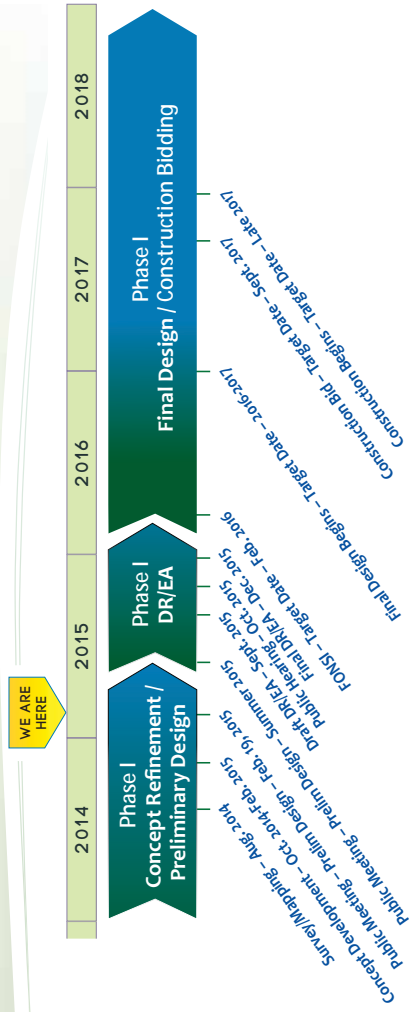
SCOPING RESULTS

1. Transportation, open space, cultural, recreation and municipal land uses were inventoried.
2. Public comment and input was received at stakeholder meetings both verbally (via transcripts) and written in the form of letters, emails, comment sheets and through standardized evaluation sheets.
3. Traffic models were developed, calibrated and utilized for analysis.
4. Past and current development plans by municipalities, state authorities, agencies and bridge commission were reviewed.
5. Six different design alternatives for the Corridor were created.
6. Based on the evaluation of each Alternative, three Alternatives were recognized for best meeting project purpose and need. Alternatives 3, 4, and 6 are recommended for further study in the design and agency review phase of the project.
7. Cost estimates for each design alternate were generated.
8. Based on analysis of the alternatives and information to date, Scoping suggests: Alternatives 1, 2 and 5 should be eliminated from further consideration. Alternatives 3, 4 and 6 should be retained for further analysis in the next phase of design and environmental review.
9. The MOU partners agreed to identify what is immediately doable.
10. There is sufficient justification in the data and reasonable consensus among the MOU partners to advance the project in phases. A Phase 1 segment from Main to Findlay may be expedited through preliminary

design/final engineering while Alternatives for the balance of the corridor are further evaluated in an EIS process.

This conclusion is supported by the following:

