

The System of Parkways, Avenues, Circles and Small Spaces

Unique Attributes

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, the Olmsted firm designed six large parks within the City of Buffalo, as well as several smaller green spaces. These open spaces include neighborhood and pocket parks, and an extensive system of connecting parkways, avenues and circles. Some of these features have been lost, but those that remain help define the City of Buffalo. The system of Parkways, Circles, and Avenues, if fully restored, will position the citizens of the City of Buffalo in the Olmsted Park and Parkway System (See Figures 68-76).

Each park in the system serves a different purpose. Some attract a more regional audience, while others cater largely to their

surrounding communities. Each has its own unique set of natural and constructed attributes. The extent of the park system, the ways in which the system has shaped the design of the city, and the ways in which the design of the city has shaped the parks, makes the system vital to the high quality of life of the region.

Three types of connections in addition to circles are proposed in this plan:

- The original Olmsted connections as planned or proposed.
- The Radial Street System of Joseph Ellicott in a manner consistent with the Great Streets Program called for in the Queen City Hub and City Comprehensive Plan.
- New parkway or avenue links which are landscaped in the style of Olmsted with significant differences in



Figure 68 – Historic photo of Lincoln Parkway



Figure 69 - Historic postcard of Soldiers Circle

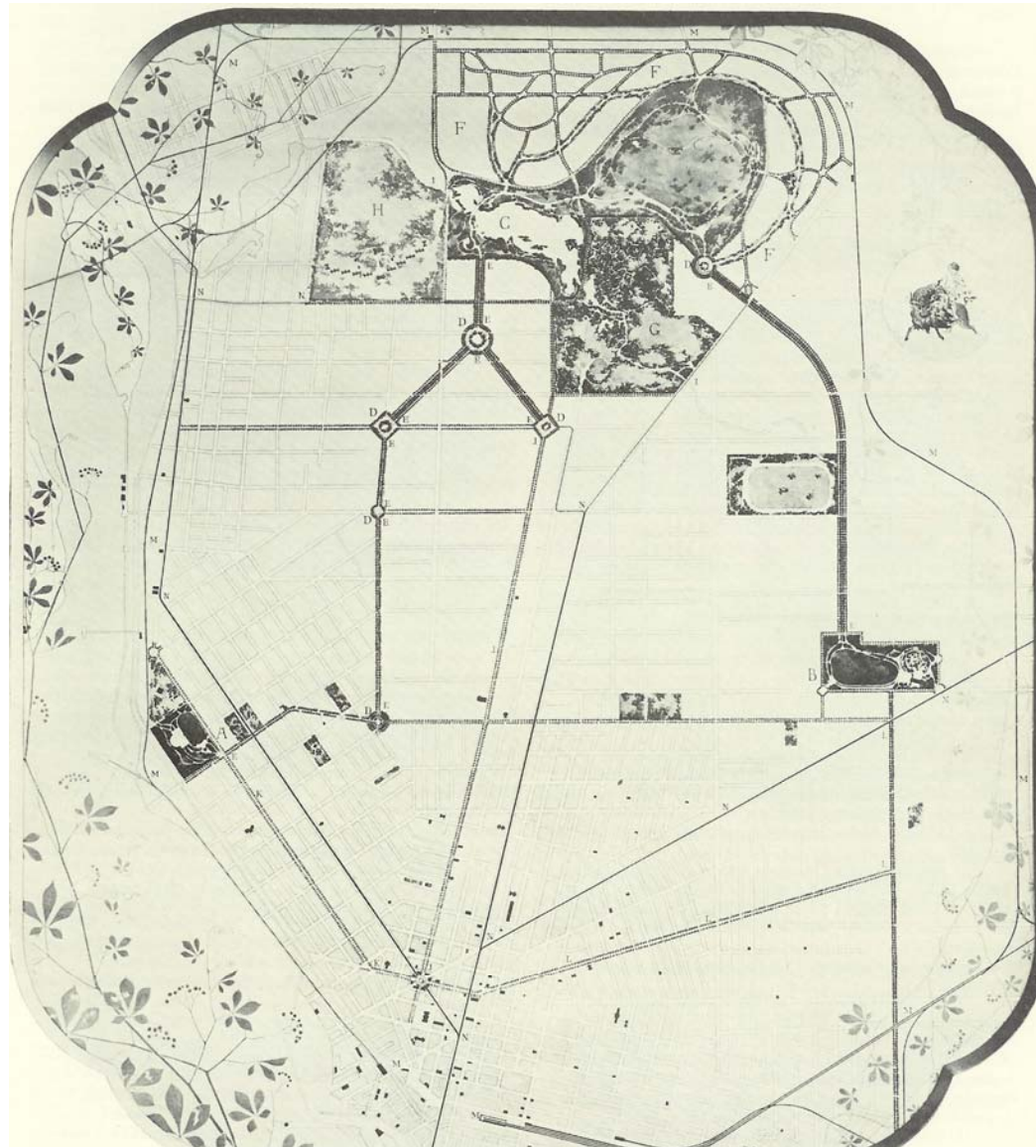


Figure 70 - 1874 Olmsted design for the northern Park and Parkway System

lighting, tree types, and spacing from the historic Olmsted tradition.

Goals

The system of Olmsted and non-Olmsted parkways, avenues, circles and small spaces should enable citizens to access the parks from locations throughout the City and to travel among destination parks, downtown and the waterfront via beautiful parkway or avenue routes. Toward this end, goals for the system connections include:

- Continue to protect, preserve, rehabilitate, and maintain the original Olmsted system of parkways, circles, and small spaces that remain in place today.
- To the extent possible, restore or reconstruct lost components of the Olmsted system as originally built.
