



NIAGARA  
PARKS

# BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2026





## **The Niagara Parks Commission**

### *Business Plan 2023-2026*

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

The Niagara Parks Commission, a board-governed operational enterprise agency of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, operates under the provisions of the Niagara Parks Act. Niagara Parks plays a pivotal role in Niagara and in Ontario, preserving and promoting a globally significant geography (the Niagara River corridor) as well as cultural heritage sites, while supporting a robust tourism experience for guests from Ontario, Canada and around the world. Funded by its numerous revenue-producing operations and welcoming millions of visitors annually, Niagara Parks' diverse offerings include natural attractions, locally sourced restaurants, renowned gardens, parks, trails, championship golf courses, the Niagara Parkway, Niagara River Recreation Trail, School of Horticulture, heritage sites and architectural assets, while ensuring public safety through the Niagara Parks Police Service.

Located within Canada's top leisure tourism destination, Niagara Parks is proud of its role as a major contributor to the spectacular double bottom line of this Ministry. This double bottom line refers to a financial bottom line, through which the sectors of this Ministry generate hundreds of thousands of jobs along with billions of dollars in economic activity, and a social bottom line, in which these sectors enrich the cultural and social fabric of Ontario.

This duality is echoed in Niagara Parks' mandate of protecting and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Niagara River corridor while remaining financially self-sufficient and will continue to guide Niagara Parks' approach to supporting tourism. Niagara Parks will aim to strike a balance between driving visitation to its revenue-producing operations which contribute to its bottom line, while remaining committed to its important role as the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River corridor.

The current fiscal year (2022-23) has seen encouraging steps toward recovery, after the previous years of (2020-21 and 2021-22) were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Commission has and will continue to make targeted and strategic investments to improve the guest experience at Niagara Parks, including ongoing redevelopment of Niagara Parks' flagship location, Table Rock Centre, and with the successful adaptive re-use of the Niagara Parks Power Station. This project was supported by the Ministry and the Ontario Financing Authority with a ten-year loan. Through its medium-term recovery plan, the Commission is reducing administration processes and costs, while remaining focused on delivering front-line services to visitors. This work included the launch of a new Enterprise resource planning system, an operational review of parks and engineering services and enhanced digital service delivery.



The contents of this business plan summarize Niagara Parks' strategic goals and priorities over the course of 2023-26 that will guide the organization, informed by the goals and priorities of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. In addition to aligning with the priorities of the Ministry, Niagara Parks' strategic goals and priorities follow the four themes of its 10-year Strategic Plan:

- Preserving and showcasing our rich heritage, culture and lifestyle
- Leveraging and activating our natural wonders and iconic experiences
- Supporting a dynamic business environment with a focus on attracting investment, connection to local communities, job creation and economic well-being
- Taking experiences and hospitality to the next level

Throughout 2023-26, in addition to the themes of its 10-year Strategic Plan, Niagara Parks' operations and decision-making will be guided by the following strategic goals:

- Developing and nurturing great guest experiences
- Growing revenue
- Fostering strong collaboration with partner organizations
- Expanding our digital service delivery
- Ensuring strong fiscal management

Moving forward, the business plan calls for Niagara Parks to continue to balance this unique mandate while:

- Focusing on promoting its natural attractions, including the new Niagara Parks Power Station and Tunnel
- Expanding the "Explore the Niagara" initiative in collaboration with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls and Parks Canada
- Collaborating with Niagara Parks' tenants to grow attendance and revenue
- Working with tourism partners such as Destination Ontario, Niagara Falls Tourism, Niagara Falls Canada Hotel Association, and Tourism Partnership of Niagara to attract more visitors to Niagara
- Concluding the procurement process with the private sector for the adaptive re-use of both the Toronto Power and Ontario Power Company Generating Stations (decommissioned power plants)



- Redeveloping current Niagara's Fury attraction to replace with a new, updated guest experience that will drive revenue, while aligning with Niagara Parks other revenue-producing offerings
- Assessing options to potentially redevelop Niagara Parks Marina at Miller's Creek
- Growing funding and stewardship opportunities through the Niagara Parks Foundation
- Implementing a new digital strategy to meet and exceed customer service standards
- Further integrating data collection and analysis solutions to inform decision-making
- Expanding diversity and inclusion initiatives to promote an equitable and diverse workforce
- Continuing to streamline administration to reduce administration costs

As Niagara Parks continues to identify opportunities to grow revenue and conserve its finances, focus will continue to be placed on promoting its highest revenue-producing operations, which are its attractions. Driving attendance to attractions has and will continue to result in ancillary benefits to other areas of Niagara Parks' operations, including its retail stores, parking facilities and locally sourced restaurants, which all provide streams of revenue for Niagara Parks.

Niagara Parks anticipates continued growth in its attendance and revenue during fiscal 2023-24 and 2024-2025. Overall, domestic tourism is expected to be fully recovered in 2023, with US recovery anticipated by 2024 and other international by 2025-26. As outlined in the 2023-24 mandate letter provided by Minister Lumsden, Niagara Parks recognizes and embraces its responsibility as a key demand generator for tourism recovery in Ontario. Niagara Parks will continue to collaborate with its partners, Niagara City Cruises and WildPlay Niagara Falls, as well as destination marketing organizations, Niagara Falls Tourism and Tourism Partnership of Niagara, along with regional stakeholders, including Niagara Falls Canada Hotel Association, to promote Niagara as a desirable and safe tourism destination that offers a range of visitor experiences. Niagara Parks offers rich and diverse experiences that will continue to add to the expansion of tourism trails and routes (Explore the Niagara), including War of 1812 heritage, Indigenous history and culture, Black History, culinary experiences, architecture, golf and outdoor experiences to name a few. Niagara Parks will continue to work with its Indigenous partners and sister agencies within the Ministry, as well as organizations like Destination Ontario and Destination Canada, to promote these types of authentic, curated experiences for guests.

In 2022, the successful re-launch of the Niagara Parks Foundation and identification of grants and funding opportunities has and will continue to contribute to the organization's environmental and cultural stewardship projects. In addition, in 2023, Niagara Parks will conclude its formal procurement process and select winning bidders for the redevelopment of the two remaining decommissioned power stations on its property, Toronto Power Generating Station and Ontario



Power Company Generating Station. Both sites hold immeasurable potential for redevelopment given their stunning architectural features, established presence within the core tourism landscape of Niagara Falls and unbeatable locations at the brink of the Falls and within the lower Niagara gorge. The adaptive reuse process is critical to ensuring that these historical sites are preserved and put into a viable long-term use, while also relieving some of Niagara Parks' financial obligations due to its ownership of the buildings.

Niagara Parks will also be assessing additional opportunities to engage the private sector, including tenants Niagara City Cruises and WildPlay Niagara Falls, to develop new guest experiences, to enhance and refresh existing offerings and to reduce operating costs.

Niagara Parks will continue to take a conservative approach to staffing levels as well, adjusting its workforce needs to align with anticipated visitation and revenue levels. The forecasted staffing levels for 2023-24 and 2024-25 are estimated to grow incrementally to support the increase in attendance and revenues, extended service hours and open locations, which will enhance visitor experiences.

Table 1.1 below summarizes the current year operating results along with and budget for the next three fiscal years 2023 to 2026.

Table 1.1 2022 - 2026 STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (thousands of \$'s)						
	CURRENT FISCAL YEAR			FUTURE YEARS		
	BUDGET	PROJECTED	VARIANCE TO BUDGET	BUDGET		
	Apr. 2022 Mar. 2023	Apr. 2022 Mar. 2023	Apr. 2022 Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023 Mar.2024	Apr. 2024 Mar.2025	Apr. 2025 Mar.2026
Total Revenue	\$63,579	\$106,053	\$42,474	\$121,894	\$131,450	\$141,679
Total Expenses	\$61,572	\$83,745	\$22,174	\$96,893	\$102,508	\$109,213
Net Surplus Before Interest & Depreciation	\$2,007	\$22,307	\$20,300	\$25,001	\$28,942	\$32,466
Loan Interest	\$1,031	\$1,113	\$82	\$1,703	\$1,435	\$1,119
Depreciation & Deferred Stimulus Funding	\$10,910	\$10,001	(\$909)	\$11,451	\$12,542	\$13,573
Net increase (Decrease) in Power Plant Obligation	\$400	\$300	(\$100)	\$300	\$300	\$300
Annual Net Surplus (Deficit)	(\$10,334)	\$10,893	\$21,227	\$11,547	\$14,665	\$17,474



## 2.0 Mandate

The Niagara Parks Commission operates under the provisions of the Niagara Parks Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter N.3. Section 4 of the Act states “It is the duty of the Commission to manage, control and develop the Parks...” It also provides a list of 15 general powers and duties.

The Niagara Parks Commission is classified as a board-governed operational enterprise provincial agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Since its founding in 1885, Niagara Parks has been guided by two key principles:

1. Niagara Parks should not become a permanent financial burden on the Province. Niagara Parks operates in a self-supporting manner without the aid of operational government funding; and,
2. Access to the lands of Niagara Parks is to remain as free to the public as possible.

## 2.1 Niagara Parks’ Mandate

*To preserve and promote the natural and cultural heritage along the Niagara River corridor.*

Niagara Parks is committed to delivering commercially successful products in a way that ensures benefits for everyone – people who travel, the local communities, Ontario and Canada along with the respective natural, social and cultural environments.

## 2.2 Stewardship

The stewardship role assumed by Niagara Parks has remained essential to its accountabilities since its inception. Niagara Parks is expected to preserve and commemorate the historical, cultural and environmental significance of the Niagara River corridor. In fulfilling this important public mandate, Niagara Parks provides myriad public and community services and assumes an important cultural stewardship role on behalf of the Province of Ontario.

Niagara Parks’ Heritage Identification and Evaluation Process has received Ministry approval, under the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (Ontario Heritage Act). This process demonstrates Niagara Parks’ continued commitment to the stewardship of Ontario’s provincial heritage properties and partnership in implementing standards and guidelines.

## 2.3 Agencies and Appointments Directive

Niagara Parks operates within the accountability framework of the province as set out in the Agencies and Appointments Directive. This directive outlines the various accountability mechanisms to be established between an agency and its relevant Ministry, including the development of a



memorandum of understanding and the submissions of annual reports, annual multi-year business plans and quarterly risk assessments. Also included is a requirement for external audits to be completed and procedures for financial reporting and periodic reviews.

In accordance with this directive, Niagara Parks has been classified as a board-governed, operational enterprise provincial agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, which provides the authority for Niagara Parks to make operating decisions. As a board-governed provincial agency, the Niagara Parks Commission has the financial and operating authority to carry on business and conduct operations in support of its mandate. The Board is accountable to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport for the achievement of its mandate and the Chair is the Board's representative to the Minister.

## **2.4 Operational Enterprise Classification**

Niagara Parks is further classified as an operational enterprise which provides the authority for Niagara Parks to sell goods or services to the public in a commercial manner and to receive revenues from its commercial activities. Niagara Parks' classification as a board-governed operational enterprise provincial agency affirms the government's intent and expectations for Niagara Parks to pursue sound fiscal management strategies. By operating its own commercial facilities and negotiating agreements with others, Niagara Parks has been able to generate the profits necessary to fulfill its self-sufficiency principle and its significant stewardship responsibilities. By structuring Niagara Parks as an economically self-sufficient organization reporting to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, with oversight and control placed in the hands of an appointed Board, Niagara Parks effectively operates for the benefit of the people of Ontario. The following chart illustrates the various public-facing guest experiences at Niagara Parks.





HOUSE BRANDS	ATTRACTIONS	NATURE + GARDENS	HERITAGE	CULINARY	GOLF	SHOPS	WEDDINGS
<b>SUB-BRANDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niagara Parks Power Station</li> <li>Journey Behind the Falls</li> <li>Niagara's Fury</li> <li>Whirlpool Aero Car</li> <li>White Water Walk</li> <li>.....</li> <li>Niagara City Cruises</li> <li>WildPlay Zipline to the Falls</li> <li>WildPlay Whirlpool Adventure Course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Botanical Gardens</li> <li>Butterfly Conservatory</li> <li>Centennial Lilac Gardens</li> <li>Dufferin Islands</li> <li>Floral Clock</li> <li>Floral Showhouse</li> <li>Niagara Glen</li> <li>Niagara Glen Nature Centre &amp; Nature Exchange</li> <li>Niagara Recreational Trail</li> <li>Oakes Garden Theatre</li> <li>Paradise Grove</li> <li>Queen Victoria Park</li> <li>Queenston Heights Park</li> <li>School of Horticulture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Battle of Chippawa Memorial Site</li> <li>Landscape of Nations</li> <li>Laura Secord Homestead</li> <li>Mackenzie Printery</li> <li>Mather Arch</li> <li>McFarland House</li> <li>Old Fort Erie</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table Rock House Restaurant</li> <li>Table Rock Market</li> <li>Table Rock Patio</li> <li>Legends on the Niagara Clubhouse</li> <li>Queen Victoria Place Restaurant</li> <li>Queenston Heights Restaurant</li> <li>Whirlpool Restaurant</li> <li>Quick Serve Restaurants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legends on the Niagara</li> <li>Oak Hall</li> <li>TaylorMade Niagara Performance Centre</li> <li>Whirlpool Golf Course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attraction Shops</li> <li>Grand View Gift Shop</li> <li>Niagara Parks General Store (online)</li> <li>Queen Victoria Place Gift Shop</li> <li>Table Rock Shop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ceremonies and Receptions</li> <li>Social Events</li> </ul>



**TABLE ROCK HOUSE**  
RESTAURANT

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS  
RESTAURANT | EST 1908





## 2.5 Ministry Goals and Objectives

As an agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Niagara Parks directly supports the Ministry's mission of improving the quality of life and promoting economic growth by supporting and delivering tourism and cultural experiences, supporting the arts and cultural industries and championing participation in sport and recreation activities across Ontario.

Additionally, the Ministry states that it helps Ontario's economy through strategic support and investment by:

- Working with the tourism industry and regional tourism organizations to bring international investment
- Investing in festivals and events across the province
- Protecting cultural heritage resources
- Promoting the arts and the creative economy
- Funding public libraries
- Supporting community projects and engagement
- Promoting active lifestyles and participation in sport, recreation and physical activity

In Minister Lumsden's mandate letter for Niagara Parks, specific goals are outlined to guide recovery efforts, including:

- Competitiveness, sustainability and expenditure management
- Transparency and accountability
- Risk management
- Workforce management
- Data collection
- Digital delivery and customer service
- Diversity and inclusion

Further details on how Niagara Parks will be aligning its efforts with these goals are included in sections 5 and 8 of this business plan.



### 3.0 Environmental Scan

Prior to COVID-19, international visitors accounted for over 60% of Niagara Parks' annual revenues. With the pandemic resulting in the near total loss of these high-yield markets, Niagara Parks focused on maximizing visitation from regional domestic markets, primarily the Greater Toronto Area, and was successful in doing so. Looking forward, generating repeat visitation from regional domestic markets will remain essential as international markets continue to recover over the next two to five years.

Currently there are no significant public health requirements impacting Niagara Parks' operations and visitor experiences. In late September, the Government of Canada announced that it would be discontinuing mandatory vaccination and use of the ArriveCan app as requirements to enter the country. The removal of these barriers should contribute to a significant increase in American visitation to Niagara Parks in 2023; however, economic conditions will dictate the degree to which this occurs.<sup>1</sup>

COVID-19 accelerated already present shifts in the domestic labour market, which resulted in early retirements and an exodus of workers from the tourism sector, following long-term layoffs in 2020.<sup>2</sup> Niagara Parks continues to be challenged by these shortages in the labour market which have affected its front-line service levels, particularly across its culinary operations. It is expected that staff hiring and retention will be an ongoing issue across many industries and in particular tourism, due in part to its largely seasonal workforce. Niagara Parks will be implementing enhanced recruitment and retainment strategies to address this challenge.

The domestic leisure travel market has already shown early signs of a strong recovery with many consumers eager to travel after forgoing typical vacations during the pandemic. In addition, the easing of border restrictions should accelerate the recovery of international markets to some degree. Despite these positive signs, it is anticipated European markets could still take up to four years to reach 2019 levels, with Asian markets lagging even further behind.<sup>3</sup>

Business travel is expected to take significantly longer to recover and may never return to pre-pandemic levels, with leading industry experts predicting business travel to take until 2024 to reach just 80% of 2019 levels.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/politics/2022/09/22/cp-newsalert-pm-trudeau-backs-lifting-some-covid-19-travel-rules.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://tourismhr.ca/2022/06/15/tourism-labour-shortages-impacting-recovery/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/1661-Tourism%20outlook%20-%20Spring%202022/Tourism%20Outlook%20-%20Spring%202022%20EN.pdf>



The renewed interest and visitation to outdoor experiences is expected to continue in the coming years and aligns with Niagara Parks key product offerings, which focus on facilitating public access to the natural wonders of the Niagara River corridor. Niagara Parks will continue to pursue new revenue generating opportunities which further activate its greenspaces and encourage exploration and repeat visitation.<sup>4</sup>

In a competitive tourism marketplace with many options to allocate their potentially limited discretionary spending, consumers will demand value for their dollar. Niagara Parks must continue to develop and deliver high-quality, one-of-a-kind guest experiences that leverage the competitive advantage of its natural sites to differentiate it from competitors. High-demand attractions like the Niagara Parks Power Station and Journey Behind the Falls will be utilized as anchor products in pass bundles that provide industry-leading perceived value to purchasers.

