



Contract No. 82000030

Primary Treatment Renovation Project

Public Participation Plan

December 2023



GREELEY AND HANSEN

Table of Contents

Section 1 Introduction	1-1
1.1 Project Overview	1-1
1.2 Purpose of the Public Participation Plan	1-3
Section 2 Approach to the PPP	2-1
Section 3 Community Engagement Meetings.....	3-1
Section 4 Community Engagement Materials.....	4-1
Section 5 Document Repositories	5-1

List of Figures

Figure 1-1: Map of BSA's Primary Treatment Process	1-2
Figure 1-2. Primary Treatment Renovation Scope of Work	1-3
Figure 1-3. Work Zone Traffic Control Plan Along the Niagara Riverwalk during Repairs to Outfall 001	1-4
Figure 4-1. Standard Buffalo Sewer Tri-Fold Brochure	4-2
Figure 4-2. Future Rendering of the High-Rate Disinfection (HRD) Facility, to be used in presentation materials – public viewpoint from the Niagara Riverwalk, looking north	4-2
Figure 4-3. Future Rendering of the completed Primary Treatment Renovation project, to be used in presentation materials – aerial view of the new HRD Facility and Odor Control system (circled), north direction.....	4-3
Figure 4-4. Future Rendering of the completed Primary Treatment Renovation project, to be used in presentation materials – northwest aerial viewpoint from the Niagara River	4-3
Figure 4-5. Sample Construction Banner and Placement Location along Riverwalk	4-4
Figure 4-6. Sample Funding Banner and Placement Location at the North and South entrance gates of Bird Island WWTF.....	4-5

List of Tables

Table 3-1: Primary (Direct) Stakeholder Contact List.....	3-2
Table 3-2: Secondary (Indirect) Stakeholder Contact List.....	3-4
Table 5-1: In-person Document Repositories	5-1
Table 5-2: Online Document Repositories	5-1

List of Appendices

Appendix A: [Reserved for future Community Engagement meeting minutes, Stakeholder Meeting Summary Email, and In-Person Meeting Summary Emails]	
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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

As the City of Buffalo (City) developed and expanded, a sewer system was built to service the City and carry combined sewage to the Buffalo River, Scajaquada Creek, Black Rock Canal, and the Niagara River. The Buffalo Sewer Authority (Buffalo Sewer) was created in 1935 to address the increase in sewage from the City's growth that threatened the health of the receiving water bodies, downstream communities, and the surrounding environment. Buffalo Sewer provides wastewater service to a population of approximately 550,000. As part of this service, Buffalo Sewer owns and operates the Bird Island Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). The WWTF provides primary and secondary treatment, disinfection, and solids handling. The primary treatment system was constructed in 1935, and the secondary treatment system was constructed between 1970-1985. **Figure 1-1** is the site plan for the primary system. The existing primary system includes four Primary Sedimentation Tanks (PSTs), Sludge Pumping Station, Sodium Hypo Feed Building, and Outfall Structure 001.

The purpose of this Buffalo Sewer Authority Primary Treatment Renovation Project (Project) is to improve the existing primary treatment system and ensure capacity up to 160 MGD at the Bird Island WWTF in accordance with Buffalo Sewer Authority's NYSDEC-approved Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). The Bird Island WWTF primary treatment system includes four Primary Settling Tanks (PSTs), Sludge Pumping Station, and additional equipment. The project will also include construction and installation of an Odor Control System for the PSTs to address community concerns, and a new High-Rate Disinfection (HRD) pumping station and chlorine contact tank to improve water quality of effluent discharges through a repaired Outfall 001 during partial treatment mode.

The Primary Treatment Renovation design, with the scope as shown in **Figure 1-2**, has been defined and is near completion. NYSDEC approved the Engineering Report for this project in June 2023.

The construction contract is expected to be advertised for bid in Q1 of 2024. Construction is expected to last for a period of up to five years.