- For lost components for which full restoration is not possible,

re-interpret the lost elements in a way that is consistent with the original Olmstedian vision and intent.

- Construct or re-interpret linkages planned by the Olmsted firm but never fully realized.
- Develop new parkway, circle, and similar linkages to fill in remaining gaps in the overall system.
 - a) Maintain the historic integrity of the original Olmsted system by differentiating new connections from the historic ones. The landscape pattern of these new elements should be stylistically compatible, yet clearly distinct from the original Olmsted connections.
 - b) The new elements should connect the six major parks through parkways, avenues,



Figure 71 – Historic Postcard of Symphony Circle



Figure 72 - Historic postcard of the fountain in Gates Circle



Figure 73 - Modern photo of Chapin Parkway



Figure 74 - Modern photo of the Ferry Circle

and a system of great streets based in part on the Joseph Ellicott radial plan for Buffalo.

c) The connections should address each park’s surrounding neighborhood, the other parks, downtown, and the waters of the Buffalo River, Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and other relevant stream/greenway corridors.

- Interpret the lost or separated small spaces of the system with streetscape and landscape linkages to related existing or proposed system elements.

Connecting the System:

- Connect the historic north and south parkway systems across the Buffalo River.
- Use the northern half of Fillmore Avenue to create a connecting landscaped

avenue from Delaware Park and Jewett Parkway to MLK, Jr. Park.

- Join Jewett Parkway and Fillmore Avenue with a landscaped traffic circle.
- Connect the Central Terminal to Fillmore Avenue with a landscaped parkway and circle on Paderewski Drive.
- Use Fillmore Avenue south of MLK, Jr. Park to parts of Seneca Street and South Park Avenue to connect Fillmore Avenue to McKinley Parkway.
- Create a landscaped traffic circle at Fillmore Avenue and Seneca Street.
- Use two routes to cross the Buffalo River and landscape the bridge heads to announce the river crossing.
- Develop a beautified Fuhrman Boulevard to meet with Michigan Avenue and to link with South Park Avenue across the existing Ohio Street Bridge or the proposed new Michigan Avenue Bridge.

Connect all the destination parks to the water.