### SWOT Analysis

<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long history (established in 1885)</li> <li>• Unique mandate and globally known address (Niagara River Corridor)</li> <li>• Bi-National zone</li> <li>• Variety of guest experiences</li> <li>• Key demand generator for Niagara and for Ontario</li> <li>• Long established relationships with tourism marketing organizations</li> <li>• One of the key agencies within the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High variable revenue</li> <li>• Dependency on US and international visitation for majority of revenue</li> <li>• Significant asset base to maintain (both operational and capital)</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewed interest in nature (parks, trails, open spaces)</li> <li>• Renewed interest by Ontarians and Canadians to explore their “own backyard”</li> <li>• New experiences to offer U.S. and international markets</li> <li>• Sustainable tourism including “made and enjoyed in Niagara and in Ontario” (e.g. Feast ON in culinary)</li> <li>• Joint initiatives with stakeholders</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/1515-Tourism%27s%20Big%20Shift%3A%20Key%20Trends%20Shaping%20the%20Future%20of%20Canada%27s%20Tourism%20Industry%20%20November%202021/Destination%20Canada%20Tourism%26%2039%3Bs%20Big%20Shift%20Report%20November%202021%20EN.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Niagara Parks' third-party partners (e.g. Niagara City Cruises; WildPlay Niagara Falls)</li> <li>○ Tourism organizations (Niagara Falls Tourism; Tourism Partnership of Niagara; Destination Ontario)</li> <li>○ Local municipalities (City of Niagara Falls; Town of Fort Erie; Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake)</li> <li>○ Sister agencies (e.g. Ontario Heritage Trust; Science North; Ontario Science Centre; Royal Botanical Gardens)</li> <li>● Local markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Niagara region/Southern Ontario</li> <li>○ Quebec</li> <li>○ US Drive market</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rising inflation and administrative costs outside Niagara Parks' control (e.g. insurance and utilities)</li> <li>● International travel taking longer to rebound</li> <li>● Global issues (financial, pandemic, conflicts) that may impact tourism</li> </ul>

### 3.1 Fiscal Outlook

The current economic climate is one of uncertainty and caution. A sustained period of rapid global inflation has prompted the Bank of Canada to react by significantly raising interest rates from record low levels in 2020, with additional hikes anticipated in the near term. There are concerns among economists that the continuation of the trend both in Canada and internationally may result in a global recession.<sup>5</sup>

There are early indications that consumers are aware of the shifting economic climate and adjusting their spending habits accordingly. An overall reduction in perceived disposable income combined with hesitancy to take on additional household debt may continue to negatively impact spending on leisure and entertainment experiences, including dining and travel.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/business/2022/09/14/a-soft-landing-more-like-a-crash-landing-say-economists-who-warn-bank-of-canadas-rapid-rate-hikes-will-likely-trigger-a-recession.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/majority-of-canadians-are-making-changes-to-their-grocery-store-habits-amid-higher-prices-1.1821231>



Fluctuating overhead expenses, highlighted by increases in utility and fuel costs, will also continue to pose obstacles to the profitability of Niagara Parks operations. Niagara Parks will continue to closely monitor these expenses and seek opportunities to reduce consumption where possible.

The most recent Economic and Fiscal Outlook issued by the Government of Ontario in its 2022 Fall Statement outlines the faster-than-anticipated economic growth that occurred in 2022, while cautioning that 2023-24 will experience slower growth than previously forecasted. Current Bank of Canada projections, which assume the continued easing of the COVID-19 pandemic, have the country's GDP growing by 2.8% in 2022, 2.3% in 2023 and 2.0% in 2024.<sup>7</sup>

Economic growth in the coming years will be driven by strong household spending and export growth. However, the pace of growth is expected to moderate as the economy returns to its potential output and as the temporary support measures put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic fully conclude.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the concerns around the state of the overall economy in the coming years, Destination Canada remains optimistic that consumer demand for travel will overcome these challenges and the tourism industry in Canada will continue on its established path to recovery. Fall 2022 data indicates strong interest in visitation from the United States for the coming year, supported by a less expensive Canadian dollar, relaxed entry requirements and geopolitical instability outside of North America.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.budget.canada.ca/fes-eea/2022/report-rapport/overview-apercu-en.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.budget.canada.ca/fes-eea/2022/report-rapport/overview-apercu-en.html>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/1696-Tourism%20Outlook%20-%20Fall%202022/Tourism%20Outlook%20-%20Forecast%20Highlights%20-%20Fall%202022%20-%20EN\\_1.pdf](https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/1696-Tourism%20Outlook%20-%20Fall%202022/Tourism%20Outlook%20-%20Forecast%20Highlights%20-%20Fall%202022%20-%20EN_1.pdf)

## **4.0 Strategic Directions**

The 10-year Strategic Plan is a blueprint to Niagara Parks' potential to achieve excellence on the world stage as one of the most spectacular Parks in the world with its mandate to preserve the natural, built and cultural heritage in the Niagara River corridor.

The strategic plan, as developed and launched in 2018, supports Niagara Parks' founding principles of financial self-sufficiency and as-free-as-possible public access by increasing revenue and employment opportunities, ensuring ongoing maintenance, preserving the Niagara River corridor and contributing to the economic well-being of the region and province.

### **4.1 Niagara Parks' Vision Statement**

By 2028, Ontario's Niagara Parks will be:

- A welcoming, accessible and inspiring place offering world-class natural, historical, and authentic experiences
- An innovative example of sustainability as the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River corridor
- A source of national pride and identity
- One of the most spectacular Parks in the world

### **4.2 Strategic Plan Themes**

#### **Theme 1 – Preserving and showcasing our rich heritage, culture and lifestyle**

- Implement a compelling brand strategy
- Promote Niagara Parks' environmental and cultural stewardship role
- Sales and marketing plan

#### **Theme 2 – Leveraging and activating our natural wonders and iconic experiences**

- Understand visitor expectations of what defines a great experience
- Align current and future experiences with visitor profiles
- Product and market development of year-round experiences
- Provide seamless linkage and/or choices to visitors
- Ensure accessibility at all Niagara Parks sites
- Develop sustainable tourism expansion



### **Theme 3 – Supporting a dynamic business environment with a focus on attracting investment, connection to local communities, job creation and economic well-being**

- Identify key stakeholders
- Define and formalize relationships

### **Theme 4 – Taking experiences and hospitality to the next level**

- Self-sustaining finances
- Review lines of business
- Efficiency and effectiveness of processes/systems for continuous improvement and innovation
- Creating a safe environment for visitors and staff
- Support excellence in recruitment and retention strategies
- Support development of staff and acquisition of new skills

## **4.3 Strategic Goals**

Guided by the themes of its 10-year Strategic Plan, Niagara Parks undertakes a number of projects and priorities designed to achieve its vision of becoming one of the most spectacular parks in the world.

In addition to these, Niagara Parks has identified certain strategic goals that are focused on seeing the organization through its recovery following the impacts of the pandemic on its operations and financial resources. As outlined in its medium-term recovery plan and aligning with the key goals set out in the Minister's mandate letter, Niagara Parks will be aiming to strike a balance between delivering on its mandate, while supporting the profitability of key revenue-producing operations and identifying partnership opportunities to help the organization return to financial health. To this end, the following strategic goals are aimed to streamline Niagara Parks' operations and help manage its finances throughout 2023-26:

- Developing and nurturing great guest experiences
- Growing revenue
- Expanding our digital service delivery
- Fostering strong collaboration with partner organizations
- Ensuring strong fiscal management

These strategic goals are expanded upon in section 8 of this Business Plan, which includes examples of Niagara Parks' action plans to achieve these goals, along with supporting data.





## **5.0 Current and Future Programs: Activities, Resources and Implementation Plans**

As Niagara Parks navigates through its recovery period, in addition to the strategic goals and opportunities previously outlined, it will continue to pursue projects and priorities that align with its 10-year Strategic Plan and advance its mandate as the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River corridor. Many of these projects are well underway, while some are new to this planning cycle.

The following are the key projects that Niagara Parks will be focusing on in 2023-26, guided by the four themes of its Strategic Plan:

### **Preserving and showcasing our rich heritage, culture and lifestyle:**

- **Environmental stewardship initiatives**

Environmental stewardship remains one of Niagara Parks' core responsibilities as the environmental and cultural stewards of the Niagara River corridor. In 2023-26, Niagara Parks will continue to expand its stewardship work along the Niagara River corridor, supported by new funding made possible by the Niagara Parks Foundation, while collaborating with partner organizations including the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Parks Canada, Duck Unlimited Canada and others to execute impactful environmental stewardship projects.

Niagara Parks will continue its work to restore coastal wetlands along key areas of the Niagara River in order to stabilize the shoreline to provide essential fish habitat and reduce erosion. To date, over 800 metres of new coastal wetland habitat has been created, using hundreds of dead Ash trees and other recycled material. Fish populations have already responded to the healthier wetlands with native warm-water and cold-water fish species, including Smallmouth Bass, Muskellunge, Walleye and Yellow Perch, showing signs of returning to health.

Niagara Parks continues work to restore a natural area along the Niagara River known as Gonder's Flats in Fort Erie. Over the past seven years, Niagara Parks has been gradually restoring Gonder's Flats, which has been severely degraded due to past land uses and the arrival of the invasive Emerald Ash Borer. The current phase of the project builds upon the previously completed restoration of the shoreline habitat and will include site improvements, a pond and planting of wetland plant species.

Over the next three years, Niagara Parks will continue the implementation of its 10-year Urban Forestry Management Strategy, which sets a number of research-based goals and strategies that will help Niagara Parks create a healthier and more resilient urban forest that supports wildlife and



recreational opportunities, reduces pollution, provides a beautiful landscape and helps mitigate the impacts of flooding, erosion and even climate change. The Urban Forestry Management Strategy includes goals to improve forest health, increase canopy cover, increase species and habitat biodiversity, mitigate the impacts of invasive species and climate change, increase awareness and promote stewardship. Its ten-year target is to reach 35% overall canopy cover.

Since 2012, approximately 150,000 trees have been planted throughout Niagara Parks. The Niagara Parks Foundation will continue to raise funds to help support this initiative and plant 5,000 trees per year, contributing to an additional 93 hectares of coverage in the Niagara River corridor.

- **Cultural stewardship projects**

Niagara Parks will continue its partnership with Landscape of Nations 360, working together to develop programming and initiatives that help share the history and culture of Indigenous Peoples in Niagara. Opportunities for collaboration in 2023-26 will include hosting Indigenous month events in June, in addition to events recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in September, continuing to offer an Indigenous speaker series, promoting the new Indigenous connections route established along the Niagara Parkway including the Indigenous Plant material route, continued consultation on content development and hosting the annual Valour & Victory ceremony to honour Indigenous veterans. Niagara Parks will also prioritize its programming and experiences around Black History, including its popular Black History speaker series and promotion and support of the new Black History route, which identifies sites and locations with connections to Black History throughout Niagara Parks. Indigenous and Black history stories and activations will be further supported through the Explore the Niagara initiative, which will bring additional awareness to these important themes and the innovative cultural stewardship projects that align with them.

- **Continued implementation of the Sales and Marketing Plan (SMP)**

In 2023, Niagara Parks' Sales and Marketing Plan will focus on maintaining strong visitation from the domestic market while investing significant sales and marketing efforts to support the recovery of the vital US market, which will be much more accessible following the elimination of COVID-19 related border restrictions, notably the discontinuation of the ArriveCan app. Niagara Parks will continue to collaborate with tourism partners such as Niagara Falls Tourism, Tourism Partnership of Niagara, Destination Toronto, Destination Ontario, Destination Canada, Culinary Tourism Alliance, etc. as well as its third-party tenants Niagara City Cruises and WildPlay Niagara Falls. Niagara Parks will also continue its focus on supporting localism with its suppliers (e.g. food and beverage and retail suppliers). Niagara Parks will collaborate with tourism partners such as accommodation partners through programs such as its Select Accommodation Partner Program and Niagara Parks Golf Stay



and Play packaging as well as providing digital assets to hoteliers to promote Niagara Parks' guest experiences through their respective sales channels.

Niagara Parks' sales team will continue to target domestic and US markets, work closely with online travel agents to promote Niagara Parks experiences and pursue opportunities for collaboration with organizations like CAA/AAA. Despite some significant challenges throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Niagara Parks continued to see strong growth and demand for weddings at its venues. The weddings team will continue to provide spectacular wedding celebrations and identify opportunities to promote and grow Niagara Parks' presence within this key market.

- **Public Programming Plan**

Niagara Parks has undertaken a comprehensive audit of its annual event calendar in order to ensure alignment with organizational goals and priorities for organizational resource allocation. The 2023 programming plan focuses on transitioning back to fully in-person events that activate Niagara Parks' existing sites and attractions with meaningful public events that deliver measurable results to further advance Niagara Parks' mandate.

These include:

- Travelling educational exhibits at the Butterfly Conservatory
- Exclusive locally sourced culinary events
- Cultural tours celebrating Indigenous and Black history
- Inclusive golf events for women and youth
- Gardening Workshops at the Botanical Gardens

Public programming for 2023-26 will continue to highlight cultural storytelling opportunities with a focus on Indigenous experiences, Black History, War of 1812, as well as health and wellness, culinary experiences, nature and the environment, and make connections to Niagara Parks offerings including heritage sites, parks and trails. Niagara Parks' digital channels will help amplify these stories and experiences with high-quality photo and video content.

### **Leveraging and activating our natural wonders and iconic experiences:**

- **Launch of Phase II of the Niagara Parks Power Station**

In July 2021, Niagara Parks launched Phase I of the Niagara Parks Power Station, a new attraction offering self-guided and guided tours of the site's generator floor, complete with exhibits, interactive installations and restored artifacts, as well as an epic sound and light nighttime experience, Currents: Niagara's Power Transformed.



Following the successful launch of Phase I, in July 2022, Niagara Parks launched Phase II of the attraction, *The Tunnel*, which features a glass-enclosed elevator that brings visitors down 180 feet below the generator floor, passing by the twelve stories that make up the fascinating underground infrastructure that was used to power the station. The descent leads guests to the tailrace tunnel – a 2,200-foot brick-lined tunnel that was part of the original construction used to expel water back into the lower Niagara River after it was used to generate hydroelectricity. The final destination of the tunnel is an incredible, never-before-seen vantage point – a viewing platform at the base of Niagara Falls.

The launch of *The Tunnel* experience resulted in worldwide media attention and viral coverage from hundreds of news outlets, including, CNN, The Washington Post, BBC, along with all major North American television news networks. This attention contributed to strong visitation at the Power Station, which is on track to welcome over 300,000 visitors in its first year of uninterrupted operations, following the opening of Phase II of the attraction.

Moving forward, Niagara Parks will continue to expand and augment the visitor experience at the attraction, with the installation of new media exhibits throughout the generator hall floor and tunnel, while also adding adequate back-of-house infrastructure to support growing interest for special events and corporate buyouts at the site. The Niagara Parks Power Station already has several significant private events booked for 2023 and this business is anticipated to expand further throughout 2023-26.

- **Replacement of Whirlpool Aero Car’s structure and cabin**

Niagara Parks has determined that components of its Whirlpool Aero Car attraction are approaching the end of their operational life and has begun the process to refurbish them. In 2023-26, Niagara Parks will be replacing the arch and refurbishing the cabin of the aero car. Designed by famed Spanish engineer, Leonardo Torres Quevedo, the Whirlpool Aero Car has been soaring over the Niagara Gorge since 1916, offering guests a bird’s eye view of the natural phenomenon that is the Niagara River Whirlpool rapids. This work will ensure that the heritage value of the aero car is protected, while also abiding by the highest standards of health and safety.

- **Explore the Niagara initiative**

The 56-kilometre Niagara River corridor and the lands that surround it comprise one of the most historically important and culturally rich regions in Canada. Throughout the spectacular natural landscapes of Niagara, themes of Indigenous culture, Black History, Nation Building and many more are waiting to be discovered around every corner. A new collaborative initiative, Explore the Niagara,



encourages visitors and residents to experience these remarkable stories as they build and expand on their own unique personal connections to Niagara.

Explore the Niagara highlights sites and activities spanning Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake. The three municipalities collaborated with staff from Niagara Parks and Parks Canada to leverage the vast array of experiences available to visitors and package them in a new and accessible way, delivering curated and digestible itineraries that are ideal for exploration.

Explore the Niagara has launched with the following five themes in 2022:

- Black History
- Indigenous Culture
- Nation Building
- Nature
- Active Living

Through these initial five themes, over 50 unique sites, monuments, trails and parks have already been featured with more to come moving forward.

- **Redevelopment of the Niagara's Fury attraction**

Since opening in 2008, the Niagara's Fury attraction has offered guests the opportunity to experience the multi-sensory simulation of the formation of the Falls in 4D. The attraction is located in Niagara Parks' flagship location – the Table Rock building, located at the brink of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls, which welcomes millions of guests within the building annually. The equipment and the overall experience at Niagara's Fury have reached the end of their life cycle. Niagara Parks is currently completing the initial research stage, in preparation to create a new, revenue-producing visitor experience at its flagship visitor location, Table Rock Centre.

Objectives for this new visitor experience include:

- Introduce a new demand generator, appealing to a broad audience base, to increase visitation to Niagara Parks, Niagara and Ontario
- Maximize revenue per square foot, with highest and best use of the existing or potential footprint
- Reduce operating expenses, including utilities and staffing requirements (more sustainable/efficient operating model)
- Create sense of place and arrival



A detailed project timeline is currently under development, with the goal of opening the new visitor experience in 2025.

- **Continued implementation of wayfinding strategy**

Niagara Parks' wayfinding strategy will continue to be implemented across its 56 kilometres of parkland, as resources allow, in order to provide a seamless guest experience and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for all that Niagara Parks has to offer. Guided by the strategy, Niagara Parks will continue to identify opportunities to help our guests better navigate themselves when visiting our properties. The focus in 2023-24 will be addressing signage gaps and opportunities within the core area of Queen Victoria Park, as well as replacing outdated signs on the north and south ends of the Niagara Parkway. This work will be completed entirely in-house led by Niagara Parks' marketing team and internal sign shop.

### **Supporting a dynamic business environment:**

- **Niagara Parks Marina at Miller's Creek**

Niagara Parks will be developing options regarding the future redevelopment of the Marina, including the potential of associated development on adjacent land.

- **The Niagara Parks Foundation**

The Niagara Parks Foundation, a registered charity established to support and advance environmental and cultural stewardship initiatives of Niagara Parks, was officially re-launched in April 2022 and worked closely with the Commission to support priority projects including: tree planting; preserving an important archaeology site at Old Fort Erie; developing a Children's Garden at the Botanical Gardens site; supporting Indigenous initiatives; and advancing children's programming at Niagara Parks. Overseen by a Board of Governors, the Foundation provides a unique opportunity for members of the public to actively contribute to one of the world's most beloved public spaces, while generating additional funds to support Niagara Parks' important stewardship work. Work will continue through 2023-26 on raising funds and support for these priority initiatives.

- **Adaptive Reuse of Toronto Power Generating Station and Ontario Power Company Generating Station**

Following the successful transformation of the former Canadian Niagara Power Company generating station, now a multi-faceted new guest attraction, Niagara Parks has officially launched the procurement process for the adaptive reuse of the other two decommissioned power stations on its property, Toronto Power Generating Station and Ontario Power Company Generating Station.



Niagara Parks is looking to the private sector to reimagine the future use of one or both of these historic power stations to undertake a design, build (renovate), finance and operate model under a long-term lease agreement.

Both sites hold extraordinary potential for redevelopment considering their established presence in the core tourism landscape of Niagara Falls, striking architectural features and unbeatable locations on the brink of the upper Niagara River and within the lower Niagara Gorge. The first stage of the process was a Request for Information that initiated discussions, informed project parameters and measured potential interest in the opportunity. The process continued with a Request for Qualifications in 2022. The final stage, Request for Proposals, was issued in the fall of 2022, with the intent of securing preferred proponent(s) in 2023. Pursuing the adaptive reuse of these iconic buildings will help to ensure that they are preserved and put to viable use.