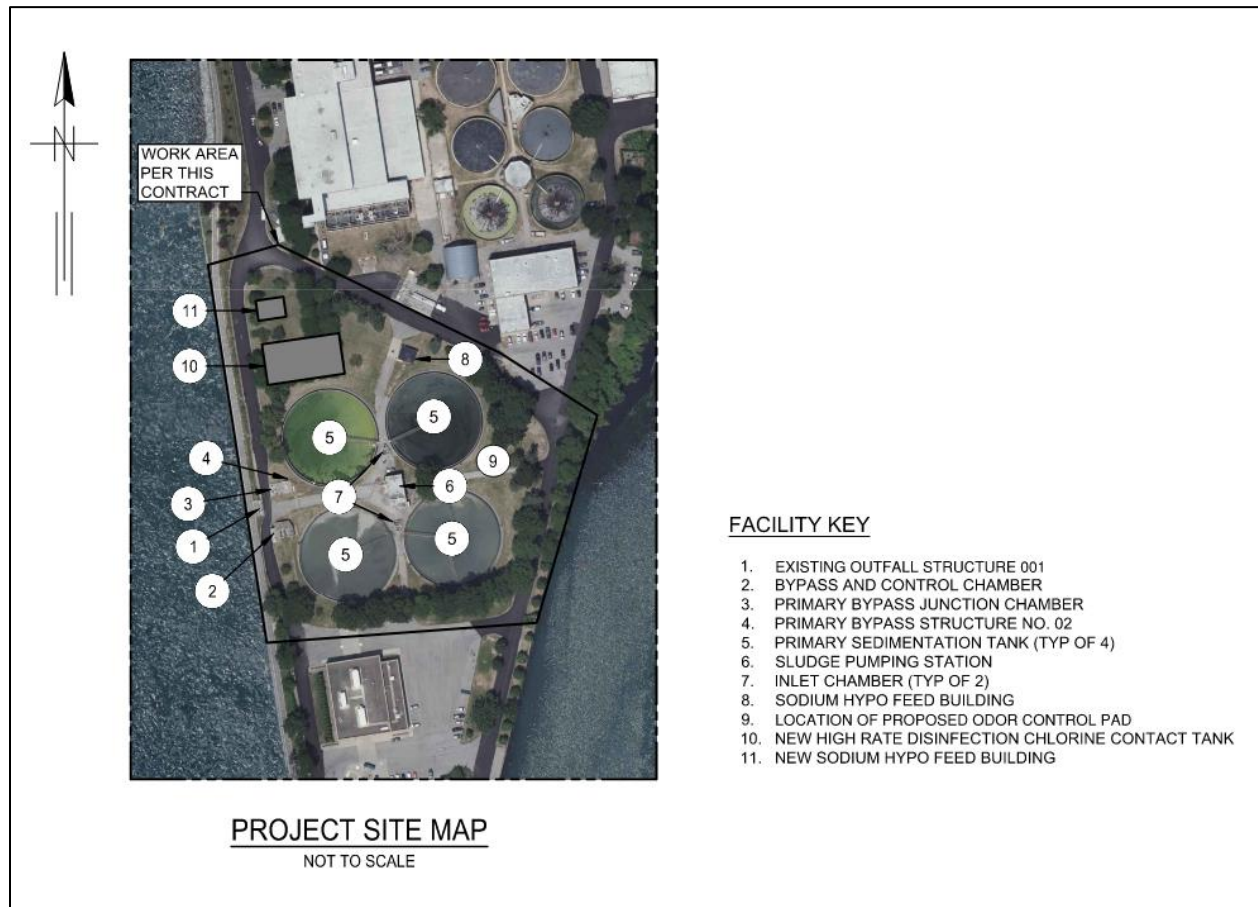


Figure 1-1: Map of BSA's Primary Treatment Process

PRIMARY SYSTEM REHABILITATION AND UPGRADES PROJECT OVERVIEW



Figure 1-2. Primary Treatment Renovation Scope of Work

1.2 Purpose of the Public Participation Plan

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan (PPP, Plan) is to document the mechanisms by which the Buffalo Sewer Authority will disseminate information about the project to the public while seeking meaningful feedback from community members and to facilitate a stronger public understanding of needed investments in water infrastructure. Community engagement efforts for this project will be focused in two areas: a series of public meetings with stakeholders, and development and dissemination of public information materials.

The key elements of this Project to be communicated include the following:

- Protect Public Health and the Environment; Improved Water Quality for the Niagara River
- Compliance with Regulatory Requirements to Achieve LTCP Goals.
- Modernizing the Treatment Facility with necessary upgrades.
- Implementing an Odor Control system for the Primary Settling Tanks, which has been a frequent request of the local community.
- Commitment to Economic Growth: Supplier Diversity and Local Workforce

- The project will include repair of Outfall 001, requiring a temporary closure of a portion of the Riverwalk that runs along the Bird Island WWTF. The current timeline is 6-8 months over a period between 2026-2027. A Work Zone Traffic Control Plan (**Error! Reference source not found.**) has been developed to detour pedestrians and cyclists along Niagara Street between Freedom Park (formerly Broderick Park) and Unity Island Park. Neither park will experience any closures.

