



Park/Harbor Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda
March 4, 2021
6:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2021
4. Public Comment
5. Old Business
 - a. Dredge Fund Update
 - b. Parking Fee Increase Recommendation to City Council
6. New Business
 - a. Landscaping Around Donnelly Sculpture
 - b. Fees – Boat Launch, Beach Parking, Commercial Boat Hauler Agreement
 - c. Waterfront Master Plan Discussion
7. Commission Comments
8. Adjournment



March 1, 2021

To: Parks/Harbor members

Spring is on the horizon! It's hard to believe that summer is just around the corner.

The Parks department has begun getting ready for what looks to be a very busy summer season. Last week we did the demo work on the bathrooms at the marina, and now we are just waiting on the bids from the contractors to come in so we can get started with the repairs. This year the marina will have a manager. I have hired Audrey Tuszyński to help me manage the marina. We have some big plans to make it great so stay tuned to see what's in store.

The boat ramp is set to open on March 15th, pending good weather. I know we are in for another very busy season down there between the boaters and kayakers. We are all set to have the parking lot sealed and restriped. Hopefully this will help with some of the confusion and congestion between the boaters, kayakers and the cars just driving through.

I have been out on the beach, and so far it looks like we've gained back some very valuable real-estate! Thankfully we had an ice shelf this year which kept both erosion and debris down to a minimum. Hopefully we don't have any crazy spring storms, because as of right now the beach is in pretty good shape. We will begin spring clean-up as soon as weather permits, as we have already had a lot of visitors heading down to the beach on the nice sunny days.

Spring sports will be taking place this year, and we will be working on getting the ball fields ready for play. Getting them ready requires us to till and drag the fields, hang the dugout screening, clean up the dugouts, fix and damage to the infields and outfields, and just make sure everything is safe for them to play ball.

Continual trash pick and maintenance continues at Oselka Park and the Dog park. Looking forward to another busy year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen D'Amico
Parks Director



WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

City Council Progress Update
January 21, 2020

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PROJECT SCOPE



Waterfront Master
Plan

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BACKGROUND

- Funded through a grant from USDA Rural Development for Waterfront Planning
- Primary Goals Identified in Grant
 - Public Engagement and Support
 - Conceptual Waterfront Plan
 - Preliminary Engineering and Cost Estimates
- Abonmarche Approach
 - Project Steering Committee
 - Guide the Process
 - Engage the Stakeholder Groups
 - Public Engagement
 - Survey
 - Design Charettes (2)
 - Conceptual Design
 - Final Design
 - Preliminary Engineering and Cost Estimating



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PLANNING PROCESS GOALS

- Identify existing issues and opportunities for waterfront access and amenities
 - City Beach
 - City Boat Launch
 - Lions Pavilion Park
 - City Riverfront Park
 - Dune Walk
- Identify and prioritize future waterfront project investments
- Enhance connections between waterfront and downtown
- Create a community vision for the City's Waterfront
 - Public input critical component to planning process



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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- On-line Survey to Gather Community Input on Waterfront
 - Likes/Dislikes
 - Critical Issues
 - What and How Beach is Used
 - What's Missing?
- Design Charette #1
 - Identify Critical Issues
 - Image Preference Study
 - Design the Beach
- Design Charette #2
 - Present 3 Design Concepts for Feedback
 - Allow Public to Vote on Likes & Dislikes

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PUBLIC SURVEY

- Worked with Steering Committee on Distribution of Survey Links
 - Distributed via Email
 - Social Media Promotion
 - New Buffalo Times Ad
 - Post Card – Local Businesses
- Participation
 - Survey Open for 6 weeks
 - Total of 654 completed surveys
 - Almost 100 surveys from New Buffalo High School seniors

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BEACH PREFERENCES

- Beaches Visited
 - New Buffalo – 96%
 - Warren Dunes – 65%
 - Silver Beach - 53%
 - Private/Michigan City/Weko
- Is New Buffalo Preferred Beach?
 - 48% No
 - 41% Yes
- Optional – Why/Why Not?
 - Why Not
 - Parking/Access/Cost
 - Crowds/Space
 - Poor Quality Sand/Amenities
 - Why
 - Close/Proximity
 - Lifeguards/Safety
- Three Most Important Features
 - Quality of Sand – 55%
 - Nearby Bathrooms – 42%
 - Convenient Parking - 38%
 - Proximity, Concessions, Benches/Viewing
- Travel Distance to Preferred Beach?
 - Up to 25 miles (84%)
 - 25 mile radius is Michigan City to Silver Beach
- New Buffalo Beach strengths are proximity and safety