- Connect South Park to Fuhrman Blvd and Lake Erie via a landscaped avenue along Ridge Road.
- Connect MLK Jr. Park to Front Park along a landscaped street linking the Parks to recreation opportunities in route along Best Street to North Street and through Symphony Circle to Porter Avenue.
- Connect Delaware Park to Niagara Street and the water along Forest Avenue taking advantage of the frontage of the Buffalo Psychiatric Center buildings and grounds in route.
- Reinforce the Scajaquada Creek recreation path from Delaware Park to Niagara Street.

Connect the Parks to Downtown

- Create a parkway condition on the Genesee Street radial

connecting MLK Jr. Park to Downtown.

- Create a South Park Avenue landscape link connecting the east Buffalo River crossings to Downtown.
- Create a Niagara Street radial comparable to Genesee Street connecting Prospect, Columbus and the Front to Niagara Square.
- Continue the Niagara Street radial treatment to the Scajaquada interchange to link up with the Forest Ave. and the Scajaquada creek recreation path routes to Delaware Park.
- Continue the Niagara Street Radial treatment to Riverside linking this northern-most park in the system to all the others.



Figure 75 – Historic photo of the fountain in Days Park

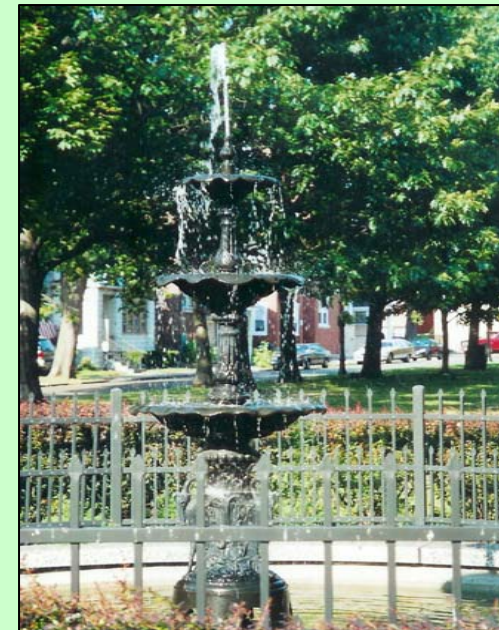


Figure 76 - Existing fountain in Days Park

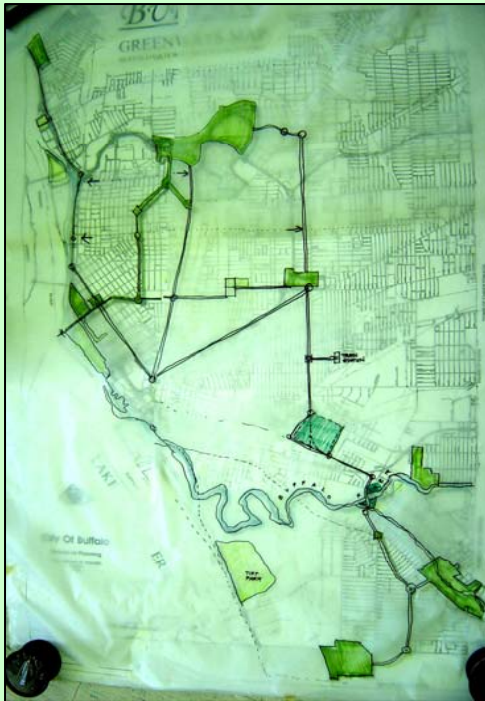


Figure 77 - Concept design for the expanded Parkway System

Mitigate the loss of the Humboldt Parkway and interpret its original alignment

- Interpret the original alignment of the Humboldt from west of Parkside Ave. to the Highway 33 (Kensington Expressway) interchange.
- Beautify the Highway 33 (Kensington Expressway) from the Scajaquada Interchange south interpreting the historic alignment at every opportunity.
- Plan for the eventual decking of the Kensington Expressway at the historic termination of the Humboldt extension as far south as practical to reconnect the neighborhoods across the Expressway.

Develop the landscape elements necessary to integrate existing small parks with the system

- Consider a landscape connection from Day's Park to Symphony Circle.
- Where possible, reestablish the historic plantings for all of the small spaces.
- Interpret lost small spaces and their connections to the system.