### **Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level:**

- **Digital Strategy**

Aligning with the priority of both the government and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Niagara Parks has started implementing a new digital strategy aimed at enhancing the availability of quality, high-speed internet access across its 56 kilometres of property. The objectives of the digital strategy, to be rolled out over the course of 2023-25, include collaborating with tourism stakeholders in the destination to drive more visitors to Niagara Parks and the region as a whole by providing an improved, seamless Wi-Fi and cellular guest experience. Additionally, the improved service will explore ways to support guest safety through the use of CCTV cameras and public announcement capabilities, as well as facilitate operational efficiencies for services such as people counters, irrigation and waste and recycling.

### **5.1 Revenue-Generating Opportunities Plan – Upcoming Renewals**

Niagara Parks has several Revenue-Generating Opportunities (RGOs) that are provided by third parties. RGOs provided by third parties are established through a competitive procurement process. Niagara Parks' Procurement Policy requires development of a business case, reporting to the Board and inclusion in the annual business plan for any anticipated renewals or new RGO ventures being planned within the business plan period. Part of the business case evaluation approach includes an analysis of "make or buy", as to whether Niagara Parks should continue to use a third party to operate the RGO, or to undertake providing the service directly.



Revenue-Generating Opportunities (Third-Party)	Expiry Date
Photo and Digital Capture	January 2024
Floral Clock Kiosk Rental	January 2024
Toronto Power Generating Station Redevelopment	2023-24
Ontario Power Company Generating Station Redevelopment	2023-24



## 6.0 Risk Identification

Niagara Parks provides updates on risks to the Board’s Governance, Ethics and Human Resources Committee, the Board and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Board has approved governing policies for enterprise risk management and internal control. This section summarizes risks and associated mitigation strategies as they affect the business plan over the three-year planning horizon.

<b>Risk 1</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	Niagara Parks operates according to its mandate, in a self-supporting manner without the need for government funding for operations
<b>Risk Factor</b>	Lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic could impact revenue and impact to visitor experience
<b>Description</b>	Global impact of COVID-19 on visitation patterns and revenues
<b>Risk Statement</b>	<p>Niagara Parks would be unable to resume critical or normal operations, in a self-sufficient business model, in the event of a sustained negative impact to visitation over multiple years. Niagara Parks is structured as a self-funded agency without taxpayer support. The majority of Niagara Parks’ revenues are variable and dependent on visitation, particularly from higher-yield US and other international visitors (historically over 60% of revenue comes from these markets) while many of its costs, such as policing, parks and road maintenance, are fixed in nature. Depending on the scope of restrictions and the time it takes to return to normal visitation levels, a number of financial and reputational/image sub-risks emerge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Niagara Parks’ third-party tenants’ (Boat Tour, Zip Line, Photo Capture) attendance and revenue takes time to return to pre-pandemic levels</li> <li>• Continued impact on levels of US visitation and limited international airlift</li> <li>• Service levels for parks and building maintenance are negatively impacted by reduced staffing and result in the cost of maintenance increasing over the long term</li> <li>• Will significantly impact ongoing capital investment levels, which will impact guest experiences</li> <li>• Shortages in the supply chain result in delays, lack of availability or inflationary price increases in materials and supplies required for Niagara Parks operations</li> <li>• Variable rate interest expenses increased due to rising interest rates</li> </ul>

Risk 1	
<b>Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity</li> </ul>
<b>Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial – Liquidity</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Self-sustaining finances (Tactic 1)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Continuous monitoring of budget, updated forecasts and cashflow; Workforce Adjustment Plan implemented; integrated cross-departmental decision-making regarding opening/closures to understand full financial impact of re-opening/closing decisions; weekly monitoring of cash flow.
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	Risk Likelihood: Almost Certain (5) Risk Impact: Very High (5)
<b>Risk Rating</b>	High (25)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Niagara Parks continues to reduce its expenditures, including administrative and other staffing costs; focus on critical asset maintenance requirements; developed contingency plans for phased re-openings and closings; robust health and safety plans customized to each location and flexible enough to adapt to changing requirements; a medium-term recovery plan has been developed
<b>Target Mitigation Dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly financial reports to Commission, including cash flow projections</li> </ul>

Risk 2	
<b>Objective</b>	Ability to reduce administrative costs and still maintain adequate insurance coverage
<b>Description</b>	Ability to obtain adequate insurance at an affordable price and deductible with an acceptably rated insurer. The market for corporate insurance has hardened; in particular, the global impact of the pandemic is limiting insurers' willingness to provide Directors' and Officers' (D&O) coverage, focusing on heightened

Risk 2	
	liquidity/bankruptcy risk, disclosure risk to shareholders and employee exposure due to layoffs and impacts on employee wellbeing. Property insurance is also proving more difficult to place due to large-scale disasters such as wildfires, flooding and hurricanes causing large claim liabilities around the globe. Claims for business interruption due to the pandemic are also expected to affect availability and affordability.
<b>Risk Statement</b>	The hardened insurance market is making it difficult to obtain affordable insurance, particularly in the D&O and property categories. Niagara Parks' current coverage expires March 31, 2023. Niagara Parks is anticipating that fewer insurers will be interested in bidding for the insurance renewal, the premiums may be higher upon renewal and/or the deductibles may increase again.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity</li> <li>• Financial – Market</li> <li>• Governance/Accountability – Controllership/Compliance; Legal/Regulatory</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Supporting a dynamic business environment with a focus on attracting investment, connection to local communities, job creation and economic well-being (Theme 3); Define and formalize relationships and funding opportunities (Tactic 2)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Niagara Parks has procured an experienced Broker of Record, AON, to competitively research the insurance market for replacement of expiring coverage, including containing expected price increases, maintaining existing deductibles or improving coverage. AON does extensive market research and provides detailed results of competitive process as part of renewal review.
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	<p>Risk Likelihood: Likely (4)</p> <p>Risk Impact: Very High (5)</p>
<b>Risk Rating</b>	High (20)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Appraise key property values, such as Table Rock, to ensure properties are not over/under-insured; evaluate cost/benefit of claims such as pandemic impact to business interruption, prior to submission; investigate with Ministry whether Niagara Parks can obtain coverage through Provincial programs to reduce cost of

Risk 2	
	coverage, stabilization funding provided includes coverage of a portion of insurance costs.
<b>Target Mitigation Date</b>	March 31, 2023 and annually through insurance review and policy renewal

Risk 3	
<b>Objective</b>	Niagara Parks is able to deliver on its stewardship role to protect and preserve its physical assets
<b>Description</b>	Niagara Parks is a self-funding agency with a high percentage of variable revenues in its annual budget. If revenues fail to meet budgeted levels, capital repair and replacement would have to be deferred if other funding sources are not available. Over an extended period of time, this could result in failure to maintain assets to adequate standard and lost business opportunities.
<b>Risk Statement</b>	From a replacement cost perspective, Niagara Parks has approximately \$360 million in depreciable assets which contribute to its mandate of heritage and cultural preservation as well as financial sustainability through self-generated revenues. Prior to the pandemic, Niagara Parks generated over \$120 million in revenues, of which approximately 18% (\$22 million) was spent annually on life cycle maintenance and enhancement of assets to support revenue-producing capabilities and visitor experience. As Niagara Parks has been able to recover from the pandemic, capital spending has been steadily increasing. Fiscal 2023-24 capital spending is forecasted at \$14 million with over 90% of those funds being directed to deferred or preventative maintenance. In fiscal 2024-25 and beyond, capital spending is expected to grow to over \$30 million annually with a balanced spending distribution between deferred maintenance and strategic investments.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity; Environmental/Infrastructure</li> <li>• Financial – Liquidity</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Reputation</li> </ul>

<b>Risk 3</b>	
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Self-sustaining finances (Tactic 1)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Niagara Parks has capital investment and working capital policies to ensure minimum adequate funding to capital maintenance priorities. Niagara Parks has been investing in the range of \$10-12 million per year for life cycle maintenance and a further \$10 million for strategic investments in assets for the past number of years (roughly 5% of asset value), such that asset condition has been improving and Niagara Parks can slow this investment for a year or two before facilities and equipment failure rates are impacted and maintenance costs increase.
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	Risk Likelihood: Likely (4) Risk Impact: Moderate (2)
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium – High (12)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Niagara Parks has implemented a multi-year capital planning process; the Condition Assessment database (AMIS) provides details by asset category. A ranking system is in place to identify critical, safety, asset integrity and strategic projects as a priority with available funds; review of 10-year capital plan as pandemic winds down and visitation returns. Niagara Parks undertakes a regular review of margins for revenue-producing operations; Niagara Parks will identify redundant assets for sale; new source of revenues from the power station attraction and full year of tunnel operations in 2023-24. Monitor revenues/expenditures; delay some capital against revenue certainty. Niagara Parks submits requests for further capital funding for VFA projects identified as critical and safety related.
<b>Target Mitigation Dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised 10-year capital plan which returns to a life cycle funding model by March 31, 2025</li> <li>Annual updates will be provided through the budget process</li> </ul>

Risk 4	
<b>Objective</b>	Provide an accessible and guest-friendly marina option on the south Niagara Parkway as a revenue-generating opportunity
<b>Risk Factor</b>	Business case assessment for aesthetic improvements at the Niagara Parks Marina at Miller's Creek are not economically viable.
<b>Description</b>	The marina is the only shoreline/water-based amenity on the south Niagara Parkway. Improvements to the area are a key contributor to the strategy of enhancing visitor experience by providing nodes of interest and complementary attractions.
<b>Risk Statement</b>	Niagara Parks has undertaken previous procurements/call for proposal processes. The board has approved going out to market again, beginning with a market engagement/market sounding process. Clarification is required regarding the potential sale of land associated with this project. Without strong support for assessing land sale as part of a call for proposals process, there would be no difference than previous processes that resulted in no viable proposals being received. The current building and site require rehabilitation to prevent further deterioration and to ensure continued service to the boating public. The infrastructure is more than 50 years old.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Environmental/Infrastructure</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Performance; Reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Leveraging and activating our natural wonders and iconic experiences (Theme 2); Enjoying the experience of being here (Strategy 2); Develop land management strategy (Tactic 2)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Extensive consultation process with municipal stakeholders, Infrastructure Ontario (previously), specialists in market sounding.
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	Risk Likelihood: Possibly (3) Risk Impact: Moderate (3)
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium (9)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Business Case Assessment: confirm goals and objectives for new marina concept, including clarity around land sales; challenge expected outcomes for the

Risk 4	
	<p>project; a series of market soundings has been and will be undertaken to identify both market opportunities and constraints on redevelopment opportunities; a business case that was completed by Infrastructure Ontario in 2018 provides some baseline information including financial scenarios and alternatives for development of the marina and adjacent lands.</p> <p>Niagara Parks will continue to operate the Marina for seasonal slip holders. There is significant risk for infrastructure failure given the age of the infrastructure, in particular the septic system, electrical service and docks.</p>
<b>Target Mitigation Date</b>	March 31, 2024

Risk 5	
<b>Objective</b>	Business Continuity: Maintain a robust and secure network, safeguarding Niagara Parks' digital information
<b>Risk Factor</b>	Risk of cyber threats
<b>Description</b>	Global electronic threats increase with the use of the internet. Networks (like the Niagara Parks network) risk suffering a malware, ransomware or other malicious attack.
<b>Risk Statement</b>	<p>If Niagara Parks' network and information security is compromised by a cyber-attack, public confidence and revenues could be impacted.</p> <p>Threats and attacks occur daily. Malware and ransomware continue to be the most common attacks detected by security experts. Malware analysis is time consuming and intensive. At Niagara Parks, attack surfaces are increasing with the deployment of Internet-of-Things (IoT), Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions and external application program interfaces (APIs).</p>
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity; Information/Privacy; Information and Information Technology</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Performance; Reputation</li> </ul>

<b>Risk 5</b>	
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Creating a safe environment for visitors and staff (Tactic 6)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	High level of competency in IT Senior Team; independent consulting advice regarding PCI compliance; annual review of computer controls as part of external audit compliance
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	Risk Likelihood: Possibly (3) Risk Impact: High (4)
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium - High (12)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Use best-in-class second-generation firewalls; use geo-blocking to block network traffic from countries that participate in state hacking; use threat intelligence data in security defenses; whitelist software; lock down devices' administrative privileges; implement a rigorous security checklist for SaaS providers and the security of IoT devices are challenged; use antivirus software; reduce reliance on point-to-point radios; use complex passwords and second factor authentication for remote usage; monitor and report staff's remote usage; use non-integrated POS payment processing and Moneris point-to-point encryption; incorporate PCI compliance requirements into procurement request specifications; train IT staff in security protocols; deliver best practice security messages to all users on Niagara Parks network and track employee acknowledgement of message; purchase cyber insurance coverage; monitor cyber threats as part of information security operations; and, create awareness and educate IT and other staff on threats and network security through the use of bulletins and free resources.
<b>Target Mitigation Date</b>	Ongoing security monitoring, staff training and software interventions are required. PCI compliance certifications required annually each November.



Risk 6	
<b>Objective</b>	Adaptively re-use the Toronto Power Generating Station (TPGS) and Ontario Power Company Generating Station (OPGS)
<b>Risk Factor</b>	Contingent liabilities associated with TPGS and OPGS structural stabilization
<b>Description</b>	Continued decline of TPGS and OPGS and rising cost of restoration
<b>Risk Statement</b>	Failure of the TPGS and OPGS could require immediate significant financial resources to stabilize and has reputational risk for Niagara Parks, Commissioners and Ministry. Also, financial risk related to value of Power Plant Obligation upon review of existing engineering studies and completion of additional studies.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Environmental/Infrastructure</li> <li>• Financial – Economic</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Creating a safe environment for visitors and staff (Tactic 6)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Annual third-party engineering inspection reports to monitor stabilization condition pending the conclusion of the procurement process to secure a third party to assist with redevelopment.
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	<p>Risk Likelihood: Unlikely (2)</p> <p>Risk Impact: High (4)</p>
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium (8)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Critical maintenance work completed with Provincial and Niagara Parks funding. Additional funding was approved to complete the update of condition assessments. Power Plant Obligation valuation for financial report has been updated using AMIS condition assessment data and engineering reports completed during the year. A competitive process to identify potential proponents to undertake adaptive re-use of the facilities commenced in fiscal 2021-22 with a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. Based on Niagara Parks' current financial position, the timing of moving this

Risk 6	
	project forward will need to be assessed once the RFP process has been completed.
<b>Target</b>	June 2023: Identify proponent(s) for adaptive re-use.
<b>Mitigation</b>	The ability of Niagara Parks to address this risk with its own funds generated from revenue-producing operations is not feasible until Niagara Parks returns to a positive cash position, expected by March 2026. This timeline could improve if funding becomes available through another source, including potential redevelopment through third parties.
<b>Date</b>	

Risk 7	
<b>Objective</b>	Niagara Park is (and is perceived to be) a safe and security destination of visitors in high traffic areas
<b>Description</b>	Millions of visitors to Niagara Parks arrive each year, with a high concentration of guests in core areas during peak season
<b>Risk Statement</b>	With recent global threats to visitor safety at internationally recognized sites and high traffic areas, a proactive approach to implementing initiatives to maintain safety and security of staff and visitors is required to avoid the perception that Niagara Parks is not a safe place to visit, when permitted to open under emergency orders.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity; Health/Safety</li> <li>• Public Perception/Stakeholder – Performance; Reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Creating a safe environment for visitors and staff (Tactic 6)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Dedicated Niagara Parks Police Service and resources in Health and Safety, monitoring provincial and local emergency measures to guide Executive decision-making during the Pandemic, including re-opening requirements.

Risk 7	
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	Risk Likelihood: Possibly (3) Risk Impact: High (4)
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium – High (12)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Niagara Parks Police Service, in conjunction with regional and provincial authorities, continues to develop and implement a safety and security plan to enhance overall safety of staff and visitors in Niagara Parks. Imminent threat emergency exercise at Table Rock and lane closures in the QVP core area have been completed. The QVP master plan considers permanent changes to transportation patterns through core areas in consideration of visitor experience and public safety. Further improvements to lands and facilities are to be designed using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles that encourage safety and discourage inappropriate behaviour. Ongoing training exercises, including enhanced cleaning and safety protocols to mitigate risk of spreading COVID-19.
<b>Target Mitigation Date</b>	Ongoing training and review/adjustment of security tactics to mitigate risk

Risk 8	
<b>Objective</b>	Maintain business continuity in the event of business interruption or disaster
<b>Risk Factor</b>	Business interruption results in significant losses to revenue and impact to visitor experience
<b>Risk Statement</b>	Niagara Parks might not be able to resume critical or normal operations in the event of a business interruption or disaster. Niagara Parks is structured as a self-financed agency without taxpayer support. An interruption to business impacts Niagara Parks' ability to provide excellent customer service, to support front-line operations and to meet its financial and stewardship obligations.
<b>Risk Category</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery/Operational – Business Continuity</li> <li>• Financial – Liquidity</li> </ul>

<b>Risk 8</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Perception/Stakeholder – Performance; Reputation</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Taking experiences, services and hospitality to the next level (Theme 4); Deliver service excellence and innovation (Strategy 1); Self-sustaining finances (Tactic 1)
<b>Existing Controls</b>	Most business divisions have informal continuity plans which have proven effective in re-opening/closing on short notice during the pandemic. More formal documented plans will be completed when resources become available after the pandemic is brought under control
<b>Risk Assessment (Residual)</b>	<p>Risk Likelihood: Unlikely (2)</p> <p>Risk Impact: High (4)</p>
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium (8)
<b>Mitigation/ Action Plan</b>	Niagara Parks has Business Interruption insurance. A formal Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for its Information Technology Services exists. Other departments have informal recovery procedures. Niagara Parks Board has directed the preparation of a formal entity-wide BCP and resources will be allocated in the upcoming business plan and budget cycle. Niagara Parks will conduct business impact assessments that encompass significant functions within the Commission and use the results to develop the business continuity plan. Documentation of assets, regular testing of the feasibility of the BCP and staff training through table-top exercises will be part of the plan.
<b>Target Mitigation Date</b>	March 31, 2024 for preparation of Business Continuity Plan



## 7.0 Human Resources

Niagara Parks is one of the larger employers in the Niagara region, with a complement of full-time, seasonal and student team members. Many individuals began their careers working at Niagara Parks as a summer student or a student at the School of Horticulture and continued their careers with the organization. Niagara Parks has a large contingent of long-serving employees.