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MY FAVORITE THING IS:

- Proximity
 - To Home
 - To Downtown Shops & Restaurants
- Experiential
 - Sunsets
 - Views
 - Family/Photos
 - Water
- Amenities
 - Beach Club/Improvements
 - Dune Walk
 - Boat Launch

LEAST FAVORITE THING IS:

- Experiential
 - Crowds
 - Cost for Parking - Residents
 - Maintenance (trash/debris)
- Access
 - Availability of parking
 - Distance from parking lot to water
 - Pedestrian access from downtown
- Amenities
 - Bathrooms
 - Lack of Concessions
- Ecological
 - Water levels
 - Dune erosion



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SURVEY KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Variety of Respondents
 - Residents well represented
 - Older respondents
- High Beach Use
- Lack of Satisfaction in Facilities and Access
 - Existing facilities are old and small
 - Peak beach use creates high demand in limited space
- Linkages to downtown need improvement
- Strengths in:
 - Safety
 - Experiences (sunsets, views, Dune Walk)
 - River paddling

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Improved connection to downtown
- Consider changes to parking layouts
- Consider demand for new facilities
- Balance Resident and Visitor preferences
- Take “Right-Sized” approach to development

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Design Charette #1

- Facilitated at New Buffalo City Hall on December 6
 - Invitations Distributed via Email
 - Social Media Promotion
 - New Buffalo Times Ad
 - Post Card – Local Businesses
- Participation – Approximately 45 attended
- Presentation of Survey Results
- Three Exercises
 - Exercise #1 – Identify Key Issues
 - Exercise #2 – Design Image Preference Study
 - Exercise #3 – Design the Beach



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WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

EXERCISE #1: KEY FINDINGS



Waterfront Master Plan

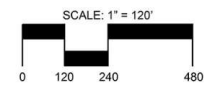


CONSISTENTLY NOTED ISSUES

PREPARED FOR: CITY OF NEW BUFFALO, MICHIGAN

DATE: JANUARY 8, 2020

PREPARED BY:
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EXERCISE #2: TOP IMAGES



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EXERCISE #3: KEY FINDINGS

- CREATE AN AMENITY CORE:
 - BETTER RESTROOMS
 - CONCESSIONS
 - FOOD TRUCK OPPORTUNITIES
 - ENTERTAINMENT FACILITY
 - EDUCATION FACILITY
 - ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FEATURES
- MOVE PRIMARY PARKING AWAY FROM BEACH
- MOVE MARQUETTE DRIVE ALIGNMENT TO THE SOUTH
- PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE
- SHORELINE STABILIZATION / SEAWALL
- PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE:
 - SEPARATE FROM WHITAKER ST.
 - ADEQUATE WIDTH
- BETTER PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN

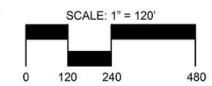


- PRESERVE NATURALNESS OF BEACH
 - DO NOT "COMMERCIALIZE"
 - DO NOT INCREASE PEAK OCCUPANCY LEVELS / INTENSITY OF USE
- PRESERVE DUNE WALK
 - REPAIR AND PROTECT FROM EROSION
- IMPROVE VEHICULAR CIRCULATION, REDUCE CONGESTION AT PEAK USE TIMES.
 - OVERALL, ROUNDABOUT VIEWED POSITIVELY.
- IMPROVE BOAT TRAILER PARKING
 - SIZE ACCORDINGLY
 - PROVIDE RESTROOM FACILITIES FOR BOATERS
 - PROVIDE KAYAK RENTAL FACILITY AREA.
- RENOVATE BOAT LAUNCHES
 - CLEARER DESIGNATION OF LAUNCH AREAS
 - DESIGNATED KAYAK LAUNCHES



CONCEPTUAL DESIGN IDEAS
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 DATE: JANUARY 8, 2020

PREPARED BY:
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Design Charette #2