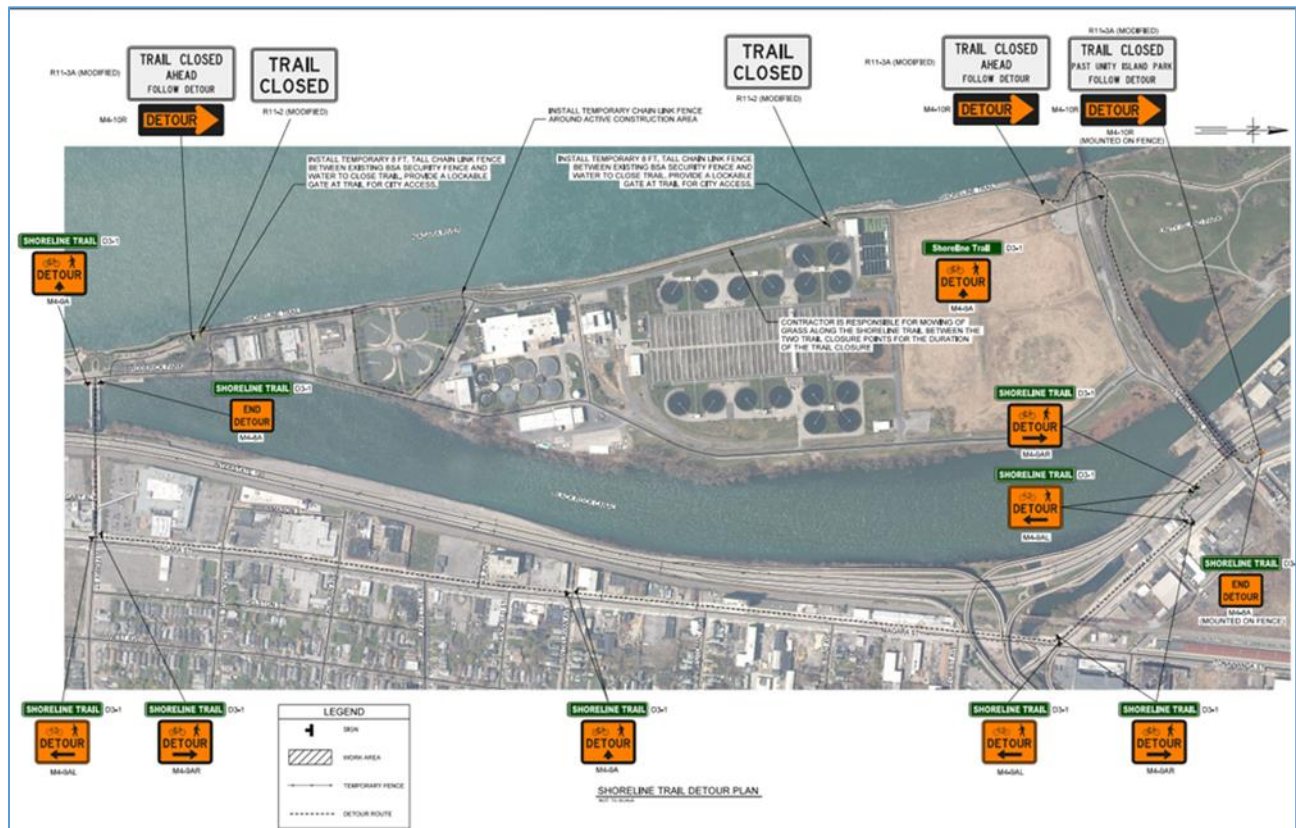


Figure 1-3. Work Zone Traffic Control Plan Along the Niagara Riverwalk during Repairs to Outfall 001

Section 2 Approach to the PPP

The approach in the development of the PPP consists of the following:

- Identifying stakeholders affected by the project, accounting for particular consideration to public participation efforts in potential environmental justice areas and achieving the desired equitable outcomes, since these communities (often minority or low-income populations) have been historically absent from the public participation process;
- Identifying methods of distributing written information and conducting public information meetings on the Primary Treatment Renovation project and the environmental permit review process, including opportunities for public input towards the project;
- Identifying easily accessible document repositories for the community, including near the project and environmental justice areas.