For fiscal 2023-24, the overall key initiatives for Human Resources and Health, Safety and Compliance include:

1. **Workforce Adjustment Plan:** Continuing to focus on front-line service delivery while adjusting the organization to post-COVID recovery and growth.
2. **Succession planning:** Addressing anticipated retirement levels as well as strategic succession planning across the organization to ensure continuity in key positions. This will include succession plans for each of the senior team positions (including the CEO).
3. **Fostering a positive corporate culture:** Ensuring consistent communication, mentoring, training and overall engagement across all levels of the organization will be a priority in 2023-24.
4. **Operational review:** Continuing operational and functional reviews of business units and departments to determine further efficiencies within the organizational structure.
5. **Health, Safety and Compliance:** Focus on risk assessment and control programs using an enterprise-wide approach, updating in-person health and safety training that had been affected by COVID-19 restrictions (including customer service training), creation of continuous improvement plans to address areas for opportunity, maintenance of compliance inspection program and emergency and business continuity planning.
6. **Contract negotiations:** Two collective agreements representing our employees expired in 2022: the OPSEU Local 217 Police Agreement on October 31, 2022, and the WUCC Local 2347 Server agreement on December 31, 2022. Negotiations will be commencing in early 2023.
7. **Joint job evaluation:** Niagara Parks management and the OPSEU union continue to work on the Joint Job Evaluation program with the inclusion of full-time, seasonal and part-time unionized workforce.
8. **Recruitment:** Creation of new Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan and Committee in 2022 and continuing into 2023-24 to address the shortage of candidates in the tourism, food services and hospitality industry. The Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan



includes increased outreach and participation of local community and educational organizations as well as providing flexible options for employment and creating more internship opportunities in our front-line positions. The plan also further increases social media presence and brand exposure.

9. **Program implementation:** Review of process optimization for administrative functions, including implementation of an in-house Learning Management System, Performance Appraisal Process and employee change of status reporting tool. For 2023-24 Niagara Parks will be completing an RFI for a Payroll and HRIS solution.
10. **Mandated training:** Engage in refresher training and orientation in accordance with legislative requirements, including AODA and Occupational Health & Safety Act as well as Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
11. **Continuous improvement:** Tracking of continuous improvement opportunities within the health, safety and compliance department and other applicable departments.

### **Alignment to Strategic Plan**

Human Resources is a key element of Niagara Parks' 10-year Strategic Plan as identified by the strategic goal of "Growing the Talent". This goal is achieved by aligning the right people with the right skills in the right positions to promote continuous improvement, integration, cross-functional development and excellence. Included in "Growing the Talent" is a focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion which will be a catalyst in attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, reflective of the diverse population of Niagara and in support of a diverse guest demographic.

Niagara Parks' recruitment and retention strategies are guided by the organization's corporate values of INSPIRED:

- Integrity
- Needs
- Safety and Security
- Participation
- Innovation
- Respect
- Environmental Responsibility
- Diversity and Inclusion



## **Talent Acquisition and Workforce Planning**

For the 2023-24 fiscal, Niagara Parks will continue to deploy a workforce planning process to identify operational needs, revenue generation and visitation levels to determine minimum and extended staffing requirements across its business units, with priority on front-line staffing and staffing redeployment to meet visitation demand.

Niagara Parks developed a new Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan in response to the significant labour shortages in the tourism, retail, hospitality and food services sectors. As Niagara Falls is a primary tourism destination, there is high competition with private sector corporations for talent, who also have the financial means and ability to offer incentives to potential candidates. Niagara Parks is positioning our brand as a focal point of recruitment and retention.

Niagara Parks experienced significant turnover for our fiscal 2022-23 season of 28%, excluding normal attrition, impacting our food services, custodial services and retail departments. This is leading our recruitment strategies to target these hard-to-fill positions. The Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan is designed to meet the following objectives:

1. Expand talent sourcing to diversify workforce and create strategic partnerships
2. Niagara Parks brand exposure
3. Enhanced candidate and employee experience
4. Retention and engagement
5. Target recruitment for specialized and hard-to-fill positions

As part of Niagara Parks' strategic plan, the Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan is developed in recognition of labour shortage impacts and to further recognize the diversity of the Niagara Region and visitation demographics, embracing inclusion and ensuring equal opportunity.

Niagara Parks' Executive Team and Human Resources continue to develop formal succession planning to identify critical skill inventories and grow top organizational talent for key future vacancies. In some cases, the succession plan may include intentional external recruitment to ensure the organization continues to develop organizational capacity

## **Workforce**

As a direct result of the continued impacts of COVID-19 on business levels for Niagara Parks, a workforce adjustment plan has been used to guide staffing levels throughout 2021-22, 2022-23 and will continue in the recovery in 2023-24 and forward. The focus will remain on front-line service



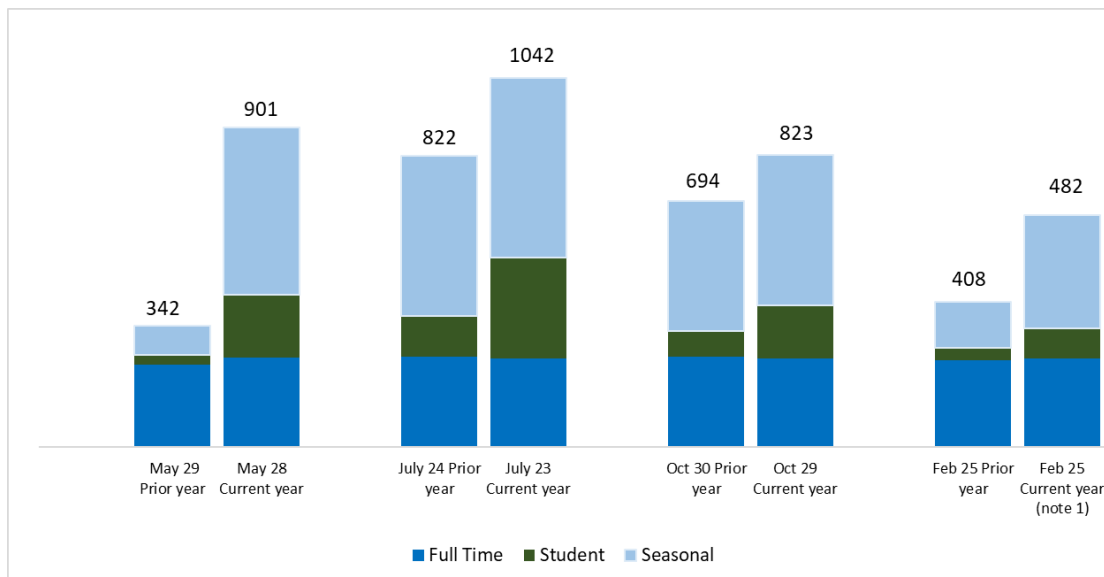
delivery, redeployment and training, retention and engagement and continued identification of administrative efficiencies across the organization.

For 2019-20, Niagara Parks had a peak workforce complement of approximately 1,800 employees comprising 330 full-time positions and the remaining positions seasonal, part-time and student. The full-time equivalent (FTE) count was approximately 934 positions.

Niagara Parks normally has significant fluctuations in its seasonal and student complement throughout the fiscal year. In 2022-23 Niagara Parks saw an increase in visitation to the prior year, requiring an increase to headcount to approximately 1,050, which equated to 464 FTE. While staffing levels continue to be significantly lower than 2019-20, the 2023-24 fiscal is expected to assist in establishing a new baseline staffing model.

As Niagara Parks engages in recovery plans from the COVID-19 pandemic, the significant labour shortage in tourism, food services and hospitality industries has become the latest implication for staffing operations. Table 7.1 below shows a comparison of staffing levels (headcount) for similar pay periods in the current and prior year, and Table 7.2 shows the projected wages and benefits paid per quarter, for the current and prior year.

**Table 7.1: Number of Employees Paid: Prior Year (2021-22) versus Current Year (2022-23)**

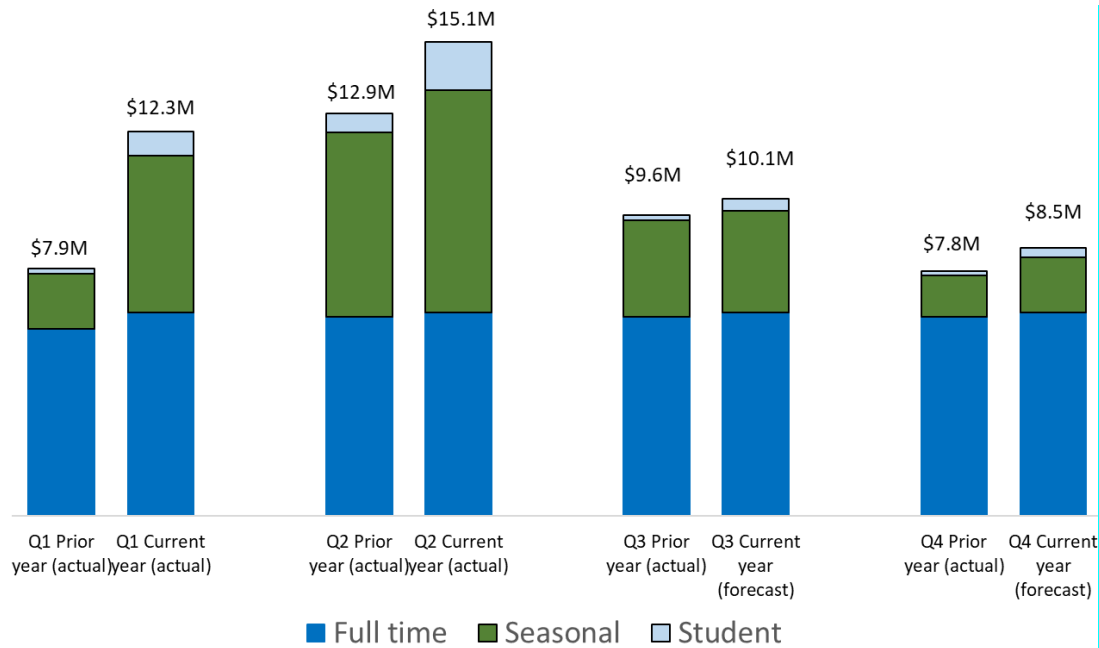


Note 1: Forecasted student counts are based on utilizing 20 students as part of the School of Horticulture’s paid experiential learning component.





Table 7.2: Wages/Benefits by Quarter, in millions of dollars: Prior Year (2021-22) versus Current Year (2022-23)



For 2023-24, Niagara Parks continues to take a conservative approach, anticipating a gradual economic recovery for the tourism sector. Based on this, the forecasted FTE for 2023-24 and 2024-25 is estimated to grow to support the increase in revenues, extended service hours and locations which will enhance visitor experiences.

### Service Delivery and Administrative Efficiencies

In 2022, Niagara Parks continued to strengthen its Human Resources function and client service delivery, focusing on continued modernization and efficiency of Human Resources programs and processes and customer service initiatives.

Niagara Parks continues to focus on core elements of Human Resources to streamline and enhance service delivery and reporting. This has included leveraging existing systems for integration with pension and benefit vendors to facilitate administrative efficiencies and reporting.

As part of an organizational endeavor, Niagara Parks will be engaged in a procurement process for a Payroll and HRIS solution to enhance service delivery and digitization within Human Resources.



## **Labour Relations and Employee Engagement**

A priority of Niagara Parks is its focus on employee engagement and the strengthening of labour relations efforts.

Resulting from COVID-19 implications, staff events were suspended at Niagara Parks in 2020-21 and 2021-22. In fiscal 2022-23, Niagara Parks returned some events to celebrate the success of our team members. These included events to support United Way and the holiday events for staff, including a sale for staff at our retail locations. Niagara Parks continued with centralized and increased communications to the workforce, in recognition of the importance of clarity and an informed team. A focused effort continues to be on corporate culture and an emphasis by the CEO and the senior team on employee engagement. These efforts will continue throughout 2023-24.

## **Learning and Development**

Niagara Parks continues annual orientation and refresher training each season for new and existing staff. Mandatory training has been completed and will be ongoing in preparation for the 2023-24 season as employees return from layoff and new employees hired.

In addition, Niagara Parks continues partnerships with tourism and hospitality organizations, including OTEC Tourism SkillsNet Ontario, Brock University and Niagara College, to identify learning and skill enhancement opportunities for staff and potential candidates. In 2022-23, Niagara Parks partnered with OTEC to provide training to front-line management and unionized staff in Service Excellence: De-escalation.

Any provincial mandates related to COVID-19 will be monitored and implemented under the Health, Safety and Compliance department.

## **Compensation Strategy**

Niagara Parks' compensation strategy is to be a competitive employer that offers fair wages, salaries and benefits in relation to the comparative market. Niagara Parks' positions are benchmarked against the southern Ontario market outside of the Greater Toronto Area at the 50th percentile for its full-time positions.

Niagara Parks offers a benefit package to its full-time employees that is comparable to other Ontario Public Service employees. Seasonal unionized staff receive a payment in lieu of benefits as negotiated between the parties.

Niagara Parks staff, excluding students, are also eligible to participate in one of the pension plans offered through the Ontario Pension Board and OPSEU Pension Trust.



## **7.1 Human Resources / Health, Safety and Compliance Priorities**

### **Future Priority Work**

The following priorities will be addressed as resources are available:

#### Learning and Development

- Implementation of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion program
- Cross training and development initiatives resulting from redeployment of staff
- In conjunction with front-line operations, focus on Guest/Customer Service Training program

#### Talent Acquisition

- Advance the Talent Acquisition and Retention Plan
- Develop a baseline workforce plan with three-to five-year projections

#### Employee/Labour Relations

- Enhance cross-functional teams to engage employee input into initiatives, plans and projects
- Develop an employee wellness program leveraging current service providers

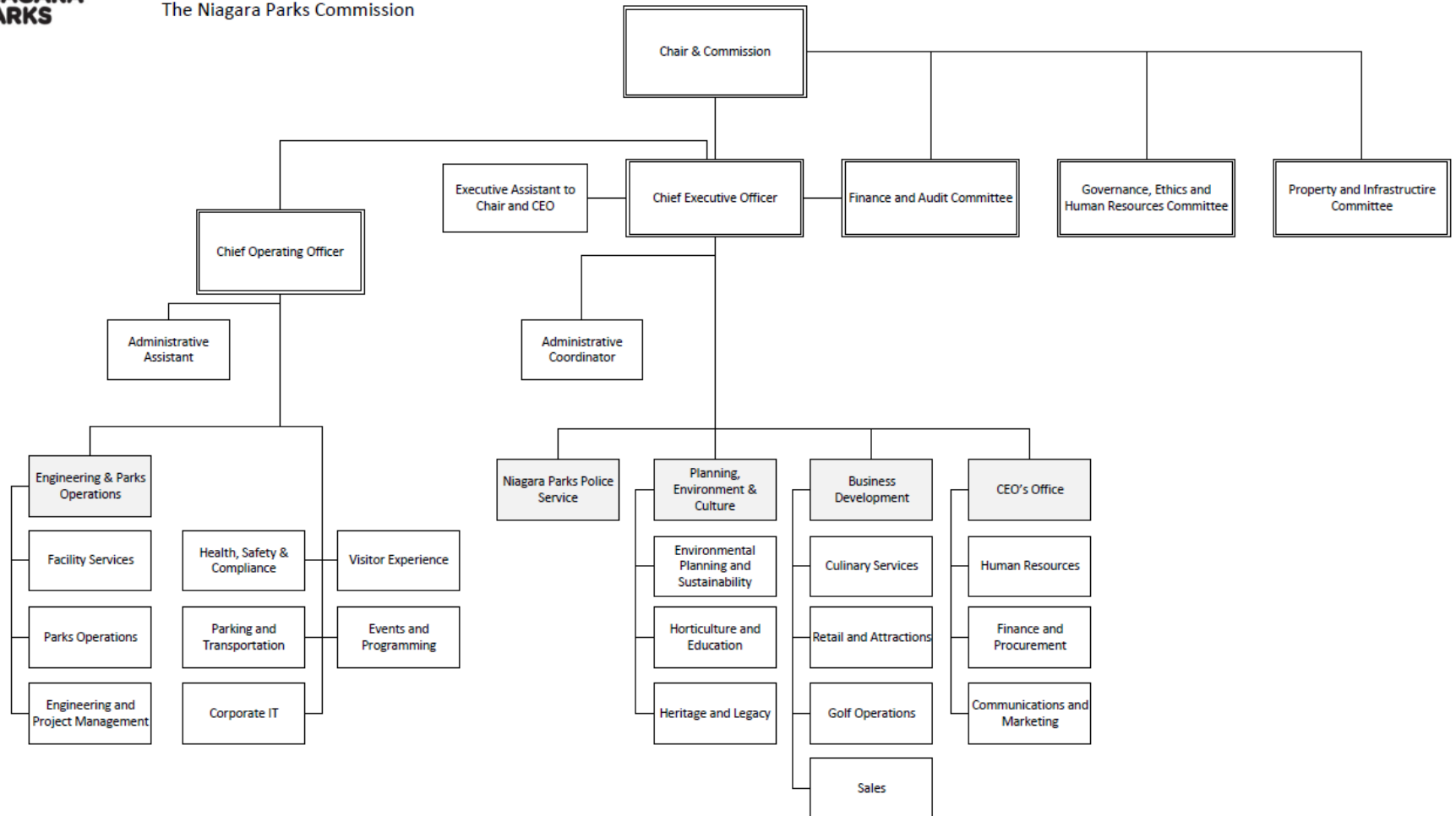
#### Compensation

- Focus on Joint Job Evaluation program for applicable unionized employees

#### Health, Safety and Compliance

- Continue to pursue ISO 45001 certification
- Complete risk assessments for all high-risk areas at Niagara Parks
- Continue to update Niagara Parks' Emergency Response Procedures to ensure continuity of business operations
- Focus on slip, trip and fall hazards for both employees and guests
- Improvement of health and safety training program, including the implementation of Customer Service training

**Organizational Chart**  
The Niagara Parks Commission





## 8.0 Performance Measures

Commensurate with the strategic plan and performance goals, Niagara Parks uses a composite model of tourism indicators to support evidence-based decisions and serve as reference points for business planning, including revenue growth, visitor impact, cost containment and service excellence.

The section below presents five strategic goals that align with the Niagara Parks’ INSPIRED values, historic mandate and 10-year Strategic Plan, along with Niagara Parks’ recovery plans and the priorities of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Specific actions to support each strategic goal are included, as well as tracking measures.