- Facilitated at New Buffalo High School on January 8
 - Invitations Distributed via Email
 - Social Media Promotion
- Participation – Approximately 45 attended
- Open House Format
 - Three Concept Plans presented for feedback
 - Varying levels of use intensity and access design
- Two Stations
 - Station #1 – Presentation Boards Summarizing Charette #1 Input
 - Station #2 – Presentation Boards of Three Design Concepts



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SITE PLAN CONCEPT A

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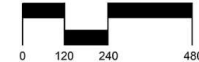
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SCALE: 1" = 120'



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SITE PLAN CONCEPT B

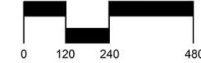
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PREPARED BY:



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SITE PLAN CONCEPT C

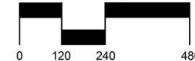
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NORTH



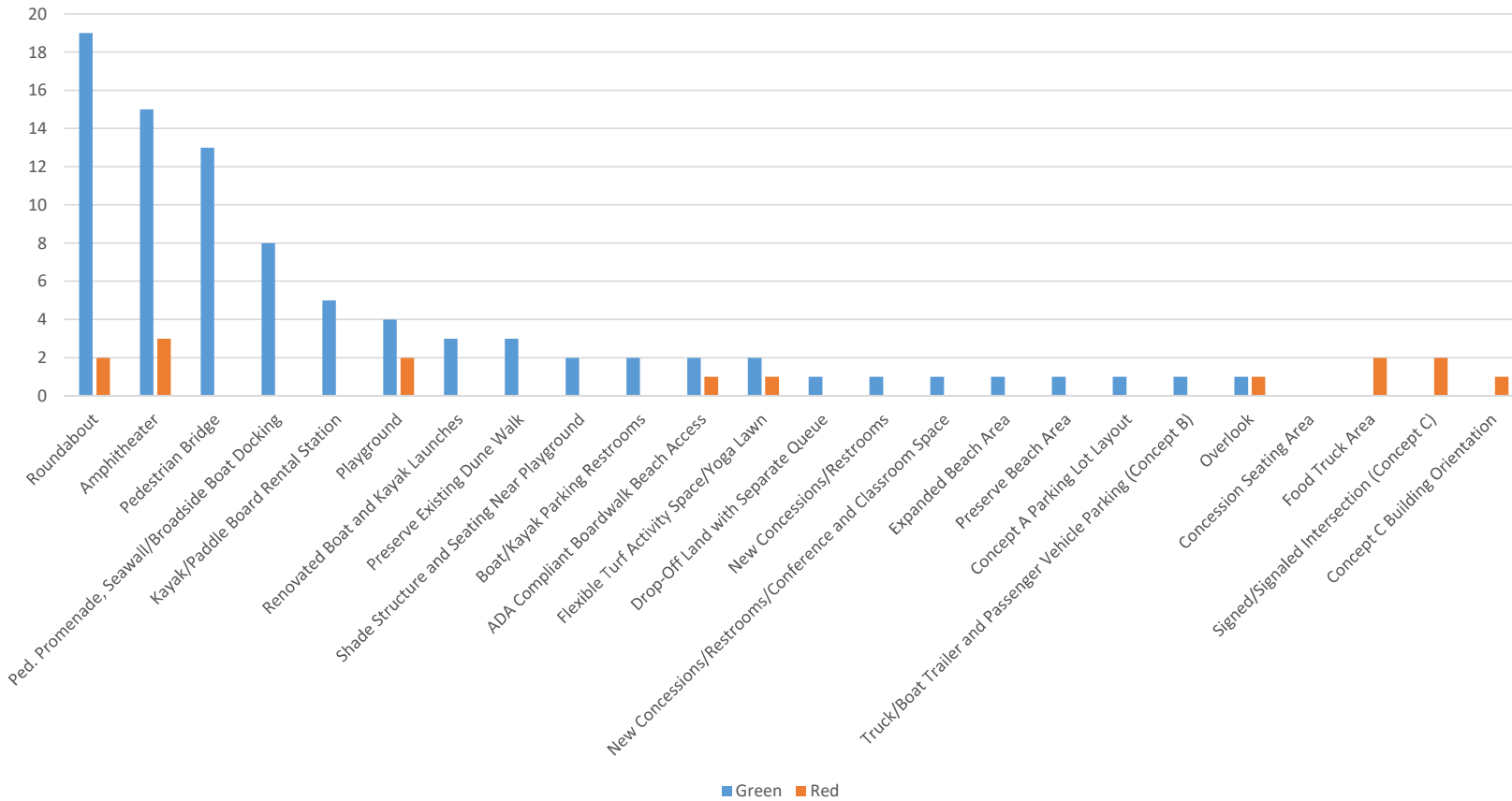
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Design Charette 2 Preference Summary