This PPP is a living document. Future reports will summarize progress to-date in implementing the plan, including: meeting minutes, substantive public concerns raised to-date, resolved and outstanding issues, components of the plan yet to be implemented and an expected time line for completion of the plan.

Upon completion of the activities related to the PPP for this project the Buffalo Sewer Authority will submit written certification documenting compliance with the plan, including an updated final report detailing the specific activities that occurred pursuant to the plan.



Section 3 Community Engagement Meetings

Traditionally, Buffalo Sewer has targeted community engagement efforts to the City Buffalo Common Council District the project is located within. The Bird Island WWTF is located within the **Niagara District**. The facility also immediately borders the **North District** (to the north).

A variety of meetings are proposed to provide ample opportunity to relay information about the project to community members and stakeholders, and to solicit questions and feedback on the proposed work and its impact to the surrounding neighborhood. These meetings:

- Will be scheduled after consulting with community leaders, local organizations, municipal and school officials, and other stakeholders in setting a meeting date. Meetings will be scheduled to avoid important meetings or events that are regularly held or already scheduled within the community;
- Will be held at a time when working people can attend, and not conflict with national or religious holidays or locally important observances; and
- Will be held in a location that is familiar to residents and community members (i.e. municipal hall, school, fire station or library), is easily accessible to people with disabilities and to public transportation, and has ample work space and parking. The Authority will consult with community leaders, organizations, municipal and school officials, and other stakeholders will be able to help identify an appropriate location for the meeting.

The following types of meetings will be scheduled:

- Meeting with Common Council Members – traditionally BSA has held a meeting in their office on the 10th floor of City Hall to meet individually with Common Council Members to explain the project and review the design plans. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the Council Member and/or their staff with information before the public engagement begins so that they are prepared to respond to community questions and may also assist in proactively sharing project information through their public communications.
- Stakeholder-Specific Meetings – these will be small meetings to discuss the project one-on-one with specific stakeholders in the neighborhood. For example, a stakeholder meeting with business along Niagara Street to listen to their concerns on how the proposed project would impact their business.
- Community Group Meetings – many neighborhoods and parks in Buffalo have established community groups and block clubs with routine meeting schedules. Examples of nearby community groups include: Friends of Freedom Park, Friends of Unity Island Park, Black Rock Riverside Alliance, and Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper. Buffalo Sewer will reach out to these groups to request an opportunity to present the project and solicit feedback from these stakeholders.
- Scheduled District Meetings – similar to the community group and block club meetings, many Council Members hold routine meetings within their Common Council District. Buffalo Sewer will reach out to the Council Member's staff to request an opportunity to present the project and solicit feedback from the constituents that attend these meetings.
- Virtual Meetings – for those that are unable to attend one of the in-person meetings discussed above, Buffalo Sewer wants to offer a virtual meeting opportunity, through a Teams or Zoom

platform, to ensure that everyone who wants to hear about the project and provide feedback is provided an opportunity.

- **Open House Informational Session:** to be scheduled prior to construction bid advertisement, the objective of this meeting is to spread awareness to interested prime contractors and DBE/MBE/WBE subcontractors in the area, and to encourage companies to network with each other and develop their teams prior to the advertisement being posted.

The primary stakeholder contact list is shown in **Table 3-1**. The contact list identifies organizations with a direct stake or interest in the Primary Treatment Renovation project, including:

- residents/neighborhood groups who are near or adjacent to the proposed project and that will be or potentially will be affected by the operation. This includes a sizable *New American* immigrant and refugee population based in the North and Niagara district areas;
- community boards, community leaders, local community, civic and recreational organizations, environmental and business groups.
- people who have expressed an interest in similar projects or in projects affecting the same neighborhood or community;
- neighborhood religious establishments; and
- elected officials who live in and/or represent the community of concern.