### Strategic Goal #1: Developing and Nurturing Great Guest Experiences

#### Action: Increasing attendance across Niagara Parks operations

Attendance statistics are an important key performance indicator for Niagara Parks. For the 2023-24 budget, Niagara Parks has projected an increase to attendance based on growth achieved in the 2022-23 season. Niagara Parks offers a variety of guest experiences that align with many tourism trends witnessed coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, including a focus on nature and outdoor experiences, as well as cultural experiences. Niagara Parks’ newest attraction, the Niagara Parks Power Station and Tunnel, continues to generate positive media coverage and exposure for Niagara Parks experiences. In addition to attraction attendance, Niagara Parks also tracks customer statistics in culinary (number of covers/transactions, average cover/transaction value) and retail (number of transactions, average transaction value). Table 8.1 below provides a summary of attendance history for Niagara Parks and its tenants.

Table 8.1 Attendance History

	Change from Prior Year	April 2022 to Mar-2023	April 2021 to Mar-2022	April 2020 to Mar-2021	April 2019 to Mar-2020	April 2018 to Mar-2019	April 2017 to Mar-2018	April 2016 to Mar-2017
<b>NPC Operated Attractions</b>	168%	1,463,964	545,954	252,652	1,999,920	1,968,507	2,018,077	1,888,105
<b>Golf Rounds</b>	0%	113,044	113,539	98,227	84,239	80,960	72,874	77,209
<b>Boat Tour</b>	247%	1,466,761	422,617	174,026	2,196,992	2,322,258	2,358,982	2,250,447
<b>Zip Line</b>	28%	88,631	69,249	34,100	106,500	93,768	78,084	48,410
<b>Aerial Adventure Course</b>	-28%	24,373	33,699	14,033	23,316	23,348	20,759	-
<b>Historic Sites</b>	128%	10,334	4,524	3,968	29,916	28,153	36,236	26,960
<b>Falls Incline Railway</b>	185%	795,515	278,652	114,834	1,187,336	1,110,440	1,056,910	990,363
<b>WEGO Transportation Service - Green Line</b>	382%	564,665	117,150	88,748	1,332,557	1,224,568	1,264,381	1,159,901



Attendance growth for 2023-24 is expected to be approximately 16% higher than current year projections for 2022-23 with the assumption that the attractions will operate longer hours, extend their seasons as long as possible and welcome more international visitors. Seasonal attractions are expected to resume operation in early spring and continue to operate until the end of October, with many planning to increase their daily operating hours. Additional attendance growth will occur with a full season of operation from the Niagara Parks Power Station's tunnel experience – from July to November 2022, 156,000 guests experienced this new attraction.

### **Action: Enhance guest engagement through Niagara Parks' Guest Services Centre**

Niagara Parks' multi-channel Guest Services Centre was established to improve the experience of our guests throughout their entire travel journey, from trip planning to their final visit. Niagara Parks' Guest Services Centre representatives respond to all incoming inquiries from our guests: online, by phone and on our social channels. In 2022-23, for its fifth year of operations, Niagara Parks achieved the performance measurement targets below for the Guest Services Centre. In 2023-24, pre-pandemic targets will be maintained while looking at ways to adapt to the volume, such as reducing redundant inquiries that could be solved by improved communication on Niagara Parks' website and social channels.

- Incoming guest requests were resolved at first contact 97% of the time (Pre-pandemic target: 90%)
- Guest inquiries or issues were resolved with a median full resolve time of 12.3 hours (Pre-pandemic target: 45 minutes)
- Guest Services Centre Representatives maintained a customer satisfaction score of 97% (Pre-pandemic target: 90%)
- Guests calling by phone experienced an average wait time of 43 seconds (Pre-pandemic target: 20 seconds)

## **Strategic Goal #2: Growing Revenue**

### **Action: Drive visitation to Niagara Parks' highest revenue-producing operations**

Niagara Parks' revenue-producing operations (RPOs) were able to fully open during the first quarter of year since the start of the pandemic and resume basic operating schedules. This resulted in surplus of \$4.842 million during Q1 2022 as illustrated in Table 8.2 below.



Table 8.2 - 1st Quarter (April 1 - June 30) Results

(In thousands of dollars)

	Actual 2021-22	Budget 2022-23	Actual 2022-23	\$ Actual Variance 2022-23	% Actual Variance 2022-23
Revenue Producing Operations	3,372	8,921	22,372	19,000	563%
Land Rent - Ontario Power Generation	1,864	1,910	1,926	62	3%
Commissions Rentals & Fees	36	36	77	41	114%
Boat Tour Revenue	1,154	1,869	1,762	608	53%
Zipline Revenue	80	151	398	318	398%
Digital Attraction Revenue	150	150	341	191	127%
Interest on Bank Deposits	-	-	-	-	0%
Sundry	176	160	378	202	115%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>6,832</b>	<b>13,197</b>	<b>27,254</b>	<b>20,422</b>	<b>299%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>13,085</b>	<b>15,881</b>	<b>22,412</b>	<b>9,327</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Net Surplus (Deficit) before Interest &amp; Depreciation</b>	<b>\$ (6,253)</b>	<b>\$ (2,684)</b>	<b>\$ 4,842</b>	<b>\$ 11,095</b>	<b>177%</b>

The recovery from the pandemic continued into 2022-23 as visitors' preference for outdoor experiences such as golf, hiking and walking continued to grow. This year did see a return to pre-pandemic trends with increases to traditional RPO activities as well. Improvements and efficiencies in parking, including automation with contactless entry, exit and payment, reduced the impact of the pandemic on parking operations.

For the year ending March 31, 2023, Niagara Parks' margin from RPOs, a key performance indicator, has continued its recovery from the prior year. Reductions to variable costs, such as staffing, to offset revenue losses continued into fiscal 2022-23. This along with a focus on attractions with the addition of a new attraction has been a key success factor to the performance for Niagara Parks' RPOs. The 2022-23 projected contribution from RPOs is detailed in Table 8.3 below.

Table 8.3 Contribution from Revenue Producing Operations							
(Revenues less Cost of Goods Sold less Direct Operating Expenses)							
(Thousand of \$'s)							
	Retail	Attractions	Parking & WEGO	Incline Railway	Culinary	Golf	Total
April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023	\$ 6,911	\$ 17,819	\$ 7,299	\$ 1,030	\$ 2,720	\$ 1,193	\$ 36,972
April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022	\$ (54)	\$ 3,380	\$ 3,255	\$ (239)	\$ (684)	\$ 1,198	\$ 6,856
<b>\$ increase in contribution</b>	<b>\$ 6,965</b>	<b>\$ 14,439</b>	<b>\$ 4,044</b>	<b>\$ 1,269</b>	<b>\$ 3,404</b>	<b>\$ (5)</b>	<b>\$ 30,116</b>

Niagara Parks has identified that the greatest opportunity to increase its revenue is by driving visitation to its highest generating RPOs, which are its attractions, including Journey Behind the Falls, Niagara's Fury, Niagara Parks Power Station, Currents: Niagara's Power Transformed, Butterfly Conservatory, White Water Walk, Whirlpool Aero Car and its third-party partner experiences, Niagara City Cruises and WildPlay Niagara Falls' Zipline to the Falls and Whirlpool



Adventure Course. Promoting visitation to its attractions results in ancillary benefits to a number of different areas of Niagara Parks operations, including its retail stores, restaurants and parking and transportation services. Niagara Parks will be leveraging its digital presence and social channels to drive visitation, in addition to its regular sales and marketing efforts.

For fiscal 2023-24, Niagara Parks is targeting a return to positive contribution, with a budget of \$42.2 million net contribution from RPOs, a targeted improvement of approximately \$28.9 million from the prior year.

**Action: Leverage Niagara Parks’ digital presence to drive online sales**

Niagara Parks’ traffic and online sales have performed exceptionally well over the past 18-months, as the organization continues its path to recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. After an exponential decrease across all metrics during 2020-21, the 2021-22 fiscal year saw positive growth with significant increases to website visitation and online sales revenue. The year-to-date results for the current fiscal period are even more encouraging, with total website sessions already eclipsing those of 2019-20 and online sales surpassing \$8 million.

<b>Table 8.4 Website Traffic / Performance</b>				
	<b>Apr 1, 2022 – Nov 30, 2022 (YTD – 8 months)</b>	<b>Apr 1, 2021 – Mar 31, 2022</b>	<b>Apr 1, 2020 – Mar 31, 2021</b>	<b>Apr 1, 2019 – Mar 31, 2020</b>
<b>Sessions</b>	3,569,744	3,087,693	1,993,898	3,520,896
<b>Pageviews</b>	9,816,796	8,906,700	5,257,867	11,129,522
<b>Pages per session</b>	2.75	2.88	2.64	3.16
<b>Conversion rate</b>	2.32%	2.17%	1.46%	1.58%
<b>Revenue</b>	\$8,371,282.08	\$4,587,814.59	\$1,970,888	\$9,975,578

Since 2016-17, the top performing page on Niagara Parks’ website has consistently been the deals and packages landing page. As well, with the exception of its home page and the COVID-19 safety page in 2020-21, for every other fiscal year since 2016-17, the top five performing pages on Niagara Parks’ website have been associated with its attractions and the purchasing of online packages. Niagara Parks maintains an excellent conversion rate from traffic to its website and will continue to leverage its digital presence to drive online sales and visitation to its attractions. Niagara Parks is currently in the initial research and preparation stages to deliver a new consumer website to be launched in 2025.





### **Action: Develop engaging storytelling content on digital channels**

Niagara Parks continues to engage with its social media audience of over 450,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Niagara Parks increased both the quantity of its content creation and frequency of posting on its channels to ensure that Niagara Parks stayed top of mind with those planning future visits. Niagara Parks published 81 original video storytelling pieces to its Facebook page in the 2021-22 fiscal year, up from 73 in 2020-21. This increased posting frequency contributed to a significant rise in follower engagement levels and higher total organic reach across all social platforms. Niagara Parks will also monitor emerging trends and networks to ensure that the organization continues to utilize all relevant digital channels to effectively support its business goals.

Looking ahead to 2023-26, Niagara Parks plans to continue to invest resources to further expand its production and delivery of high-quality visual storytelling content on its digital channels including its website and in-park video network while also effectively leveraging these assets to drive valuable earned media coverage for Niagara Parks that will increase awareness and demand for its key revenue-producing attractions and experiences.

### **Action: Explore new opportunities for revenue generation**

Niagara Parks added a new year-round guest experience in 2021 with the launch of the Niagara Parks Power Station. In addition to providing a new reason for guests to return to Niagara Falls or to visit for the first time, the power station also provides a new revenue stream for Niagara Parks. Niagara Parks Power Station offers a daytime experience with self-guided or guided tours through the preserved generator hall complete with interpretive panels and interactive exhibits, as well as a separate nighttime experience with *Currents: Niagara's Power Transformed*, an epic sound and light show within the heart of the station.

In July 2022, another new activation was added at the Niagara Parks Power Station – a tunnel experience that brings guests down 180 feet below the ground floor to explore a 2,200-foot tunnel leading to an awe-inspiring viewing platform at a never-before-seen vantage point. The tunnel experience was added to the daytime experience at the power station, which brought the price of daytime admission to \$28 for adults and \$18.25 for children (6-12 years of age), up from \$20 and \$13 respectively in 2021-22. The power station offers a number of different admission options including self-guided and guided tours, package deals with the night show *Currents* and family packages. For the fiscal 2022-23, forecasted revenues of \$4.1 million have been projected with a net contribution of \$2.8 million. The expectation for fiscal 2023-24 is that these revenues will grow to \$6 million with a contribution of \$4.4 million.



## **Strategic Goal #3: Expand our Digital Service Delivery**

### **Action: Development of New Consumer Website**

Niagara Parks' current consumer website was launched in 2017 and is currently approaching the end of its planned lifecycle. Niagara Parks has begun a comprehensive audit of its consumer website to implement incremental improvements in the coming year, while also undertaking initial market research in advance of a formal procurement process to deliver a new consumer website in 2025.

Key objectives for this new website include:

- Deliver an industry-leading user experience that converts visits to online sales
- Leverage in-house photo and video production resources for impactful visual storytelling
- Build Niagara Parks brand awareness and communicate successes that support its mandate for environmental and cultural stewardship
- Provide a full 1:1 French language user experience that is compliant with FLSA requirements

Niagara Parks will leverage its in-house web development capacity to work alongside a contracted vendor to develop and launch the new website, while building in a detailed plan for its ongoing maintenance. **Action: Modernize Information Technology services**

Niagara Parks will also be implementing a new digital strategy aimed at improving connectivity across its properties. Currently, there is good service (Wi-Fi and cellular) in most parts of the core area of Queen Victoria Park, as well as good indoor Wi-Fi service at most of Niagara Parks' guest-facing sites (attractions, restaurants, golf courses, heritage sites, etc.). However, there are challenges with cellular service and Wi-Fi connectivity in the rural north and south areas of the Niagara Parkway. The digital strategy will address these challenges so that guests will have access to strong cellular service and Wi-Fi connectivity across all of Niagara Parks' properties. Success will be measured based on improved cellular service and Wi-Fi connectivity particularly in areas along the north and south Parkway.

## **Strategic Goal #4: Foster Strong Collaboration with Partner Organizations**

### **Action: Joint initiatives with key partners**

Niagara Parks maintains close relationships with a number of different partner organizations. Currently, Niagara Parks has collaborative agreements or relationships with over 50 organizations. At the local level, Niagara Parks regularly partners with destination marketing organizations Niagara Falls Tourism and the Tourism Partnership of Niagara to promote the destination and host numerous



destination events such as the annual Winter Festival of Lights. Niagara Parks also works with its third-party tenants Niagara City Cruises and WildPlay Niagara Falls to promote the guest experiences they provide through digital and social media marketing efforts and bundling of experiences. Niagara Parks has worked closely with its Indigenous partners, the Landscape of Nations 360, in past years to develop programming and content to promote Indigenous culture, history and experiences in Niagara. Niagara Parks also regularly seeks out opportunities to collaborate with sister agencies within the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Throughout the redevelopment and launch of the Niagara Parks Power Station, Niagara Parks partnered with sister agency Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) to discuss effective positioning and storytelling initiatives for the attraction. Niagara Parks and OHT partnered to offer a virtual Doors Open visit to the Niagara Parks Power Station before it opened to the public to help generate enthusiasm and buzz around the project. As well, Science North, who Niagara Parks has partnered with on other initiatives in the past, contributed to the project by creating the interactive exhibits at the control panel and the flow model. In the future, Niagara Parks will also be exploring additional collaboration opportunities with Science North on exhibit material and programming at the Niagara Parks Power Station. Also related to the power station, Niagara Parks partnered with Destination Ontario on opportunities for cross-promotion and support, including the coordination of media tours, amplification of key social media content, support with media pitching, etc. which provided substantial benefits, including securing a feature with Breakfast Television, among other high-profile broadcasts.

Additionally, Niagara Parks has joined Destination Ontario and other Ministry agencies on a pilot project to develop initiatives related to Province-wide trails, under the themes of nature, heritage, art and culture. So far, Niagara Parks has provided digital content to support the trails initiative and looks forward to continuing this partnership and developing programming to support this Province-wide initiative.

In the near-term, Niagara Parks will continue to focus its marketing efforts on the Southern Ontario and Quebec markets, as well as the US drive market. As different international markets start to return, Niagara Parks will work closely with organizations like Destination Ontario and Destination Canada on joint marketing initiatives and opportunities.

Full details on Niagara Parks' third-party partnerships are included in section 11. For 2023-26, Niagara Parks will continue to build on these partnerships already established and will explore further opportunities with existing partners and potential new partner organizations.



### **Action: Maintain regular communication with stakeholders and partners**

Across the organization and covering a wide range of topics and operations, Niagara Parks maintains regular communication with its stakeholders and partners. Niagara Parks issues regular media releases on upcoming events, announcements, corporate initiatives, etc. that are also shared with destination stakeholders and partners. Niagara Parks also has staff representation on various destination tourism boards, which meet regularly to discuss upcoming initiatives and opportunities.

Beginning in October 2020, a cross-functional team from Niagara Parks and representatives from Destination Ontario held regular meetings to discuss collaboration opportunities and updates related to the Niagara Parks Power Station project. These meetings, now held bimonthly, will continue into 2023-24 to allow for information/opportunity sharing, collaboration and updates between the two organizations. Similarly, in 2021, Niagara Parks launched regular meetings with Metrolinx to enhance the level of communication between the two organizations to support the GO Train/WEGO Niagara program, which has been increasing in popularity in recent years. The program has contributed to revenue growth, increased ticket sales, web traffic, in addition to providing visibility for Niagara Parks in a critical consumer market in the GTA.

## **Strategic Goal #5: Ensure Strong Fiscal Management**

### **Action: Reduce potential business disruption by actively managing Niagara Parks' asset condition – Facility Condition Index (FCI)**

Actively managing its Facility Condition Index (FCI) helps ensure Niagara Parks is able to prioritize required investments in key facilities to reduce disruption to its service levels and operations. Niagara Parks maintains information about its asset condition and replacement/repair requirements in a condition assessment database, referred to as the Asset Management Information System (AMIS). Information in the database is updated annually to reflect investments in asset replacement and reconditioning, aging of assets and current unit costs to replace. FCI is an industry-standard index that objectively measures the current condition of a facility which allows comparison both within and among institutions. To determine FCI for any given set of assets, the total cost of remedying deferred maintenance requirements is divided by the current replacement value. Generally, the higher the FCI, the poorer the condition of the facility.

The current FCI for Niagara Parks assets (excluding decommissioned generating stations) in the AMIS database at December 2022 is .53. This represents a current remediation cost of \$243 million divided by current replacement value of \$456 million. Prior to the pandemic, Niagara Parks had been steadily increasing its investments in asset remediation over the past three years in addition to strategic investments in revenue generating assets and strategic priorities. Niagara Parks was



targeting an investment rate in life cycle maintenance over the 10-year plan that exceeded the annual depreciation rate, which would have reduced deferred maintenance on assets and thereby improved Niagara Parks' FCI steadily over the long-term. In 2022-23, Niagara Parks was targeting investment in life cycle replacement of \$5.4 million and strategic capital investments of \$1.7 million, and the depreciation rate was estimated at \$12.6 million. Due to the impact on revenues, capital investment was significantly reduced between 2020-2023. Over the next three to five years, capital spending is planned to increase to return the FCI index to the target range.

Niagara Parks is targeting maintaining an FCI of .53 for fiscal 2023-24, provided that there are sufficient revenues from operations to address necessary repairs during the year.