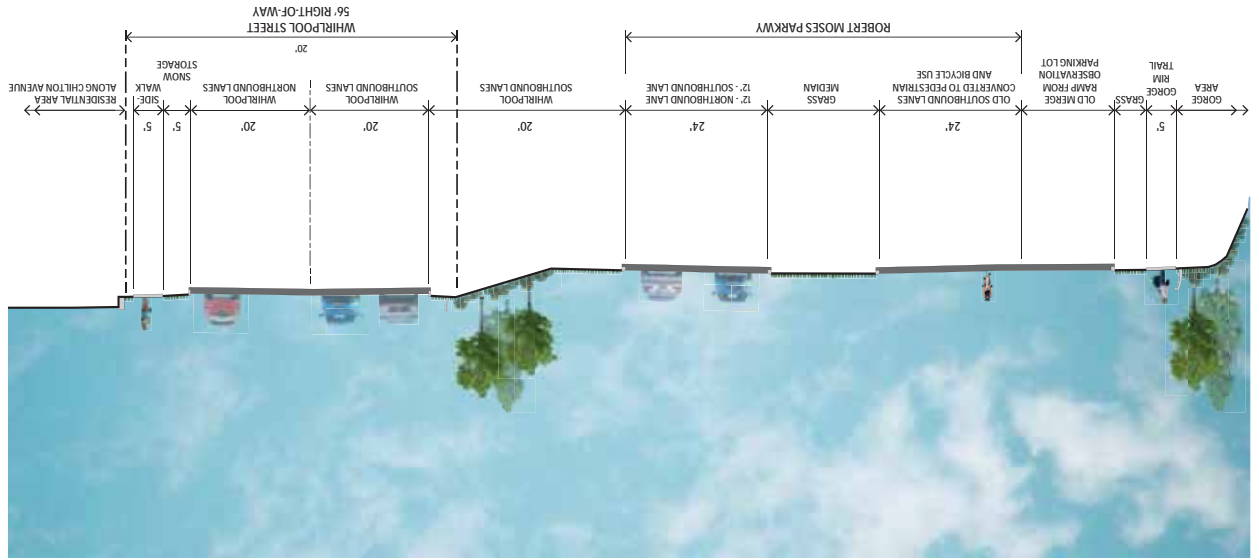
- Alternatives 1, 2, and 5 were exceeded by the potential of the other Alternatives in meeting project objectives; and were ranked lowest in the comments and evaluation sheets received from stakeholders.
- Alternatives were broken into 5 geographic sections based on natural or man-made features along the Niagara Gorge Corridor. Each section could be either a stand-alone project or a separate phase in an overall project. The sections that could be addressed in a Phase 1 stand alone project are A and B. Sections C, D and E would be evaluated during Phase 2.
- With a common plan, purpose & geographic location for this project, the Main to Findlay section has independent utility, ends at logical termini and does not restrict consideration of other alternatives in Phase 2.
- As a Phase 1 project, the Main to Findlay section satisfies project goals and objectives and would be no less protective of the environment than a single project for the entire corridor.
- Phase 1 would not result in created impacts north of Findlay Drive beyond those included in the No-build alternative, or as resolved in any of the alternatives.
- The Phase 1 project is supported by the MOU partners, a majority of the stakeholders and the public and thus is most apt to be funded and advanced through preliminary design, regulatory review and ultimately final design/ construction in an expeditious manner.





CONCEPT A

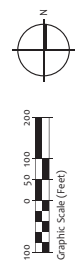
Cross Section of Existing Whirlpool Street



CONCEPT A (continued)

Legend:

- Project Limits: (Solid black line)
- Existing Trails: (Dashed yellow line, width varies 5' wide min.)
- Multi-Use Trail: (Blue line, Pedestrians & Bicyclists, 13' wide)
- Multi-Modal Trail: (Orange line, Pedestrians, Bicyclists & Trolley, 13' wide min.)
- On-Street Trolley Line: (Yellow line with black dots, 13' wide min.)
- Potential On-Street Parking: (Yellow rectangle with black dots)
- Gateway Node: (Purple circle with yellow arrow)
- Scenic Overlook: (Yellow circle with black arrow)
- Gorge Trail Access: (Green circle with black arrow)
- Existing/Proposed Parking: (Blue 'P' icon)