Table 3-1: Primary (Direct) Stakeholder Contact List	
Assembly Of Christian Church 211 Ontario St, Buffalo NY (716) 883-1120	Ontario Street United Methodist Church 179 Ontario St, Buffalo NY (716) 875-3639
Black Rock Riverside Alliance 52 Amherst St, Buffalo, NY 14207 (716) 322-6602 https://brralliance.org/index.php/contact/ https://brralliance.org/	Our Lady of Hope Parish 18 Greenwood Place, Buffalo, NY 14213 (716) 885-2469 https://www.ourladyofhopewny.org/
Buffalo Myanmar Indigenous Christian Fellowship Church 410 East St, Buffalo, NY 14207 (716) 885-5911	People for United Sustainable Housing (PUSH Buffalo) 429 Plymouth Ave Suite 1, Buffalo, NY 14213 (716) 884-0356 https://www.pushbuffalo.org/
Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper 721 Main St, Buffalo, NY 14203 716.852.7483 info@bnwaterkeeper.org https://bnwaterkeeper.org/	Rehoboth Ministries Worship 1020 Grant St, Buffalo, NY 14207 (716) 874-4393
Clean Air Coalition of WNY 371 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14202 (716) 852-3813 info@cacwny.org https://www.cacwny.org/	Riverside Baptist Church 346 Ontario St, Buffalo, NY (716) 876-3994

City Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets (DPW) 65 Niagara Square, Room 502, Buffalo, NY 14202 716-851-5636 https://www.buffalony.gov/312/Department-of-Public-Works-Parks-Streets	Riverside Park Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy 84 Parkside Ave. Buffalo, NY 14214 716-838-1249 https://www.bfloparks.org/parks/riverside-park/
El Batey Puerto Rican Center 175 Rano St, Buffalo, NY 14207 Phone: (716) 348-0156 https://elbateyprcenter.business.site/?m=true	Sāsanasukha Buddhist Temple 861 Military Rd, Buffalo, NY 14217
Friends of Freedom Park (formerly Broderick Park) 1170 Niagara Street, Buffalo, NY 14213 (716) 851-5553 https://friendsofbroderickpark.com/	Shwe Min Won Myanmar Monastery 356 Plymouth Ave, Buffalo, NY 14213 716-777-3925
Friends of Unity Island Park friendsofunityisland@gmail.com https://brralliance.org/index.php/friends-of-unity-island/	Vision Niagara Vision Niagara A Vision for Niagara Street: Where We Love to Live, Work, and Play https://visionniagara.org/info@visionniagara.org
International Institute of Buffalo 864 Delaware Avenue Buffalo, New York 14209 (716) 883-1900 https://iibuffalo.org/	West Side Bazaar https://www.wedibuffalo.org/ 436 Grant Street Buffalo, NY 14213 716.393.4088 info@wedibuffalo.org
Jericho Road Community Health Center 184 Barton Street Buffalo, NY 14213 716-348-3000 contact@jrhc.org https://jrhc.org/	Believe in Black Rock believeinblackrock@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/BelieveinBR/
Council Member David A. Rivera – Niagara District 65 Niagara Sq., Rm. 1504 Buffalo, NY 14202 (716) 851 – 5125 darivera@city-buffalo.com https://www.buffalony.gov/1133/David-A-Rivera	
Council Member Joseph Golombek, Jr. – North District 65 Niagara Sq., Rm. 1502 Buffalo, NY 14202 (716) 851-5116 NORTH2@buffalony.gov https://www.buffalony.gov/1155/Joseph-Golombek-Jr	



Along with the primary contact list of actual stakeholders (above), a secondary contact list is provided in **Table 3-2** for those with overall potential project interests.

Table 3-2: Secondary (Indirect) Stakeholder Contact List	
Buffalo Rocket Community News 9195 Main Street Clarence, New York 14031 (716) 632-0808 buffalorocket@gmail.com http://buffalorocket.com/	Int'l Peace Bridge authority Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority 716-843-8521 https://www.peacebridge.com/
Challenger Community News 1337 Jefferson Ave, Buffalo, NY 14208 (716) 881-1051 https://issuu.com/challengercommunitynews	NYS Regional Citizen Participation Specialist Region 9 - Regional Director 270 Michigan Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14203-2999 Phone: (716) 851-7200
Local Burmese community newsletters	Regional Citizen Participation Specialist Phone (716) 851- 7201

The contact list will be updated regularly to include new stakeholders.