**Action: Prioritize grant funding opportunities**

In addition to revenues generated by its revenue-producing operations, Niagara Parks actively seeks additional funding for its capital projects in the form of grants and sponsorship opportunities. As Niagara Parks continues to conserve its financial resources, grant funding will be important to supporting a variety of projects, from destination events that promote Niagara Parks experiences to environmental and cultural stewardship projects. In 2023-24, Niagara Parks staff will continue to pursue current grants and sponsorship opportunities with a target goal of securing \$1,000,000 in funding. Revenue generated from grants and sponsorship funding, based on revenue recognized when grant conditions are fulfilled, is included in Table 8.5 below, with additional information of grant revenues in Table 9.3 in the Financial Budget and Staffing Section.

TABLE 8.5: GRANT AND SPONSORSHIP REVENUE	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
SPONSORSHIP REVENUE (RECOGNIZED IN YEAR)	\$ 599,154	\$ 739,372	\$ 413,963	\$ 504,590	\$ 130,000	\$ 80,635
GRANT REVENUE (RECOGNIZED IN YEAR)	\$ 520,243	\$ 282,636	\$ 123,683	\$ 61,452	\$ 16,889,406	\$ 13,492,628
	\$ 1,119,397	\$ 1,022,007	\$ 537,647	\$ 566,042	\$ 17,019,406	\$ 13,573,263



## 9.0 Financial Budget and Staffing

Niagara Parks is a board-governed operational enterprise provincial agency that generates revenues from a variety of operations. The largest source of revenue earned is normally from Niagara Parks' commercial activities. For the year ending March 31, 2023, these commercial revenues will generate approximately \$96 million, compared to \$116.2 million in 2019-20 (pre-pandemic). Niagara Parks also received \$9 million generated from water/land rentals, fees, investment income and sundries.

These commercial and ancillary revenues are intended to allow Niagara Parks to operate in a self-sufficient manner while covering the expenditures needed to support the work in the maintenance, parks and administrative departments, operate its own police service and enable Niagara Parks to reinvest in its infrastructure.

While Niagara Parks did receive emergency stabilization grants in 2020-21 and 2021-22 from the Province to offset its sudden loss of revenues and meet its operational and financing commitments during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no further expectation of provincial operational grant funding.

### 9.1 Summary of 2022-23 Results, 2023-24 Approved Budget and 2024-26 Forecasts

For the year ending March 31, 2023, Niagara Parks expects a surplus before interest and depreciation of \$22.3 million and a net surplus of \$10.9 million when factoring in depreciation, interest and changes to the Power Plant Stabilization obligation. Revenues from RPOs increased by 50%, or approximately \$39.5 million, over the prior year due to increases in visitation and full openings of the majority of commercial operations, following COVID-related emergency closures in previous years. Revenues from Niagara Parks' tenants, such as the zipline and boat tour operations, also improved by approximately 13%. As visitation has increased, certain commensurate operating expenses have also increased. Maintenance activities have also increased, due to deferral of all but the most critical maintenance repairs during the previous year. Insurance costs also rose significantly in fiscal 2022-23. Niagara Parks has been able to offset some of these cost increases through reductions in administrative expenses.

The 2023-24 operating budget is prepared on the basis that the economic outlook impacting Ontario tourism in the upcoming year. Niagara Parks' revenues are sensitive to economic risk factors, including changes in exchange rates, interest rates and oil prices all of which have an impact on discretionary household income available for tourism activities as well as any changes in US visitation from projected levels.



The current year budget, projected results and revised three-year forecast, approved by the Commission at its December 2022 Board meeting, are shown in Table 9.1 below.

Niagara Parks is forecasting modest growth for the next three years due to the changes and risks in the economic climate. The majority of the growth is expected to occur through increased visitation along with a continued focus on attractions and cost management strategies.

	CURRENT FISCAL YEAR			FUTURE YEARS		
	BUDGET	PROJECTED	VARIANCE TO	BUDGET		
			BUDGET	Apr. 2023	Apr. 2024	Apr. 2025
	Apr. 2022 Mar.2023	Apr. 2022 Mar.2023	Apr. 2022 Mar.2023	Mar.2024	Mar.2025	Mar.2026
Revenue Producing Operations						
Retail	\$ 7,132	\$ 19,360	\$ 12,228	\$ 22,190	\$ 24,409	\$ 26,850
Attractions	\$ 13,300	\$ 24,362	\$ 11,062	\$ 29,666	\$ 32,633	\$ 35,896
Parking/Transportation	\$ 7,708	\$ 14,326	\$ 6,618	\$ 16,601	\$ 18,261	\$ 20,087
Culinary	\$ 6,000	\$ 15,478	\$ 9,478	\$ 17,906	\$ 19,697	\$ 21,666
Golf	\$ 6,485	\$ 6,592	\$ 107	\$ 6,694	\$ 6,694	\$ 6,694
<b>Total Revenue Producing Operations</b>	<b>\$ 40,625</b>	<b>\$ 80,118</b>	<b>\$ 39,493</b>	<b>\$ 93,057</b>	<b>\$101,694</b>	<b>\$111,194</b>
Land Rent - Ontario Power Generation	\$ 7,800	\$ 8,033	\$ 233	\$ 8,434	\$ 8,856	\$ 9,033
Boat Tour Revenue	\$ 11,745	\$ 12,988	\$ 1,243	\$ 14,826	\$ 15,271	\$ 15,729
Zipline	\$ 1,834	\$ 2,355	\$ 521	\$ 2,560	\$ 2,637	\$ 2,716
Grant Revenue	\$ 201	\$ 82	\$ (119)	\$ 39	\$ -	\$ -
Sundry	\$ 1,374	\$ 2,477	\$ 1,103	\$ 2,978	\$ 2,993	\$ 3,008
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 63,579</b>	<b>\$ 106,053</b>	<b>\$ 42,474</b>	<b>\$ 121,894</b>	<b>\$ 131,450</b>	<b>\$ 141,679</b>
Expenses						
Revenue Producing Operations						
Cost of Goods Sold	\$ 5,214	\$ 11,702	\$ 6,488	\$ 14,122	\$ 14,546	\$ 16,001
Operating Expenses	\$ 20,842	\$ 30,687	\$ 9,845	\$ 35,819	\$ 39,301	\$ 42,866
Strategic Plan Key Priorities	\$ 610	\$ 848	\$ 238	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ 800
Parks, Environment & Culture	\$ 4,599	\$ 5,446	\$ 847	\$ 6,396	\$ 6,652	\$ 6,918
Engineering & Parks Operations	\$ 14,073	\$ 16,817	\$ 2,744	\$ 18,287	\$ 19,201	\$ 19,969
Niagara Parks Police Service	\$ 3,538	\$ 4,121	\$ 583	\$ 4,398	\$ 4,530	\$ 4,711
Administration	\$ 5,685	\$ 6,768	\$ 1,083	\$ 7,781	\$ 7,859	\$ 7,937
Insurance and Municipal Payments	\$ 3,751	\$ 3,305	\$ (446)	\$ 3,499	\$ 3,674	\$ 3,859
Sales, Marketing and Visitor Experience	\$ 3,260	\$ 4,052	\$ 792	\$ 5,791	\$ 5,965	\$ 6,203
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 61,572</b>	<b>\$ 83,746</b>	<b>\$ 22,174</b>	<b>\$ 96,893</b>	<b>\$ 102,528</b>	<b>\$ 109,264</b>
<b>Net Surplus (Deficit) Before Interest &amp; Depreciation</b>	<b>\$ 2,007</b>	<b>\$ 22,307</b>	<b>\$ 20,300</b>	<b>\$ 25,001</b>	<b>\$ 28,922</b>	<b>\$ 32,415</b>
Interest Expense	\$ 1,031	\$ 1,113	\$ 82	\$ 1,703	\$ 1,435	\$ 1,119
Depreciation & Deferred Stimulus Funding	\$ 10,910	\$ 10,137	\$ (773)	\$ 11,592	\$ 12,672	\$ 13,672
(Gain) on Disposal of Assets	\$ 0	\$ (136)	\$ (136)	\$ (141)	\$ (150)	\$ (150)
Power Plant Obligation Adjustment	\$ 400	\$ 300	\$ (100)	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
<b>Annual Net Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$10,334)</b>	<b>\$ 10,893</b>	<b>\$ 21,227</b>	<b>\$ 11,547</b>	<b>\$ 14,665</b>	<b>\$ 17,474</b>

### April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024 Operating Budget

For fiscal 2023-24, revenues are being budgeted to increase 15% over the 2022-23 forecast. A significant amount of this growth is expected to occur in the first quarter of the season as the Tunnel



experience at the Niagara Parks Power Station will be in full operation. There will still be a significant amount of earned media to help position Niagara Parks as a key destination. A softening of the golf market is expected to continue in 2023-24 as visitors return to other pre-pandemic activities. A focus on key marketing channels in the golf market and pricing strategies are expected to maintain revenue levels on par with 2022-23 volumes which will offset the loss of golfers.

## 9.2 2023-24 Capital Works Plan

In its original fiscal 2022-23 budget, Niagara Parks included \$4.2 million in capital works. The remainder of the funds were allocated to deferred maintenance. Capital grant funding was secured from the province to assist with a major boiler replacement project for \$1 million to complete the first phase of the repair.

As the season progressed and improved operating results were achieved, the capital forecast was increased to \$7.2 million with funds being allocated to strategic projects to further grow revenue in the park. Moving into fiscal 2023-24, the capital budget is set at \$14 million with 91%, or \$12.7 million, allocated to deferred maintenance. The most significant project for 2023-24 is the replacement of the Black Creek Bridge, which is expected to cost \$4 million.

The level of capital spending proposed is to address the capital deficiencies backlog identified in Niagara Parks' asset data condition database as well as support implementation of Niagara Parks' strategic plan.

The capital plan for 2023-24 is summarized in Table 9.2 below:

TABLE 9.2 2023-24 CAPITAL PLAN BY ASSET TYPE AND PRIORITY CLASSIFICATION (thousands \$)				
(thousands)	Operational Efficiency	Proactive Replacement	Strategic Investment	TOTAL
Fleet & Heavy Equipment	\$ 400			\$ 400
Equipment		\$ 1,140		\$ 1,140
Facility Upgrades	\$ 2,180			\$ 2,180
Information Technology	\$ 528	\$ 528		\$ 1,056
Roads, Bridges, Paths Sidewalks	\$ 3,954			\$ 3,954
Bridge Replacement		\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
<b>Sub Total - Life Cycle Capital Replacement</b>	<b>\$ 7,062</b>	<b>\$ 5,668</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 12,730</b>
Table Rock Redevelopment			\$ 250	\$ 250
Journey Behind the Falls			\$ 250	\$ 250
Floral Showhouse and Botanical Gardens			\$ 50	\$ 50
QVP Master Plan			\$ 20	\$ 20
Data Centre Move/Office Consolidations			\$ 100	\$ 100
Waste and Recycling			\$ 350	\$ 350
Winter Festival Of Lights			\$ 250	\$ 250
<b>Sub Total - Strategic Investments</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 1,270</b>	<b>\$ 1,270</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 7,062</b>	<b>\$ 5,668</b>	<b>\$ 1,270</b>	<b>\$ 14,000</b>





In addition to funding available from Niagara Parks’ operations, Niagara Parks is seeking additional funding for its upcoming capital projects via grants provided by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport which has periodically provided Niagara Parks with funding toward critical projects. In 2020-2022, Niagara Parks received two emergency stabilization operational grants as a result of the pandemic’s impact on operations, a student wage grant and grants from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) for conservation projects. Grant funding for operating and capital needs is highlighted in Table 9.3 below.

Fiscal Year	Funding Ministry	Purpose	Amount (Thousands of \$)
2015-2016	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Infrastructure renewal	\$1,912
2016-2017	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Infrastructure renewal	\$3,450
2017-2018	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Infrastructure renewal	\$207
2018-2019			n/a
2019-2020			n/a
2020-2021	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Student Summer Experience	\$338
2020-2021	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Emergency Stabilization Fund	\$16,353
2020-2021	Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry	Wetland Project	\$75
2020-2021	Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks	Environmental Project	\$65
2021-2022	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Emergency Stabilization Fund	\$13,080
2021-2022	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Infrastructure renewal	\$550
2021-2022	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Student Summer Experience	\$201
2022-2023	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Student Summer Experience	\$37
2022-2023	Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Culture Industries	Infrastructure renewal	\$1,090

## Debt Financing

Niagara Parks’ outstanding long-term debt as of March 31, 2022, was \$16.2 million, with annual principal and interest charges of \$3.211 million, until the debt is retired in April 2027. This financing relates to the previous redevelopment of Table Rock Centre completed in 2007. Niagara Parks requested and was approved for borrowing of \$25 million from OFA to stabilize the decommissioned Canadian Niagara Power Company generating station and to build a new attraction within the generating station including an immersive multimedia show – launching as the Niagara Parks Power Station. Phase I of the construction was completed in the summer of 2021 with the launch of the daytime experience with interactive exhibits and installations throughout the preserved generator floor and the new immersive multimedia night show, Currents: Niagara’s Power Transformed. Phase II of the project, which consists of the tunnel attraction and viewing platform, was completed by the summer of 2022. The fiscal 2023-24 budget includes forecasted revenues of \$6M million and a contribution of \$4.4 million for the Niagara Parks Power Station.



Loan payments for the new attraction are estimated between \$2.8 million and \$3.0 million annually for 10 years, starting in 2023-24. The loan payments are to be financed from the new attraction and include a provision for optional early repayment without penalty, which was exercised in the amount of \$5 million in December 2022. The value of the loan with accrued interest as of December 2022 is \$20.8 million.

### The Niagara Parks Foundation and Donations

Niagara Parks will continue to explore the use of donations and fundraising to assist with relevant and appropriate operating and capital projects as determined by the Commission. In the spring of 2022, Niagara Parks re-launched the Niagara Parks Foundation, a board-governed charitable organization designed to raise funds to contribute to Niagara Parks’ environmental and cultural stewardship responsibilities.

### Other External Revenues

Engineering maintains a listing of shovel-ready projects identified in the Asset Management Information System (AMIS) reports to take advantage of grant funds that become available.

## 9.3 Asset Management Plan

Table 9.4 below shows the historical cost and net book value of Niagara Parks’ depreciable assets as provided by Niagara Parks’ most recent audited financial statements.

<i>(thousands)</i>	Buildings & Structures	Machinery & Equipment	Total
Historical Cost	\$305,211	\$37,143	\$342,354
Useful Life	7 – 40 years	3-10 years	
Annual Amortization Charge	\$9,737	\$2,487	\$12,224
Net Book Value	\$174,536	\$19,532	\$194,068
Net Book Value as a Percentage of cost	57%	53%	

The annual amortization charge of \$12.2 million represents the amount by which tangible capital assets depreciated during 2021-22. This \$12.2 million amount is based on historical costs and does not include funding for inflation, for assets that are fully depreciated from an accounting perspective but are still in use or funding for service enhancement.



Niagara Parks has identified the need for a detailed asset management plan and work continues on the components of this plan, which are:

- State of infrastructure (condition assessment)
- Levels of service (various planning and engineering studies, space planning, master plans, strategic plan – further study required in 2023-24 to determine 10-year needs analysis)
- Replacement strategy (10-year asset replacement plan informed by studies)
- Financing strategy (10-year funding strategy, including funding from operations, debt financing, grants, donations, public private partnerships and other external sources)

This section of the business plan contains the preliminary elements for a detailed asset management plan. The plan’s components will be updated as further studies are undertaken to refine them.

### State of Infrastructure – Condition Assessment

In conjunction with the Ministry and VFA, Inc., a contracted asset management consulting firm and software provider, Engineering staff have been working on a condition assessment of Niagara Parks tangible capital assets, referred to as the AMIS project. The AMIS project is providing more detailed information about capital deficiencies and associated funding requirements for incorporation into a long-term capital plan.

The AMIS project has provided a current cost estimate of deficiencies of \$242.651 million, including deficiencies in specific structural items such as electrical systems, roofing, windows, etc. This amount includes an amount for similar deficiencies in power plant buildings quantified at \$16.2531 million. Niagara Parks has previously received provincial funding of approximately \$1.8 million to assist in the stabilization process and condition assessment studies of the power plants. The value estimates provided in AMIS are updated each year based on updated inspections, capital work undertaken and additional depreciation and an inflation factor for requirements that have not been undertaken. The status of deficiencies (capital requirements) based on the AMIS reports as at December 2022 and inspected by VFA are identified in Table 9.5 below.

<i>(millions)</i>	NPC Operations	Power Plants	Total
Currently Critical	\$ 3,978	\$ 6,147	\$ 10,125
Asset Integrity - Imminent Failure	\$ 11,279	448	11,727
Asset Integrity - Proactive Replacement	\$ 226,319	9,822	236,141
Code Compliance and Legislative	\$ 790	35	825
Discretionary	\$ 285	79	364
<b>Total Capital Deficiency, Dec-2022</b>	<b>\$ 242,651</b>	<b>\$ 16,531</b>	<b>\$ 259,182</b>
<b>Total Capital Deficiency, Dec-2021</b>	<b>\$ 223,436</b>	<b>\$ 16,279</b>	<b>\$ 239,715</b>



Table 9.6 contains a more detailed breakdown of the capital requirements by type of asset.

System Group and Priority	Currently Critical	Code Compliance & Legislative	Asset Integrity - Imminent Breakdown	Asset Integrity - Proactive Replacement	Discretionary	Total Dec 2022	Total Dec 2021
Electrical System	385	137	80	41,405		42,007	38,426
Equipment				61		61	65
Equipment & Furnishings			41	2,140		2,181	3,076
Exterior Enclosure	5,658	13	745	16,313	184	22,913	21,416
Fire Protection				1,684		1,684	1,591
HVAC System	191		3	32,989		33,183	38,592
Interior Construction and Conveyance	304	289		32,426	22	33,041	25,389
Plumbing System	6			7,743	64	7,813	6,835
Site	2,296		10,851	91,382		104,529	93,488
Special Construction				7,686		7,686	7,141
Structure	201	10	2	2,256		2,469	2,232
Other	1,084	376	5	56	94	1,615	1,464
Total - December 2022	10,125	825	11,727	236,141	364	259,182	239,715
Total December 2021 Comparative	9,618	719	10,359	218,667	352	220,787	

### Asset Replacement Strategy

Table 9.7 summarizes the original long-term capital plan forecasted for 2023-33 for projects to be funded from Niagara Parks operations. The long-term capital plan for subsequent years will be revised in the upcoming year.

The revised 2023-24 asset replacement plan incorporates \$12.7 million in life cycle asset replacement, which includes the replacement of the Black Creek Bridge at a cost of \$4 million. A cautious approach to capital is being taken in fiscal 2023-24 due to lingering impacts of the pandemic as well as economic uncertainty.