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CONCEPT DESIGN



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Concept Design Development

- Built from public input
 - 640+ surveys
 - Approximately 100 Charette Attendees
- Address Key Issues Identified
 - Access
 - Flooding/Erosion
 - Facilities
 - Capacity
- Improve Perception of Beach – Make Preferred



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MASTER PLAN



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CONCEPT DESIGN GOALS

Goal 1 – Mitigate Beach Erosion and Flooding Issues Related to High Water Levels

Address primary issues related to flooding, beach/dune erosion and shoreline erosion in Galien River Channel

Goal 2 – Improve Access to the Park and Resolve Traffic Conflicts

Address primary issues related to access and traffic during peak use hours, as well as shoreline erosion in Galien River Channel

Goal 3 – Create Park Identity and Improve Beach Use Experience

Address primary issues related to beach experience (including restrooms, concessions, and crowds), underutilized spaces, and diversity of experiences available at the beach.

Goal 4 – Increase Use of and Improve Boat Launch Experience

Address primary issues related to overall park experience, and diversifying users of the park.



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WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS

1. Shoreline Stabilization – Sea Wall
2. Roadway Relocation & Roundabout
3. Boat Launch Enhancements
4. New Beach Parking & Drop Off
5. Beach Expansion, Boardwalk, Playground and Seating Wall
6. Pedestrian Promenade, Enhanced Aesthetics and New Building
7. Pedestrian Bridge



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SITE PLAN



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SHORELINE STABILIZATION

This element includes extension of the seawall along the eastern bank of the channel from the existing City Marina to Lake Michigan.

Primary Benefits:

1. Mitigation of flooding and erosion due to high water levels
2. Enhanced pedestrian access to the beach when combined with future promenade improvements
3. Possible expansion of broadside docking opportunities and revenues
4. Development of signature overlook location



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MARQUETTE DR. RELOCATION & ROUNDABOUT

This element includes the relocation of Marquette Drive to the south, and the construction of a new roundabout.

Primary Benefits:

1. Enhanced vehicular access, reducing conflict points for traffic accessing the boat launch, the beach and the homes east of the beach.
2. Shifts vehicle stacking into designated beach and boat launch parking areas, and off Marquette Drive
3. Mitigation of flooding due to high water levels



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BOAT LAUNCH ENHANCEMENTS

This element includes the revitalization of the existing boat launch to enhance traffic flow, improve and integrate parking opportunities, expand paddling infrastructure and create new dedicated restroom facilities.

Primary Benefits:

1. Improved user experience
2. Enhanced boat and trailer access when integrated with Marquette Drive relocation and roundabout
3. Expanded paddling opportunities will increase activity and revenue, and drive economic impact to local businesses
4. Replace large asphalt areas with green space, including relocated Lion's Pavilion



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NEW BEACH PARKING & DROP OFF

This element includes relocating the primary beach parking area and creating an extended stacking/drop off lane to enhance traffic flow. Shifting parking south accommodates the expansion of the beach area.

Primary Benefits:

1. Reduce conflict points, minimizing back-ups on primary drive
2. Removes boat launch traffic from beach traffic sooner
3. Maintains similar number of parking spaces as currently provided (197 in main parking area, 16 additional in boat launch)



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BEACH EXPANSION, BOARDWALK, SEATING WALL & PLAYGROUND

This element includes expanding the useable beach area, creating a new seating wall that provides stabilization for hardscape and building foundations, and creating a new ADA accessible boardwalk for improved access along with a new playground area.

Primary Benefits:

1. Improved user experience by reducing crowding of beach area and increase in recreation areas
2. Improved protection of beach amenities from high water flooding
3. Enhanced ADA access to beach integrated with new dune walk access



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NEW LANDSCAPED PLAZA AND MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING

This element includes creating a new plaza with hardscape and landscape improvements, along with a new building for restrooms, changing areas, concessions, and possibly classroom space or event venue space.