The approach to these community and stakeholder meetings will follow the following format and practices:

- Publicize meeting logistics as early as possible to give stakeholders ample notification.
- The notification for the public meetings will include:
 - the name of the project owner (Buffalo Sewer);
 - the name and address of the proposed project;
 - the description of why the meeting is being held;
 - the time and place of the public meeting;
 - a short description of why the public should attend;
 - a short description about how the public can participate, the type of input sought, whether there will be a question-and-answer period;
 - a brief description about the information that will be discussed; and
 - contact information for any questions about meeting.
- Notify the community and other stakeholders at least three (3) weeks before a meeting is to take place.
- At the beginning of the meeting, review the agenda and invite attendees to set and agree to meeting ground rules. Let the attendees know how they can participate and allow for comment/question periods both during and at the conclusion of the meeting as time allows. Also, let the attendees know where they can obtain answers to questions they may have after the meeting has concluded.
- Encourage dialogue during the meeting. Avoid one-sided meetings where either the project sponsor does all of the talking or where the stakeholders read a prepared statement with no feedback from the project sponsor. Explore a variety of meeting formats that incorporate small group discussions between the project sponsor's staff and stakeholders. The use of a neutral facilitator or meeting planner can help the project sponsor tailor the public meeting to best suit the

circumstances. For more in-depth discussion of the project, consider meeting with individuals or small groups at their convenience.



Section 4 Community Engagement Materials

In addition to, and in support of, the proposed community engagement meetings, the following materials will be developed to help further explain the project details to community members, the impact the proposed work will have on their neighborhood during construction, and the positive benefits to the community and environment of the work Buffalo Sewer is undertaking.

- Brochures – BSA has a standard tri-fold brochure that has been used on past projects to disseminate information to residents and businesses in the adjacent area (see sample in Figure 1). Brochures are typically hand-delivered door-to-door by BSA staff members. The brochures will be made available at community meetings, document repository locations, and will also be made available electronically to interested parties for posting on websites or electronic distribution.
- PowerPoint Presentations – in support of the community engagement meetings, a standard PowerPoint presentation has been developed that includes an overview of the project and why it is being completed, a map of all the project site, a summary of construction disturbances, a slide depicting work zone traffic control for detours during the Riverwalk closure, and before and after photo renderings. The presentation can then be modified or adjusted as needed for District-specific meetings.
- Local Publication Notices – Common Council Members and local community groups and block clubs typically have routine emails that are distributed amongst their constituents and members. Buffalo Sewer will reach out to these groups for opportunities to include a small description of the proposed work and/or information about public meeting opportunities, as these emails can reach a wide audience. In addition, BSA will include similar information in local newspaper publications, such as The Challenger Community News and Buffalo Rocket Community News.
- Website Postings – the applicable notices, brochures, and PowerPoint presentations, along with periodic updates on construction progress, will be posted on the Buffalo Sewer Authority website to make this information available to the public any time. In addition, this information will be shared with Common Council Members and local community groups and block clubs for posting on their websites as well.
- Construction Fencing Wraps / Signage – BSA developed a fencing wrap that was recently used on the Broadway at Oak RTC project (see Figure 2). The purpose of the wrap is to convey the overall project benefits to the community while, at the same time, shielding the community from the “mess” of construction. BSA intends to utilize a similar wrap on this project, as well as future RTC projects. BSA is also considering additional signage at the project site that could be translated into the language of the neighboring community to better convey their message.

These materials will be provided in the English language and translated for non-English speaking stakeholders and will highlight important points of the project. The materials will also inform the reader as to where they can obtain further detailed information on the project (i.e. website, document repository location, Buffalo Sewer staff contact information, etc.).



Figure 4-1. Standard Buffalo Sewer Tri-Fold Brochure



Figure 4-2. Future Rendering of the High-Rate Disinfection (HRD) Facility, to be used in presentation materials – public viewpoint from the Niagara Riverwalk, looking north



Figure 4-3. Future Rendering of the completed Primary Treatment Renovation project, to be used in presentation materials – aerial view of the new HRD Facility and Odor Control system (circled), north direction



Figure 4-4. Future Rendering of the completed Primary Treatment Renovation project, to be used in presentation materials – northwest aerial viewpoint from the Niagara River