In 2018-19, Niagara Parks approved a Cash Management Policy and a Capital Works and Equipment Maintenance and Renewal Program Policy to assist in development of capital plans that ensure maximum funds are made available for investment in deferred maintenance and strategic priorities while ensuring long-term financial sustainability and flexibility for Niagara Parks operations. Niagara Parks is planning to return to these levels in 2025-26 as there is a significant backlog of deferred projects requiring prioritization due to reductions in capital spending through the pandemic.

Most of Niagara Parks' revenues are earned in the first two quarters of the fiscal year and capital works are generally completed in the last two quarters of the fiscal year after peak season operating results are known, which provides a contingency to temporarily defer capital if earnings in a year do not meet budget.



Table 9.7 Niagara Parks Commission 10 YEAR CAPITAL FORECAST (THOUSANDS OF \$)

	2019-20	2023-23	2022-23	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Actual	Budget	Projected	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Projected	2025-26 Projected	2026-27 Projected	2027-28 Projected	2028-29 Projected	2029-30 Projected	2030-31 Projected	2031-32 Projected	2032-33 Projected
Earnings before interest & Depreciation	24,714	\$ 2,007	\$ 22,317	25,001	28,942	32,466	35,388	37,157	39,758	42,541	44,669	46,009	46,929
Working Capital Changes (Increase Working Capital)	3,063	3,203	(7,978)	(5,091)	7,668	6,144	1,222	(835)	(2,058)	159	(1,969)	(3,309)	(4,229)
Provincial Grant		2,000	1,090										
Sponsorship		200											
Repayment of Power Plant OFA			(5,000)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)	(2,700)
Principal & Interest on Debt Charges*	(3,210)	(3,210)	(3,210)	(3,210)	(3,210)	(3,210)	(3,210)	(2,922)					
<b>Capital Funding Forecast</b>	<b>24,567</b>	<b>4,200</b>	<b>7,219</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>
<b>DEFERRED &amp; PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE</b>													
Facilities	4,953	350	1,106	1,680	7,660	2,000	2,750	3,000	5,000	7,550	7,300	7,400	7,000
Powerplant Serving (TPG/OPG)						2,000	4,000	2,000					
Roads, Bridges, Paths Sidewalks	2,879	1,190	2,316	3,955	9,165	2,500	3,000	4,000	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
Bridges (Black Creek 2024; Millers 2028; Bakers 2030)				4,000					4,000	4,500	4,000	4,500	4,000
Equipment	1,453	1,030	1,733	1,140	2,125	1,500	1,500	1,250	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Fleet	1,665			400	600	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750
WEGO Bus Replacement						3,200		3,500		3,750		3,900	1,550
Information Technology	1,835	580	330	1,055	1,500	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
Unallocated Critical Capital Works				500	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700
<b>Total Deferred and Preventative Maintenance</b>	<b>12,785</b>	<b>3,150</b>	<b>5,485</b>	<b>12,730</b>	<b>21,750</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>13,950</b>	<b>16,450</b>	<b>17,700</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS</b>													
<b>Revenue Producing Operations</b>													
Niagara Parks Power Station Attraction	808	750	1,434			750	2,000	750	750	750	750	750	750
Journey Behind the Falls Tunnel Upgrade	159			250	500	2,500	5,000	5,000	1,550				
Aero Car Upgrades		300	300									5,150	5,000
Niagara Fury's Attraction/Retail/Washrooms Renewal					7,000	9,000							
White Water Walk						100	250						
Unallocated Strategic Initiatives								2,500	2,500	6,800	7,550		
<b>Total Strategic Attraction Renewals</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>12,350</b>	<b>7,250</b>	<b>8,250</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>8,300</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>5,750</b>
Niagara Parks Marina/Boat Launches/Break wall	50					500	2,500	2,500	7,000				
Grandview Renewal	231								500	5,000	2,500	5,000	5,000
Queen Victoria Park (Master Plan & Facility Renewal)	981			20		2,000	5,000	2,050	2,550	5,000	5,250	5,150	5,300
Table Rock Redevelopment	9000			250									
Floral Showhouse	75												
Botanical Gardens/Butterfly				50			550		1,500	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,000
Brand Strategy and Wayfinding	328					500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Winter Festival Of Lights				250	500	500	500	500					
Environmental (Waste & Recycling /Charging)	150			350	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450
Data Centre Move/Office Consolidations				100	500	2,500							
<b>Total Strategic All Other</b>	<b>10,815</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>6,450</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>12,450</b>	<b>11,700</b>	<b>14,100</b>	<b>14,250</b>
<b>Total Strategic Investments</b>	<b>11,782</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>8,950</b>	<b>18,800</b>	<b>16,750</b>	<b>14,250</b>	<b>17,300</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure Forecast</b>	<b>24,567</b>	<b>4,200</b>	<b>7,219</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>30,700</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>



## **10.0 Information Technology and Electronic Service Delivery Plan**

Niagara Parks' digital vision is to "facilitate a reliable, safe, secure and high-speed internet experience".

To support the provincial priority of improving digital service delivery, planning to achieve this vision commenced in 2022. Niagara Parks will continue to collaborate with tourism stakeholders and drive more visitors to Niagara Parks with an improved, seamless Wi-Fi guest experience.

As part of the plan, third-party high-speed internet access will be sought for guests visiting along the 56km Niagara Parkway. Additionally, the improved internet access will enable smart technologies like CCTV, people counters, sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) to improve Niagara Parks' operational efficiencies.

Niagara Parks recently implemented the first modules of its ERP solution (Unit4 ERP) – General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Financials, Fixed Assets, Expense Ledger, Product Costing, Inventory and Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A), and System Administration. In 2022, Fleet Management and Facilities Management modules were implemented.

Meanwhile the Niagara Parks' Information Technology (IT) department continues to support existing operations with three IT functional areas: Network and Infrastructure Services; Application Services; and, Client (Helpdesk) and Infrastructure Services. The following is an overview of the accomplishments of 2022-23 and plans for 2023-24 period.

### **10.1 Accomplishments of 2022-23**

#### **Network Services**

- As part of the digital strategy, procured and developed an outdoor Wi-Fi plan which will deliver outdoor Wi-Fi from the Floral Showhouse to Clifton Hill.
- Procured and developed a plan for improved cellular services across the 56 kilometres of Niagara Parks properties. Conducted an RFP for hosted cellular services provider for implementation in 2023-2024.
- Expanded Niagara Parks' fiber network to the new Niagara Parks Power Station and adjoining tunnel.
- Deployed eleven Wi-Fi access points to the Niagara Parks Power Station attraction and eight Wi-Fi access points in the Niagara Parks Power Station tunnel.
- Implemented two cell stations with repeaters to provide cellular services within the Niagara Parks Power Station tunnel.



- Replaced the two primary, high availability / failover firewalls for improved security to the internet.
- Renewed Palo Alto firewall maintenance and Wildfire “threat intelligence cloud” subscriptions for 15 network firewalls to thwart malicious attempts to gain access to the Niagara Parks network.
- Upgraded Cortex XDR which helps prevent zero-day exploits, malware, ransomware and file-less attacks.
- Developed and presented Cyber Security Phishing Training for staff managing pin pads.
- Completed Request for Qualifications for data and voice cabling services.
- Deployment of 20 ADP Timeclocks for employee time keeping.
- Completed the 2022 PCI-DSS internal audit to ensure preservation of PCI-DSS compliance.

### **Application Services**

- Participated in the development of and reporting for the Unit4 ERP Fleet Management and Facilities Management.
- Completed the technical upgrade of Retail Pro Prism 1.14 from end-of-life version of Retail Pro 8.6.
- Replaced 64 end-of-life Culinary point of sale (POS) units.
- Upgraded Accesso ticketing solution application software from 4.8.02 to 4.08.04 and modified reporting accordingly.
- Integrated Ingresso (an online travel agent solution) with the Accesso ticketing solution.
- Implemented Single Sign On (SSO) to a new project management and collaboration software, Wrike.
- Completed the Unit4 ERP application audit from external auditors.
- Designed and developed a “Certificate of Insurance” system for managing Certificates of Insurance.
- Designed and developed “Driver’s License Validation” system integrated with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to validate employee driver’s licenses for vehicles and equipment.
- Designed and developed a Human Resources “Employee Change Management” system.
- Developed Human Resources “Employee Performance Appraisal” system.
- Designed and developed a repository for storage and management of Properties agreements.



## **Helpdesk and Infrastructure Services**

- Procured and implemented 18 emergency call stations throughout the Niagara Parks Power Station tunnel.
- Added a CCTV camera pointed at the mouth of the Niagara Parks Power Station tunnel.
- Supported the Canada Games by enabling infrastructure at each Niagara Parks venue associated with the games.
- Electronic Monitoring Policy developed and communicated, per Ontario government mandate.
- Replaced six end-of-life, Toshiba multi-function community printers/scanners for an annual cost savings of \$9,900.
- Upgraded virtual environment software from VMware 6.7 to 7.3 supporting 110+ virtual servers.
- Replaced Microsoft's Active Sync authentication with Microsoft's Modern Authentication.
- Procured, configured and implemented a new IT Ticketing system.
- As of December 1, 2022, a total of 3,476 Helpdesk tickets were closed, providing a closure rate of 98.4%.

## **10.2 Plans for 2023-24**

### **Network Services**

- Supporting the Digital Strategy, it is planned to complete three of the four outdoor Wi-Fi zones between the Floral Showhouse and Clifton Hill area. This is dependent on the global supply of network equipment and Wi-Fi access points.
- Provide new broadband network access at Legends maintenance facility and the Mackenzie Printery heritage site.
- Procure and implement an Air Fiber solution at the Maintenance Centre facility to provide an emergency backup solution to the Niagara Parks fiber network.
- Expand Wi-Fi at the Legends restaurant and patio.
- Expand the fiber network at the Butterfly Conservatory to support additional network connectivity.
- Expand the fiber network at Whirlpool Golf to the Halfway House building.
- Expand the fiber network at White Water Walk attraction and add Wi-Fi to the riverside walkway.





- Conduct an RFP for a Qualified Security Assessor auditor services to audit Niagara Parks PCI-DSS to the new 4.0 PCI-DSS standards and to provide advisory services for future internal PCI-DSS audits.

### **Application Services**

- Replace end-of-life BOCA ticket printers and attraction ticket scanners.
- Retail Pro Prism process re-engineering and optimization.
- Research, investigate and develop Retail Pro Prism integrations into Unit4 ERP.
- Unit4 ERP reporting and system administration.
- Replace remaining Culinary end-of-life Point-of-Sale (POS) units.

### **Helpdesk and Infrastructure Services**

- Increase IT data storage with expanded Cohesity solution.
- Add Dell ESX physical hosting servers and configure for VMWare.
- Investigate and develop Oak Hall to Table Rock data centre infrastructure and systems synchronizations for redundancy.
- Replace end-of-life telephony systems at critical sites.
- Add Oak Hall Apartment generator to support internet connectivity during power outage.
- Receive and resolve 255+ monthly IT requests for help with overall closure rate of 95%.
- Provide Helpdesk support for a growing number of printing devices, Wi-Fi access points, switches, Internet of Things (IoT), data collections, databases, multi-function printers, mobile devices, telephony devices and other network devices.



## 11.0 Initiatives Involving Third Parties

Niagara Parks continues to work with partners to achieve its overall operational requirements. Niagara Parks seeks to expand its outreach into regional, national and international communities and organizations that share the common interest of promoting environmental and cultural stewardship, growing tourism and furthering the Niagara Parks brand story. Niagara Parks strengthens its partnership arrangements through the development of agreements on significant initiatives, as well as memorandums of understanding and/or membership as means to providing clarity of the working relationship. The strength of the partnership is contingent on all parties achieving mutually agreed to goals and objectives.

The following charts outline third-party partners to Niagara Parks. It should be noted that Niagara Parks does not provide grant funding to any of the parties below.

### 11.1 Business Development, Events and Public Relations

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Niagara City Cruises	Operator for boat tour service for Niagara Parks under a 30-year agreement that began in 2013.	The boat tour is a Canadian Signature Experience and a key demand generator for Niagara Parks and the destination. Niagara Parks works collaboratively with Niagara City Cruises on packaging and promotions to drive higher visitation and revenue.
Niagara Adventure Excursions (operating as WildPlay Niagara Falls)	Operator of two attractions for Niagara Parks: Zipline to the Falls and Whirlpool Adventure Course, under what is now a 20-year contract (pending the meeting of set investment criteria) that originally began in 2014.	The zipline and adventure course are two attractions that offer guests an opportunity for an adventurous experience.
Falls Fireworks Series	Activate fireworks series and coordinate the program on behalf of local stakeholders.	Fireworks enhance visitation for all partners. The program runs in the summer (May to Thanksgiving). Fireworks is intended to extend the guests' stay in Niagara Falls, including encouraging overnight stays.

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Illumination Support of the Falls	Niagara Parks is a member of the Niagara Falls Illumination Board, a not-for-profit corporation made up of 18 representatives from the City of Niagara Falls (Ontario), Ontario Power Generation Inc., City of Niagara Falls (New York), New York State Parks, New York Power Authority.	It is the Illumination Board's responsibility and mandate to finance and maintain the nightly illumination of both the Canadian Horseshoe and American falls. The Falls' illumination is another key activation for the destination.
New Year's Eve (NYE) On-hold since 2020.	Co-host annual NYE show in Queen Victoria Park by way of a contractual relationship with the City of Niagara Falls and other community stakeholders.	This is an important event for the destination to maximize revenue and public relations potential for Niagara Parks and the stakeholders.
WEGO Vehicle Transportation System	In August 2011, Niagara Parks and the City of Niagara Falls signed a 10-year agreement to develop an integrated Visitor Transportation System, known as WEGO, to provide a seamless connection between tourist areas within the City and Niagara Parks' sites and attractions.	Niagara Parks received 11 new fully accessible buses (nine articulated/two single buses) as part of the overall \$50 million in funding provided to the City by the federal and provincial governments for this project. Annually \$1.15 million is paid by Niagara Parks to the City as part of a 10-year agreement.
Regional Tourism Organization (RTO)	RTOs have the responsibility for marketing as well as longer-term strategic planning for tourism regions, including product development, workforce strengthening and the provision of travel information.	Niagara Parks serves on the board of the RTO. Participation allows Niagara Parks to take part in and help influence the cooperative advertising and marketing strategies to promote visitation and increased stays within the region.
Niagara Falls Convention Centre	Niagara Parks is a founding partner in the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls. Niagara Parks has a seat on the board of directors.	Niagara Parks supports the Convention Centre to help draw meetings and conventions to the destination and Niagara Parks receives business from those conventions.



Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Niagara Falls Tourism	Niagara Parks is a member of Niagara Falls Tourism and serves on the board for the local destination marketing organization.	Tourism is a critical part of Niagara Parks' business and having a strong and well-performing Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) is important in providing marketing programs that benefit the destination and Niagara Parks.
Winter Festival of Lights	Niagara Parks was a founding partner in the original community event and remains a significant contributor to what is now a tourism-led event by way of lighting design, programming and manual support.	The event draws visitors to Niagara Falls and extends the destination's season. Winter Festival of Lights is overseen by Niagara Falls Tourism with funding support from the Niagara Falls Canada Hotel Association.
Culinary Tourism Alliance (CTA)	Organization promoting champions of local food and beverages in Ontario	Membership and Feast ON certifying Niagara Parks' full-serve restaurants supports brand alignment and provides positive economic impact.
Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA)	ORHMA is an organization supporting the restaurant and tourism industry in Ontario and is linked to Restaurants Canada (formerly Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association)	Niagara Parks is a member and works in partnership to promote the industry
Golf Canada	Golf Canada is the National Sports Federation and governing body for golf in Canada representing 271,000 golfers and 1,400 member clubs across the country. Golf Canada's mission is to increase Canadian participation and excellence in golf.	Niagara Parks Golf maintains membership and participates in many of Golf Canada's programs including supporting for Professional and Amateur competitive events and grow the game initiatives.
Stanley Thompson Society	The society is committed to celebrating and preserving the legacy of Canada's premier golf architect Stanley Thompson.	Whirlpool Golf Course is a Stanley Thompson designed golf course and supports the society with membership. The membership enables networking opportunities, research, archives and learning more about Thompson through guest speaker series.

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Digital Attractions	Operator of the FX Studio photo capture services at Table Rock Centre and Grand View Marketplace. The studio captures photos of guests at Journey Behind the Falls, Hornblower Niagara Cruises, White Water Walk and Butterfly Conservatory.	Operations are also being implemented at Whirlpool Aero Car.
Whirlpool Jet Boat Tours	Operator renting excess space at Floral Clock	Brings traffic to Floral Clock retail store
Pinnacle Scopes	Operator of viewing machines	Provides amenity to guests and revenue for Niagara Parks
Metrolinx	Metrolinx, an agency of the Government of Ontario under the Metrolinx Act, 2006, was created to improve the coordination and integration of all modes of transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.	Promotional partnership with Metrolinx in 2017 to support summer train service to Niagara including bike storage cars on each train schedule. Partnership facilitates access to other Ontario markets as well Metrolinx's broader mandate to encourage and support cycling and active transportation.
SMARTlab Niagara	Experiential PhD research program, working out of Oak Hall	MOU signed with Niagara Parks
District School Board of Niagara and Niagara Catholic District School Board	Co-op education placement in Niagara Parks culinary venues	Supports tourism as an opportunity for employment and assists in recruitment
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development	Coordinating apprenticeships for trades in Ontario	Used by culinary services for chef apprentices (in addition to other departments utilizing apprentices in trades)
Niagara College – Canadian Food and Wine Institute	Work in partnership for apprenticeships and co-op programs for culinary services	Supports local job economy and recruitment efforts
Destination Canada	Destination Canada, the national marketing organization, promotes Canada as a travel brand in key international markets.	Niagara Parks leverages marketing programs offered by Destination Canada ranging from meetings and conventions, travel trade, digital marketing and travel media relations.



Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Destination Ontario	Destination Ontario, as the provincial marketing organization and sister agency, provides important marketing initiatives that support Niagara Parks' tourism marketing efforts.	Niagara Parks' leverages consumer, travel trade and travel media relations activities that Destination Ontario develops each year.
Destination Toronto	Niagara Parks is a member of Destination Toronto, the official destination marketing organization for Toronto.	Niagara Parks leverages sales and marketing programs offered by Destination Toronto, including international meetings and convention leads, travel trade and travel media opportunities.