Primary Benefits:

1. Improved user experience in restroom/changing areas upgrades
2. Opportunities to expand seasonality of beach usage through added event spaces
3. Improve image and perception as preferred beach option in the region



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PHASING



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PHASING GOALS

- Provide flexibility in construction of project elements
- Address Priority Issues Early
- Construct Improvements as Funding is Identified



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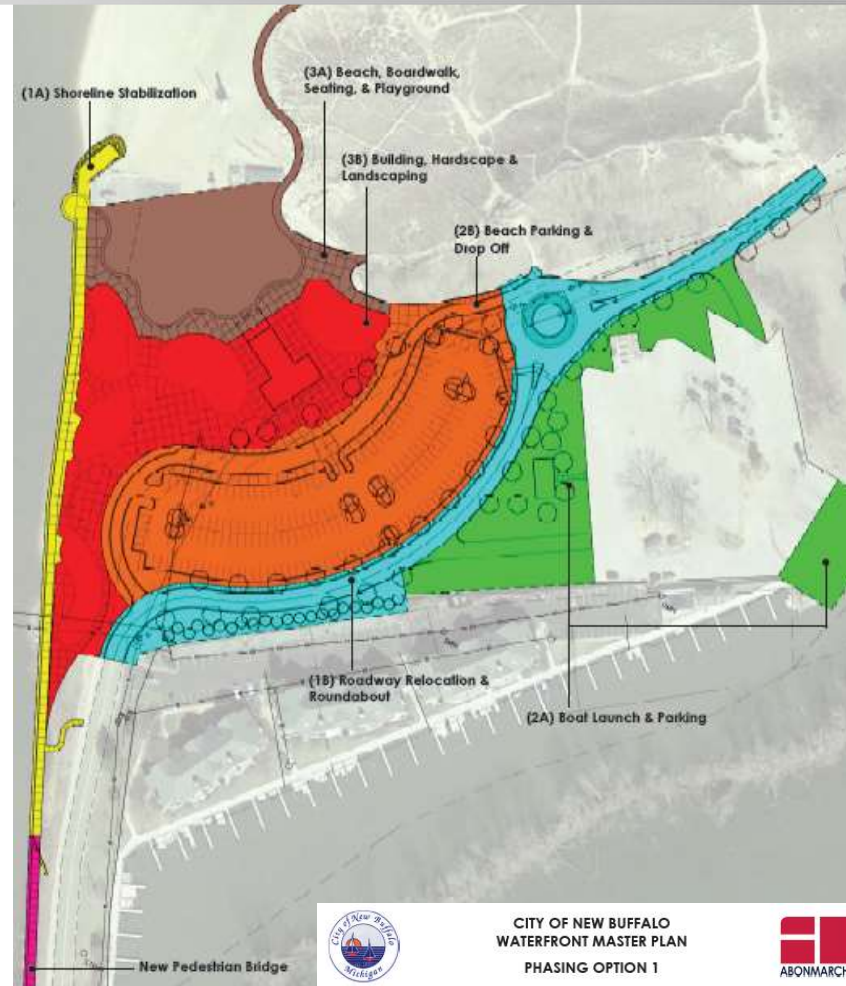
PHASING PLAN

Phase 1:

Phase 1 activities will address priority flooding and erosion mitigation goals, along with access improvements. Activities include:

1a. Shoreline Stabilization (Yellow)

1b. Roadway Relocation & Roundabout (Lt. Blue)