(See Figures 77-78)

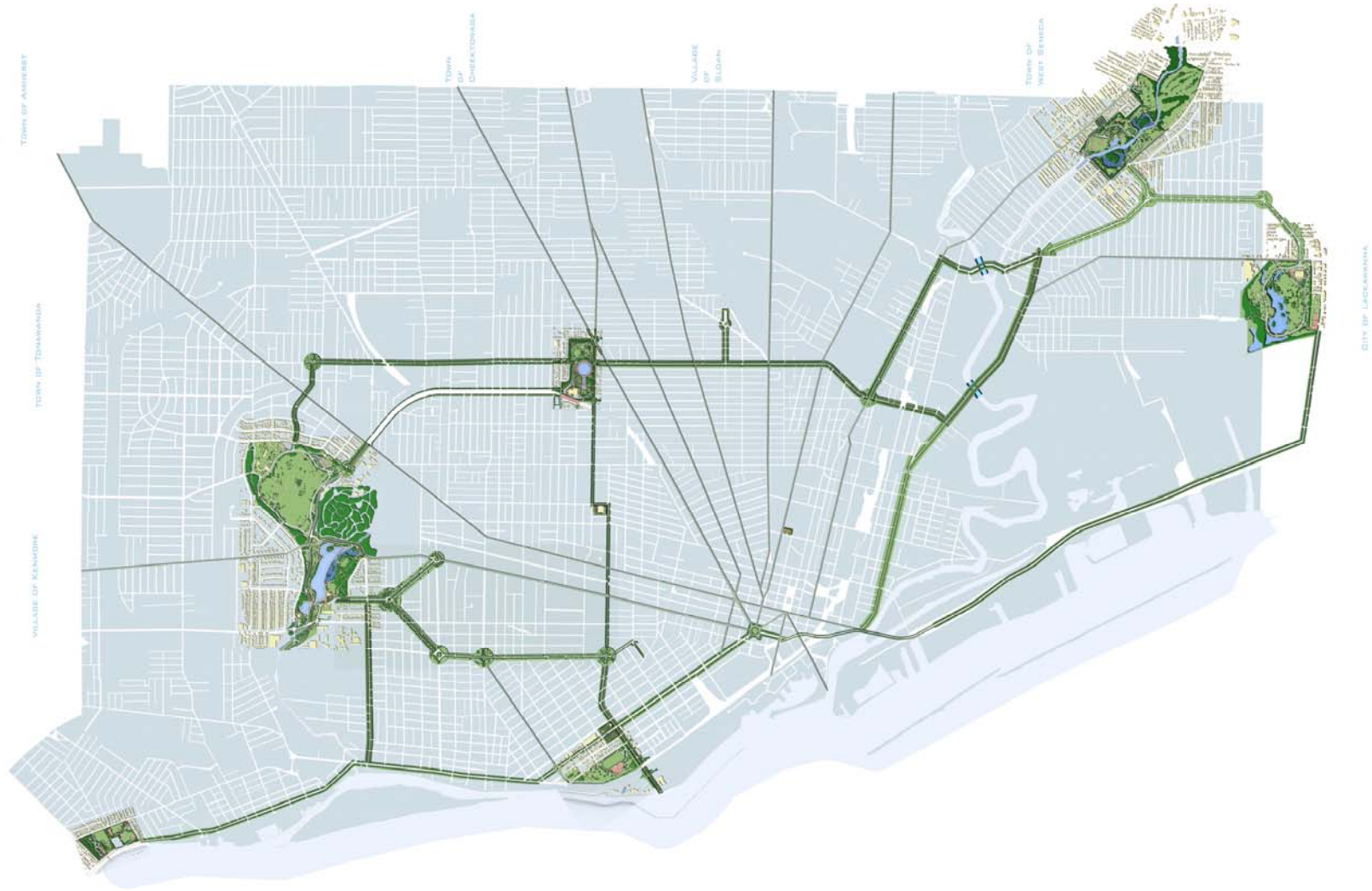


Figure 78 - 2025 Buffalo Olmsted Park and Parkway System