## 11.2 Environment

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Environment Canada (Habitat Stewardship Program and Great Lakes Sustainability Fund) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) (Species at Risk Stewardship Fund)	To acquire resources needed to protect, maintain and preserve natural areas that make up 25% of Niagara Parks' lands.	In addition, resources are used for education and outreach both internally and externally.
Niagara College and Brock University	Provide expertise for various environmental, recreational and technical programs to support Niagara Parks' stewardship program and Botanical Gardens.	Provide NPC staff with valuable data. In 2018, NPC signed a memorandum of understanding with Brock University to collaborate on environmental stewardship initiatives. In 2020, NPC signed another MOU with Brock and Ontario Trails Council to support trail research and development.

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Science North	Support programming at the Niagara Glen Nature Centre and the Niagara Parks Power Station.	Liaise with Science North to manage the Nature Exchange program at the Nature Centre and develop exhibits at the new Niagara Parks Power Station.
Audubon International	The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf is an award-winning education and certification program that helps golf courses protect the environment and preserve the natural heritage of the game of golf. By helping people enhance the valuable natural areas and wildlife habitats that golf courses provide, improve efficiency, and minimize potentially harmful impacts of golf course operations, the program serves an important environmental role worldwide.	To achieve certification golf courses must demonstrate a high degree of environmental quality in 6 separate categories. Legends on the Niagara has achieved full certification while Whirlpool continues to progress. The certification is promoted to guests as a sustainable initiative through events and various communications.
Corporate and non-profit support [OPG, Friends Groups, Naturalists, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Land Care Niagara, MNRF, Ontario Access Coalition (Boulderers), Royal Astronomical Society Club – Niagara Centre, Niagara Geological Society]	Alliances have allowed for environmental, educational and recreational initiatives that Niagara Parks would not otherwise have the internal resources to achieve.	Collaboration provides support for numerous preservation and restoration activities on Niagara Parks' lands.
Forests Ontario	Research and development of tree seed collection strategy for Niagara.	Provides the opportunity to offer seed collection related workshops and training to Niagara Parks staff.
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)	Improvements on the Lands Protection Program.	Partnership with OPG provides funding and technical support to Niagara Parks in its native tree planting and reforestation efforts.



<b>Third Party Name</b>	<b>Business Objective</b>	<b>Business Strategy</b>
Monarch Teachers Network, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Niagara Falls Nature Club	To increase the education programming and outreach of Niagara Parks' Butterfly Conservatory.	Provides the capabilities to offer educational programming to local teachers and students using monarch butterfly life history along with providing funding to offset monarch workshop costs to participants.
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	Research in management and control of invasive species.	Research in controlling damage from emerald ash borer and hemlock woolly adelgid.
Trail and cycling organizations (Greater Niagara Circle Route, TransCanada Trail, Waterfront Trail, Greenbelt Route, Ontario Trails Council, Venture Niagara, Ontario by Bike)	Increase promotion and development of cycling opportunities and infrastructure within Niagara Parks and the surrounding region.	Provides opportunities for joint marketing initiatives, access to funding and trail management expertise as it relates to the Niagara River Recreation Trail.
American Public Gardens Association	Niagara Parks is a member of American Public Gardens Association, a preeminent association for public garden professionals and serves on the board to gain an advanced understanding of the field of public horticulture.	Niagara Parks leverages its board membership to gain insight into best practices, offered through educational and networking opportunities,

### 11.3 Heritage and Indigenous Programs

<b>Third Party Name</b>	<b>Business Objective</b>	<b>Business Strategy</b>
Parks Canada	Programming Partner	Collaboration on events and tours. Cross-promotional opportunities as appropriate. Niagara Parks has an MOU with Parks Canada (updated in December 2020).
Printery Group	Maintain the Printery Collection at Mackenzie Printery heritage site.	Collaborate with local community association to showcase the history of printing.





Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Landscape of Nations 360	Indigenous Education Initiative to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Indigenous experience in the Niagara Region through partnership with indigenous leaders and educators to enhance how Indigenous histories, cultures and contemporary issues are taught in K to 12 classrooms	Supports the Niagara Parks mandate of preserving the cultural stewardship of the Niagara River corridor through recognition of the important role of indigenous people held in the history of the region.
Friends of Laura Secord	The Friends of Laura Secord is a community group with the primary goal of preserving, strengthening and perpetuating the Secord legacy so it can continue to inspire and educate future generations about the many people who helped to define Canada.	Collaborate on summer events and share in highlighting the life and era of Laura Secord.

#### 11.4 School of Horticulture

Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Olds College, Olds Alberta	Articulation agreement for Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture graduates to obtain a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree (block transfer).	Supports corporate excellence objective in building the Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture program as a national program of recognition.
Awaji Landscape Planning and Horticulture Academy (ALPHA Academy), Hyogo, Japan	Exchange program allows Japanese students to attend Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture for advanced study and an opportunity for Niagara Parks students to seek internship placements in Japan.	Supports corporate excellence objective in building Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture program globally.



Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), United States	This governing body of the landscape industry for North America has accredited Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture program as being the equivalent of a four-year bachelor's degree program.	Supports Corporate Excellence objective in building Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture program as a national program of recognition.
City of Niagara Falls	Schools in Bloom program – Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture students actively participate in a consultative capacity with all high schools in the City to beautify school properties and engage young people in horticulture.	Supports corporate excellence objective and demonstrates commitment to natural and cultural stewardship.
Niagara Catholic District School Board	This partnership allows high school students enrolled in horticulture and a high skills major program in horticulture to complete their studies at the Botanical Gardens with a hybrid teaching model using class lectures with studies in the gardens and working with Niagara Parks' students.	Supports growth of Niagara Parks' diploma program through enhanced reach to potential future students and increases applicants to program.
Niagara District School Board	Niagara Parks will support the DSN to deliver portions of their Green Industries Specialty High Skills Major – “Dig It” program's curriculum within the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens	Supports and benefits Niagara Parks by further expanding the presence of the School of Horticulture in the local educational market.
Canadian Wildlife Federation	Memorandum of understanding developed to enable collaborative activities between Niagara Parks and Canadian Wildlife Federation with a focus on education.	Supports development of Niagara Parks' educational programming for Niagara Parks' staff, students and visitors. Provides access to experts in horticulture, forestry and conservation. Further opportunities for ecological restoration and research.



Third Party Name	Business Objective	Business Strategy
Canadian Garden Council	Continued support as founding member to increase promotion of Niagara Parks, the Botanical Gardens, the School of Horticulture and other Canadian gardens and tourism experiences, education opportunities and to cultivate joint marketing strategies.	Provides opportunity for joint marketing initiatives and access to resources from participating members. Requires further study to develop staffing plan.
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Garden Club of Niagara and Horticulture Society of Niagara Falls	Partnership to provide learning opportunities to visitors, students and members to advance awareness and education (agreement to be developed).	Supports growth and development of the visitor experience at the Botanical Gardens and creates other revenue opportunities for the partners.
School of Horticulture Alumni Association	Promote and support Niagara Parks' School of Horticulture, its current students and alumni.	Niagara Parks staff liaise with the Alumni Association supported by its terms of reference.



## **12.0 Communications Plan**

In 2023-24, corporate communications will continue to support and implement Niagara Parks' key strategic priorities identified in the 10-year Strategic Plan and this business plan. In so doing, communications efforts will be aligned and positioned to support the overall strategic directions identified and promoted by the provincial government and the Ministry.

### **12.1 2023-24 Business Goals**

- Provide external and internal communications support to Niagara Parks' diverse operational units and revenue-producing departments
- Support Niagara Parks' efforts in both its brand management and reputational objectives thereby enhancing Niagara Parks' overall image and financial performance
- Implement corporate communication plan, in support of Niagara Parks' 10-year Strategic Plan objectives and brand initiative, to further Niagara Parks' corporate objectives and reputation
- Continue to build upon Niagara Parks' internal communications efforts and capabilities to ensure support and organization-wide buy-in for strategic and corporate initiatives

### **12.2 2023-24 Communications Goals**

- Continue to build awareness and support among key stakeholder groups for the strategic plan and the resulting capital/program priorities to be pursued
- Support the continued implementation of Niagara Parks' brand initiative through identifying new and unique storytelling opportunities that promote Niagara Parks' diverse offerings and role as the environmental and cultural steward of the Niagara River corridor
- Increase awareness and understanding of Niagara Parks as a provincially and nationally significant tourism asset with the goal of making Niagara Parks not only one of the most respected parks agencies in Canada, but also one of the most spectacular Parks in the world
- Continue to enhance and strengthen the relationship between Niagara Parks and its identified stakeholders, ensuring Niagara Parks' vision, mission, economic importance and strategic plan are shared with and understood by these important stakeholder groups
- Manage issues proactively to continue to build and enhance the corporate reputation of Niagara Parks



- Provide strategic communication support for key Niagara Parks initiatives in 2023-24 including:
  - Continuation of the redevelopment procurement process for the remaining two decommissioned power stations
  - Redevelopment and launch of a refreshed visitor experience at Journey Behind the Falls
  - Redevelopment and launch of a new bistro restaurant and bottle shop at Table Rock Centre
  - Redevelopment and launch of a new fast-casual dining experience at the Botanical Gardens
  - Support for the first full year of operations for the Niagara Parks Foundation
  - Support for environmental and cultural stewardship initiatives, including tree planting and Indigenous Tours

### **Key Target Audiences/Stakeholders**

- Niagara Parks employees
- The Government of Ontario
- Residents of Ontario
- The Government of Canada
- The local community – residents, community groups and municipal governments of Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara region
- Tourism organizations such as Niagara Falls Tourism, Tourism Partnership of Niagara, the Niagara Falls Convention Centre, local BIAs, Destination Ontario, Destination Canada, the Travel Industry Association of Canada, the Travel Industry Association of Ontario, Attractions Ontario, Culinary Tourism Alliance, attraction operators, local hoteliers and golf course operators
- Local, national and international media
- Tourism visitors



## **12.3 Success Factors**

The following factors are critical in achieving the goals of this Communication Plan:

### **Advance preparation and a proactive approach**

Advance preparation and a proactive approach to communications, issues management and event plans, including the development of key messages, identification of target audiences and tactics are needed to ensure maximum exposure and coverage of Niagara Parks events and initiatives and positive reputational positioning for the organization. This will be managed through the implementation of the corporate communications plan.

### **Consistency**

Consistency in delivering key messages is fundamental to the success of all corporate communications. Approved key messages will form the basis of all corporate communications related to public-facing events and campaigns, as well as internal corporate initiatives and strategic projects, that are of significant interest.

To ensure consistency, key messages in issues/communications/event plans will be shared in advance with the Chair and CEO as well as with members of the Executive Team who may be required to speak publicly to a matter. Information will also be shared with Commissioners and senior staff as they may be expected to use and deliver these key messages when discussing Niagara Parks business/activities with stakeholders and others. Key messages will also be used to brief Niagara Parks' Guest Services Centre to ensure consistency across all platforms. Additionally, customized key messages will be distributed to directors, managers and supervisors across Niagara Parks to share with front-line staff to help them communicate with and answer questions from the public.

### **Internal/Employee Communications**

Niagara Parks is one of the largest employers in Niagara region. Commitment to internal communications ensures employees have accurate information about any current and/or future activities to be pursued by Niagara Parks for sharing with colleagues, family, friends and associates in the community and region. Internal communications will continue to emphasize the vision and objectives of this business plan and the corporate initiatives in the strategic plan. In an effort to reach the largest number of staff, internal communications will take advantage of multiple communication vehicles such as email, bulletin boards, employee newsletters and face-to-face communications



through town halls, executive tours and targeted messaging provided to directors, managers and supervisors to share with their staff.

Many of the strategic plan's initiatives require communications support and plans, especially when an initiative has a direct impact on staff (e.g. venue change, process change, skill change, role change, etc.). Employee communications will highlight several corporate initiatives being pursued this year as identified in this plan.

### **Communications Protocol with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport**

While Niagara Parks has primary responsibility for communicating decisions/activities, existing Ministry/agency protocols with respect to issues management and communications must be followed. The Ministry will continue to be apprised of significant public matters and asked to provide input with respect to key messages and speaking points through regular reporting mechanisms such as the six-week agency roll-out and additionally on a case-by-case basis.

### **Commitment to Transparency**

Niagara Parks is committed to openness and transparency which guides all communications initiatives. This commitment is demonstrated through the distribution and publication of Niagara Parks' Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements, public Board meetings, publication of agendas, reports, minutes and media releases on Niagara Parks' website, the full integration of Niagara Parks' Guest Services Centre to respond to visitor and public enquires and the hosting of public information sessions on key issues and initiatives pursued by Niagara Parks.

## **12.4 Tactics**

### **Media Relations**

Corporate communications, which includes public relations and media relations expertise, contributes to the overall effort to attract visitors to Niagara Parks and Niagara. This combination is critical to achieving the business and communications goals of this plan given limited advertising and marketing budgets.

Earned media coverage through public relations activities supplements advertising buys, maintains the profile of Niagara Parks in major tourism markets and helps open new markets internationally and domestically.



2023-24 media relations activities will include:

- Managing an internal corporate and public relations event calendar that will identify all events, milestones and other story opportunities throughout the year to ensure ongoing coverage and a proactive approach to media relations
- Issuing media advisories and news releases for all events and initiatives of media interest to promote Niagara Parks and provide reasons for guests from Canada, the US and international markets to visit and/or return to Niagara Parks
- Issuing news releases proactively to advise the local news media, members of the public, bordering municipalities, relevant stakeholders, etc. regarding infrastructure projects, environmental initiatives, road closures and other public notices to maintain positive reputational positioning among the local community
- Under the guidance of the corporate communications plan, developing strategies and best practices for informed and targeted media outreach, to better understand our media audiences
- Prioritizing the use of new media such as photo and video assets and seeking out storytelling opportunities
- Aligning media relations activities with social media campaigns and web content launches to leverage Niagara Parks' digital audiences, build awareness and ensure cohesiveness of messaging, tone and voice across all platforms
- Facilitating editorial board meetings and media interviews for the Chair, CEO and identified spokespersons across all departments
- Continuing to build and maintain positive working relationships with local media to preserve Niagara Parks' reputation as a responsive, open and transparent organization
- Identifying new media contacts on a national and international scale and building strong working relationships
- Updating and increasing media content on Niagara Parks' digital platforms
- Increasing awareness of the role and importance of Niagara Parks as a provincial and national treasure
- Promoting Niagara Parks as one of the most spectacular Parks in the world

### **Internal Employee Communications**

In 2023-24, internal communications will continue to play a vital role in ensuring all employees have accurate information about future directions/decisions made and the reasons behind those decisions. On an operational level, strong internal communication across departments will help





ensure the success of different projects and initiatives, as well as business continuity. In support of this, Niagara Parks will continue to promote communications vehicles designed to foster ongoing dialogue and positive engagement between staff and management, such as:

- Weekly CEO “Welcome to the Week” updates and monthly newsletter
- Employee updates and communication plans developed in support of strategic plan projects/programs of significance
- Memos/bulletins/all users communications from the CEO which have proven to be valuable in communicating important information to staff immediately and unfiltered, on issues of critical importance to Niagara Parks
- Leverage the effectiveness of in-person communication by providing simplified and targeted messaging for directors/managers/supervisors to share verbally with their staff and to help answer questions
- The CEO and Executive Team will meet with directors, managers and supervisors to share information on corporate initiatives, strategic and capital projects and to discuss successes and challenges in the workplace
- Continue holding smaller, more informal group discussions between management and staff on a departmental basis to receive individual concerns and issues faced by employees
- Executive Team visits to all work sites

### **Stakeholder Outreach Initiatives**

Board and public meetings held with residents and municipal councils over the past several years have been successful in demonstrating Niagara Parks’ commitment to openness and transparency. In 2023-24, these initiatives will continue and include presentations to local municipal councils/public provide information on Niagara Parks’ operations, economic importance and the significant role Niagara Parks plays with the community. Not only is this an educational opportunity, it can also be used to generate feedback and build stakeholder support for issues of importance to Niagara Parks, such as:

- Priorities/programs resulting from the strategic plan
- Queen Victoria Park master plan
- Adaptive reuse of Toronto Power and Ontario Power Company Generating Stations
- Development of new programs – reaching out to stakeholders, soliciting feedback on creation of new event plans, as well as Indigenous tourism and cycling strategies
- Holding open Board meetings throughout the year, guided by public health regulations



- Hosting Public Information Centres when needed, to provide members of the public opportunities to meet with Niagara Parks staff, learn about plans and projects and provide feedback

Niagara Parks will also continue to take a proactive approach with industry associations and partnerships it is involved in. While Niagara Parks has established relationships with local stakeholders such as Niagara Falls Tourism and the Tourism Partnership of Niagara, staff also provide regular briefings with organizations such as Destination Ontario, the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, Destination Canada and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada to better promote Niagara Parks, its goals and its importance to the tourism sector. Niagara Parks' continued relationship with these organizations is threefold:

- Raise awareness of the important and vital role Niagara Parks plays in the tourism industry
- Ensure that the voice of Niagara Parks is not overlooked on issues of importance to Niagara Parks and its role as one of Ontario's premier tourism sites
- Involve Niagara Parks in marketing and promotional events, and other initiatives designed to attract visitors to Niagara Parks, Niagara Falls and the Niagara region

### **Provincial Government Outreach**

As a provincial agency, Niagara Parks has numerous reporting mechanisms including a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, business plan, annual report, and issues notes designed to inform and ensure its accountability to the Province of Ontario. In 2023-24, Niagara Parks will continue with initiatives to increase awareness and understanding of Niagara Parks, its mandate, vision and importance, including briefings and meetings with the Minister, Deputy Minister, MPPs and MPs (federal government) in support of projects and initiatives of importance to Niagara Parks and Niagara region.

### **Social Media**

To ensure alignment across its corporate communications and consumer facing channels, pitches/releases/advisories written for the mainstream media will continue to be repurposed for Niagara Parks' social and digital channels, while visual and written content prepared for web and social are also used for Niagara Parks' corporate communications efforts.

Photography and video continue to be used whenever possible in media relations activities and in social media initiatives to enhance storytelling capabilities. Videos are posted on Niagara Parks' website and social media sites such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook, as well as shared directly with media using a cloud solution.



### **Speaking Opportunities**

Niagara Parks will continue to seek speaking opportunities for the Chair and CEO regarding Niagara Parks' role, contribution, goals and continued commitment to environmental and historic stewardship and preservation practices. Niagara Parks will continue to ensure potential speaking opportunities for Minister Lumsden are shared well in advance with the appropriate ministry contacts.

### **Niagara Parks Website**

Detailed information is posted on Niagara Parks' websites to ensure continued openness and transparency with the public. Niagara Parks will continue to enhance its current websites to promote Niagara Parks and increase visitation and sales while undertaking initial development steps for the launch of a new consumer website in 2025.

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