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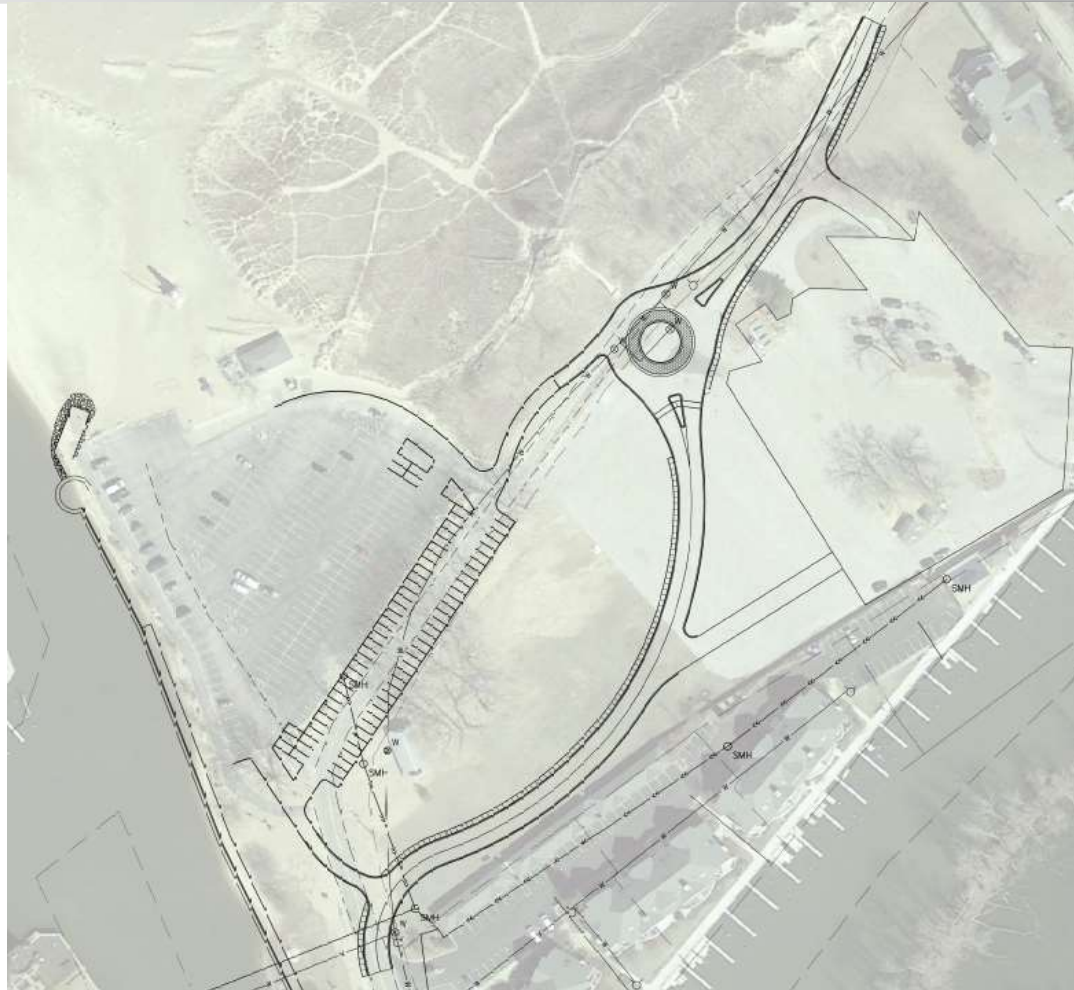
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PHASING OPTION 1



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PHASE 1 COMPLETION

Phase 1 improvements will include the completion of a new connector road into the existing beach parking area and a reduced boat launch parking area. This solution provides a bridge allowing the beach to function with existing amenities until Phase 2 & 3 improvements are constructed.