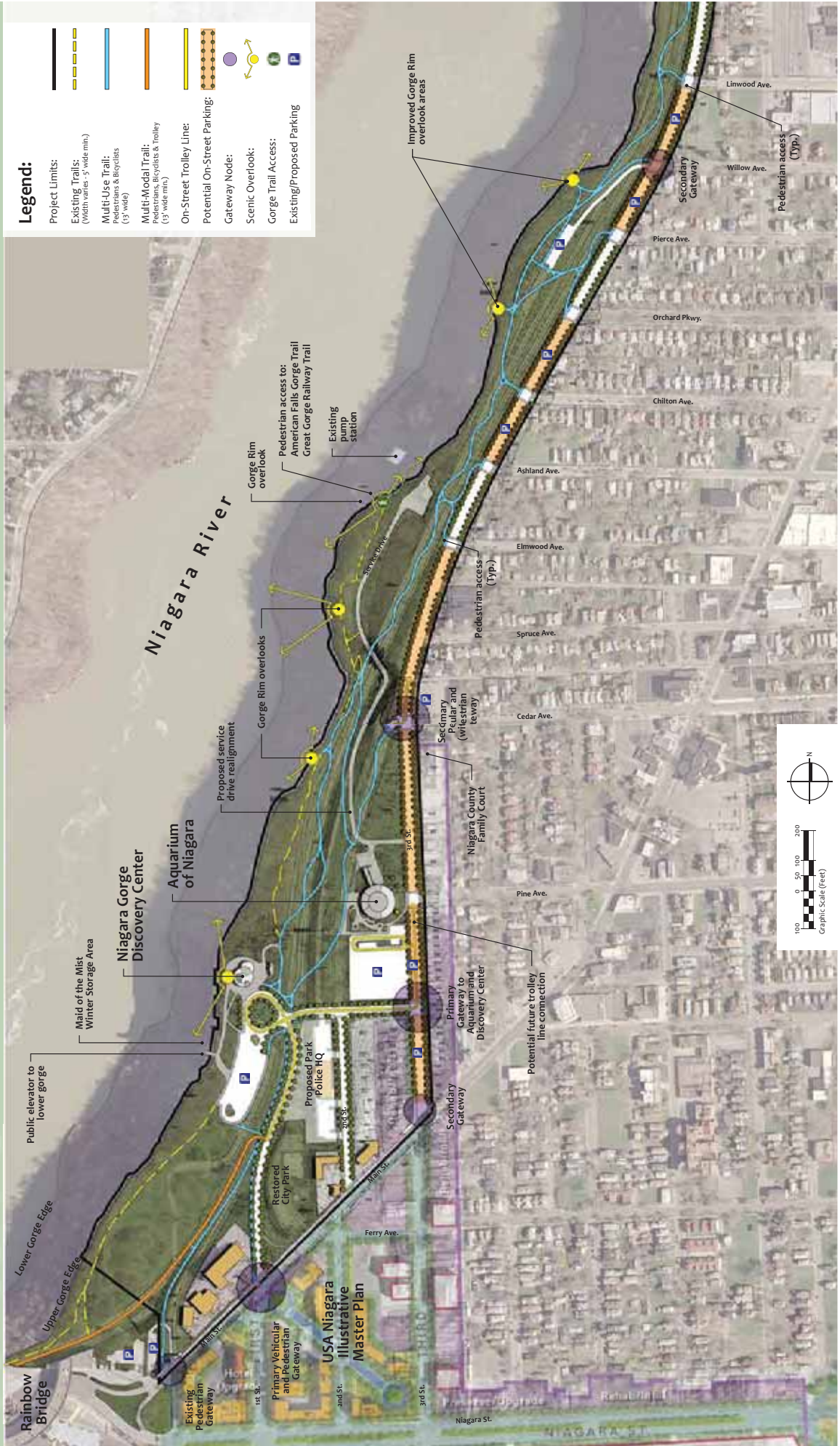


CONCEPT C (continued)

- Legend:**
- Project Limits
 - Existing Trails: (Width varies 5' wide min.)
 - Multi-Use Trail: Pedestrians & Bicyclists (13' wide)
 - Multi-Modal Trail: Pedestrians, Bicyclists & Trolley (13' wide min.)
 - On-Street Trolley Line:
 - Potential On-Street Parking:
 - Gateway Node:
 - Scenic Overlook:
 - Gorge Trail Access:
 - Existing/Proposed Parking



CONCEPT B



CONCEPT C



CONCEPT B (continued)

Legend:

- Project Limits: [Solid black line]
- Existing Trails: (Width varies 5' wide min.) [Dashed yellow line]
- Multi-Use Trail: Pedestrians & Bicyclists (13' wide) [Blue line]
- Multi-Modal Trail: Pedestrians, Bicyclists & Trolley (13' wide min.) [Orange line]
- On-Street Trolley Line: [Yellow line with black dots]
- Potential On-Street Parking: [Dotted black line]
- Gateway Node: [Purple circle]
- Scenic Overlook: [Yellow sun icon]
- Gorge Trail Access: [Green circle]
- Existing/Proposed Parking: [Blue 'P' icon]