Figure 4-5. Sample Construction Banner and Placement Location along Riverwalk

SIGN NO. 2 - NYSDEC WQIP SIGN AT NORTH AND SOUTH SECURITY GATES

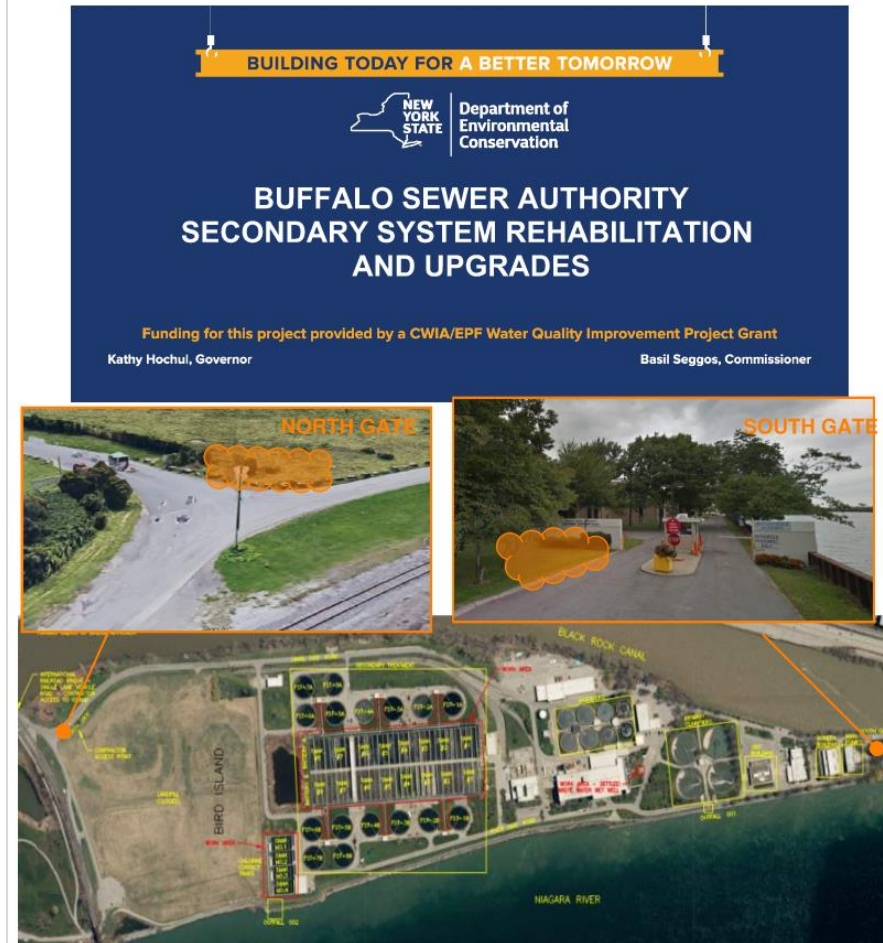


Figure 4-6. Sample Funding Banner and Placement Location at the North and South entrance gates of Bird Island WWTF

Section 5 Document Repositories

Document repositories – location points for the public to access written project information and subsequent updates to that information – have been identified as public facilities easily accessible by stakeholders and close to the Project site. The repository will contain a copies of information relevant to the proposed project and will be updated regularly. Repositories shall be checked regularly to ensure that there are sufficient quantities of copies available, and no information is missing.

Table 5-1: In-person Document Repositories

Facility	Address	Proximity to Project Site
Freedom Park (formerly Broderick Park)	1170 Niagara St, Buffalo, NY 14213	0.5 mile
Unity Island Park	Unity Island Park Buffalo, NY 14207	0.8 mile
BR Riverside Alliance	52 Amherst St. Buffalo, NY 14207	1.8 miles
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library – Isaias Gonzalez-Soto Branch	280 Porter Ave, Buffalo, NY 14201	1.8 miles
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library - Crane Branch	633 Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY 14222	1.9 miles
Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper Riverkeeper	721 Main St, Buffalo, NY 14203	2.9 miles
Riverside Park	Riverside Park Buffalo, NY 14207	3.2 miles
Central Library (Downtown Buffalo)	1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo, NY 14203	3.3 miles
Common Council Offices – North District and Niagara District	North District 65 Niagara Sq., Rm. 1502 Buffalo, NY 14202 Niagara District 65 Niagara Sq., Rm. 1504 Buffalo, NY 14202	3.3 miles

Table 5-2: Online Document Repositories

Buffalo Sewer Authority website	https://buffalosewer.org/construction-projects/ https://buffalosewer.org/construction-projects/wet-weather-capacity-project/
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Appendix A: *[Reserved for future Community Engagement meeting minutes, Stakeholder Meeting Summary Email, and In-Person Meeting Summary Emails]*