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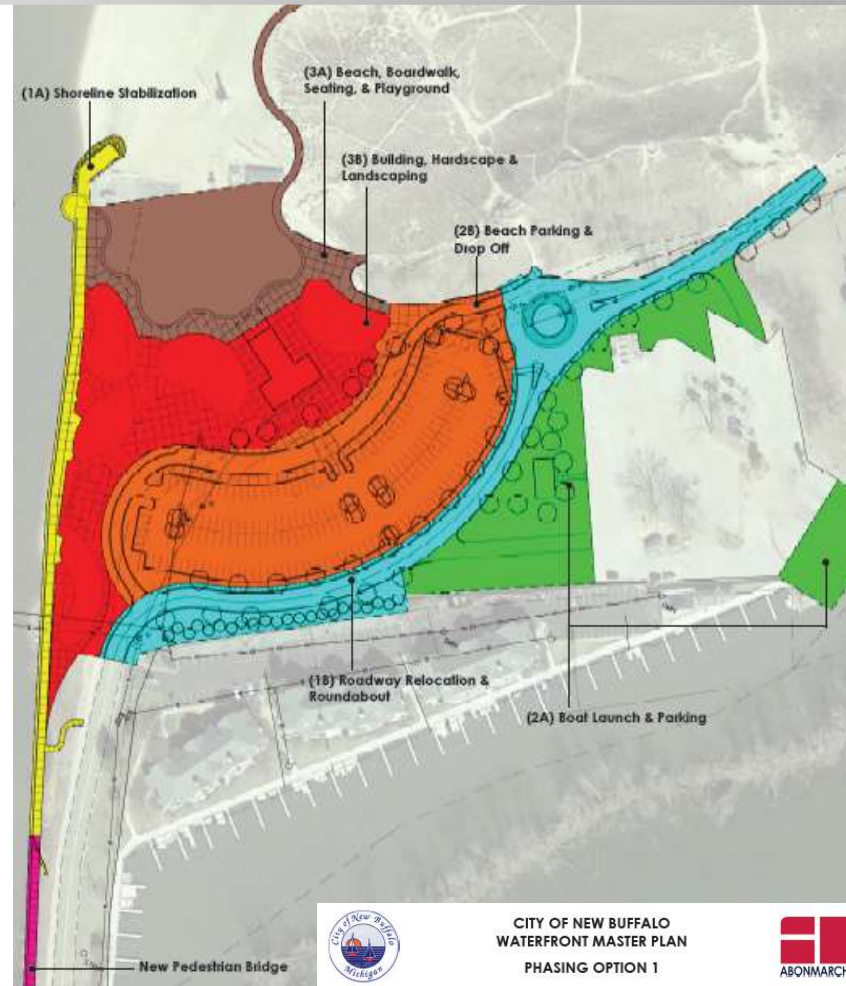
PHASING PLAN

Phase 2:

Phase 2 activities will include parking improvements, boat launch enhancements and set the table for beach expansion. Activities include:

2a. New Beach Parking and Drop Off (Orange)

2b. Boat Launch Improvements (Green)



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PHASING OPTION 1



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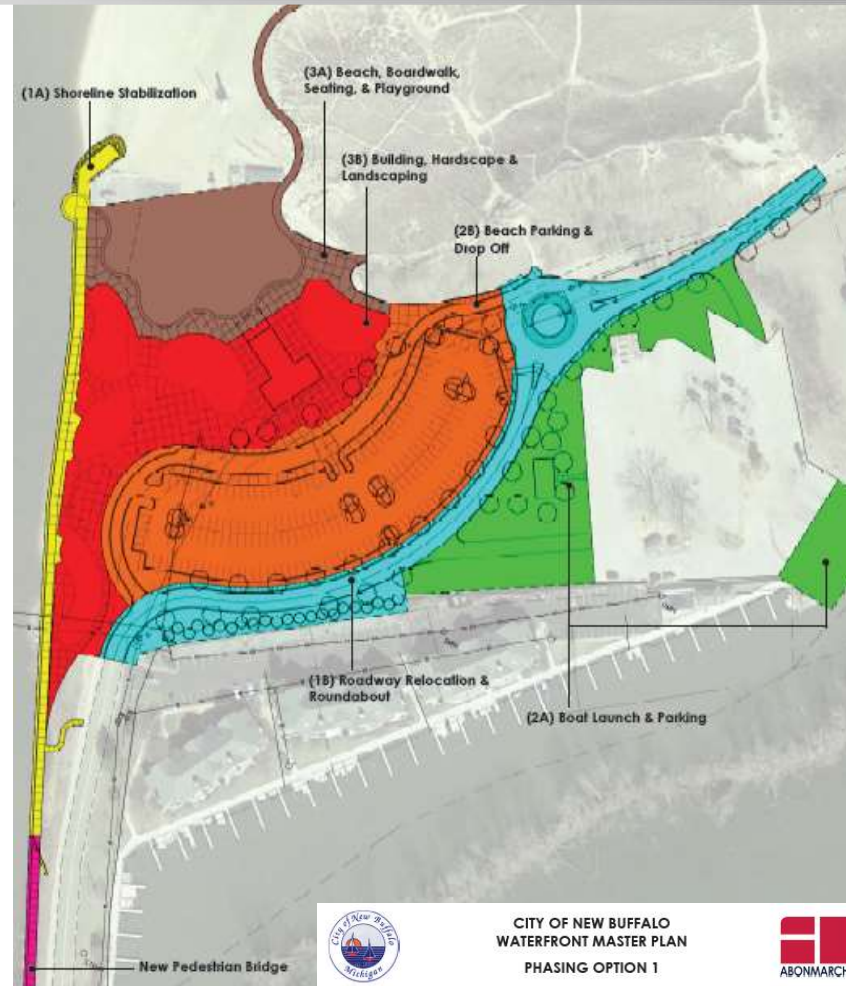
PHASING PLAN