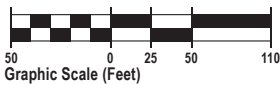
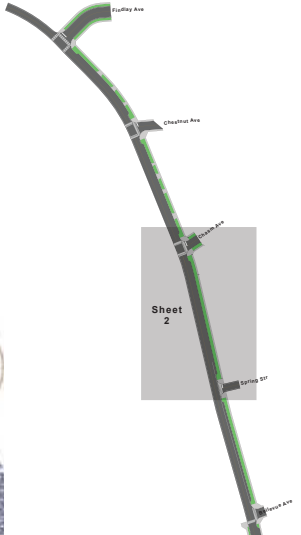
ATTACHMENT D



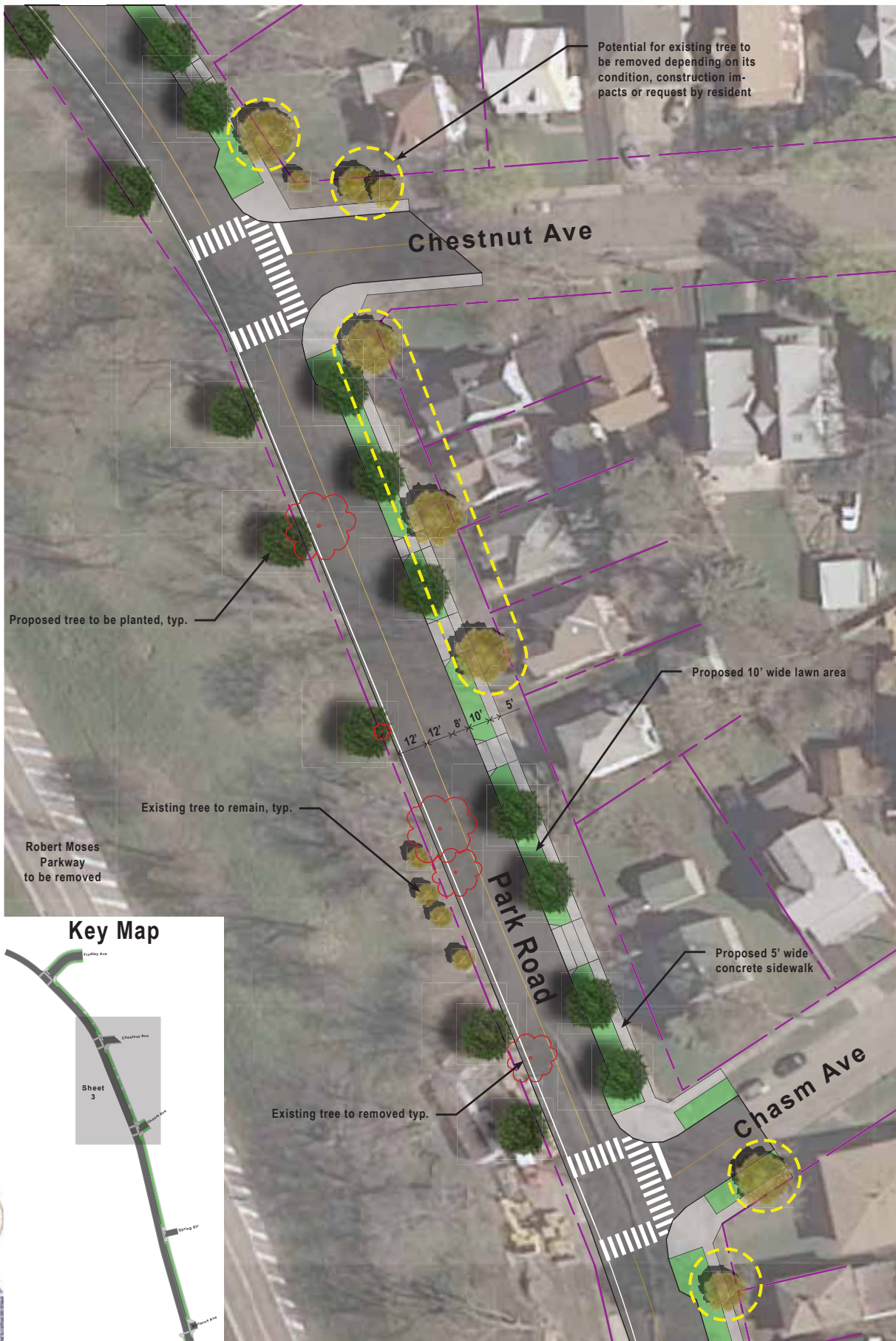
Bellevue Avenue to Spring Street



Key Map



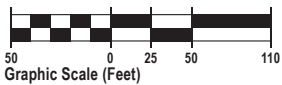
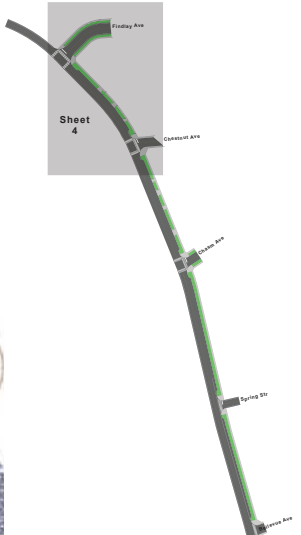
Spring Street to Chasm Avenue