Phase 3:

Phase 3 activities will include expansion of the beach recreation area, and completion of plaza and amenity areas. Activities include:

3a. Beach Expansion, Boardwalk, Seating Wall & Playground (Brown)

3b. New Landscaped Plaza & Multi-Purpose Building (Red)



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PHASING OPTION 1

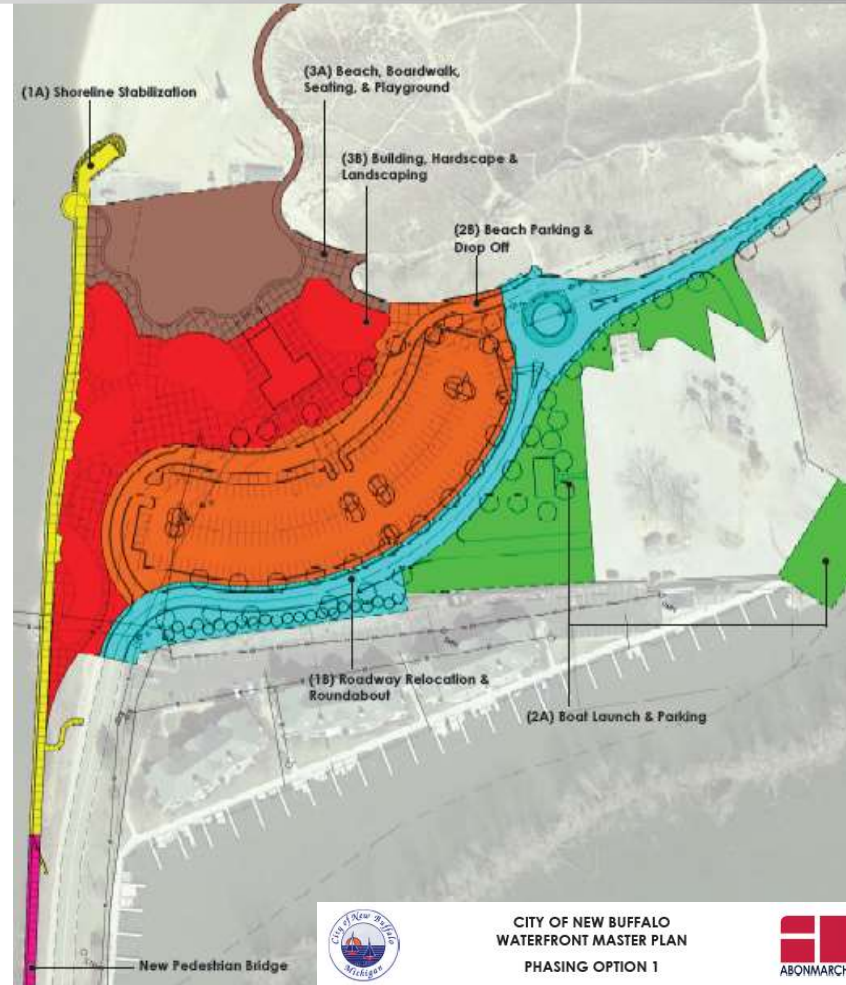


WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN



COST ESTIMATES

Phase 1 – Flood Mitigation & Vehicular Access	
1A Shoreline Stabilization	\$2,473,075
1B Roadway Relocation & Roundabout	\$1,420,909
TOTAL Phase 1	\$3,893,984
Phase 2 – Parking & Boat Launch Improvements	
2A Boat Launch & Parking	\$ 867,338
2B Beach Parking & Drop Off	\$ 954,340
TOTAL Phase 2	\$1,820,632
Phase 3 – Beach Expansion, Aesthetics & Amenities	
3A Beach, Boardwalk, Seating & Playground	\$1,433,988
3B Building & Hardscape	\$3,442,541
TOTAL Phase 3	\$4,876,529
Pedestrian Bridge	\$1,380,874
TOTAL (ALL PHASES)	\$11,972,019



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PHASING OPTION 1



**THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?**



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