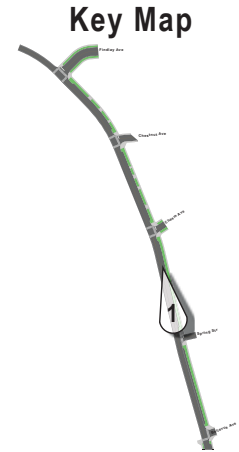
Chasm Avenue to Chestnut Avenue



Key Map



Chestnut Avenue to Findlay Avenue

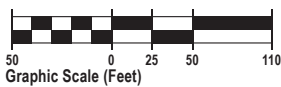


Existing Condition

**Proposed Condition
10 foot wide lawn verge**

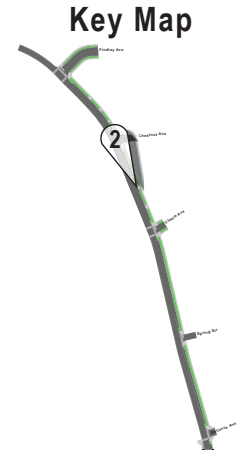


**Artist Rendering |
View looking north near Spring Street**





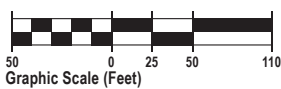
Existing Condition



**Proposed Condition
10 foot wide lawn verge**

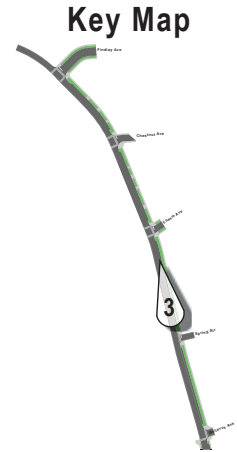


**Artist Rendering |
View looking south near Chestnut Avenue**





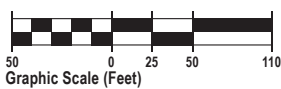
Existing Condition

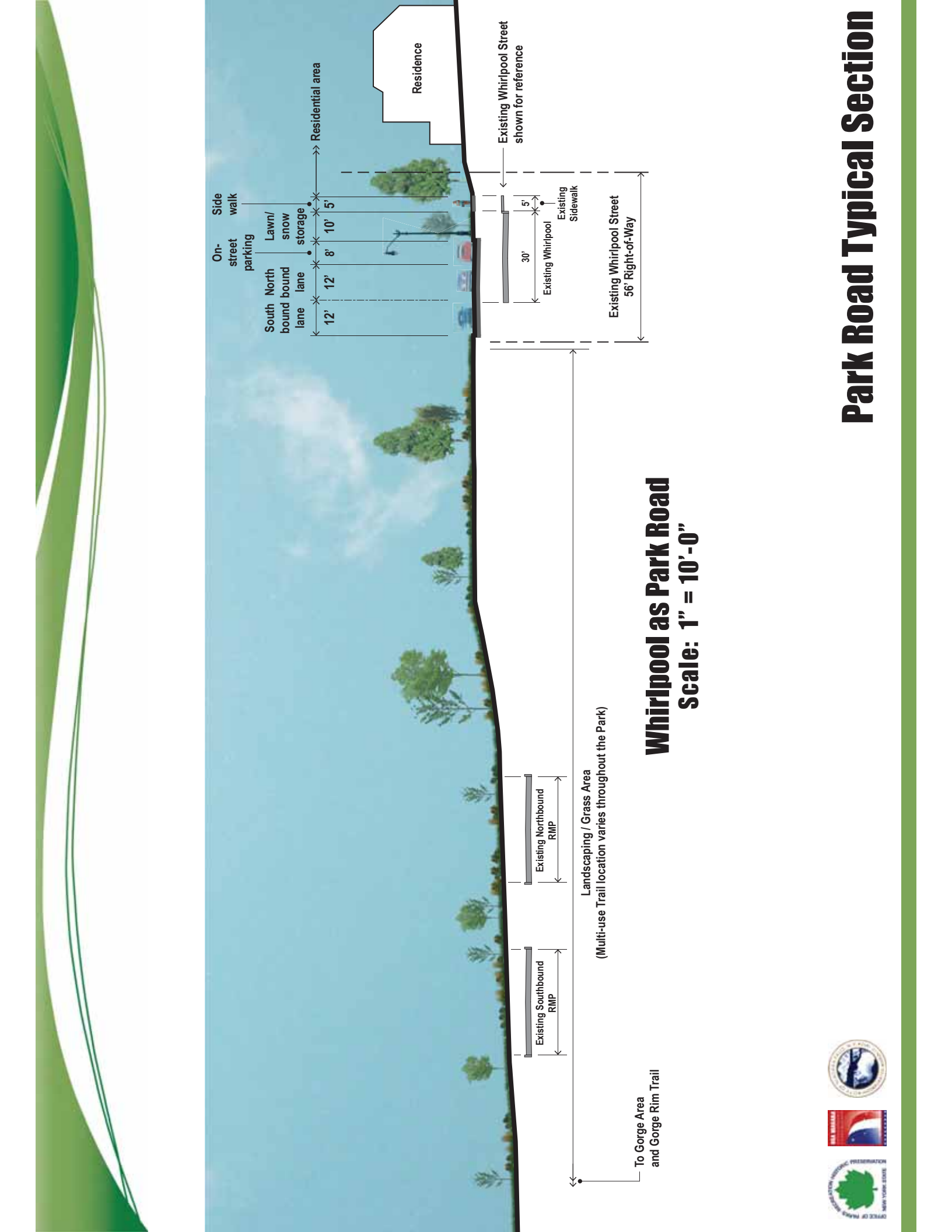


**Proposed Condition
10 foot wide lawn verge**



**Artist Rendering |
View looking north along sidewalk**





On-street parking
 Lawn/snow storage
 Side walk
 Residential area

South bound lane 12'
 North bound lane 12'

8'

10'

5'

Residence

Existing Whirlpool Street shown for reference

5'

30'

Existing Whirlpool

Existing Sidewalk

Existing Whirlpool Street 56' Right-of-Way

Landscaping / Grass Area
 (Multi-use Trail location varies throughout the Park)

To Gorge Area and Gorge Rim Trail

Whirlpool as Park Road

Scale: 1" = 10'-0"



Park Road Typical Section

ATTACHMENT E



NIAGARA GORGE CORRIDOR PROJECT

Robert Moses Parkway – North Segment

July 15, 2015

Neighborhood Meeting Sign-In Sheet

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Name:	_____
Address:	_____ _____
Email Address:	_____
Interest Represented:	_____

Name:	_____
Address:	_____ _____
Email Address:	_____
Interest Represented:	_____

Name:	_____
Address:	_____ _____
Email Address:	_____
Interest Represented:	_____

