

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation | University at Buffalo Regional Institute

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Inc.

11 February 2019

First Community Workshop - 17 January 2019



What We Heard

Events

- More and larger events (arts, culinary, local business, etc.)
- Improve quality and increase number of flexible event spaces.

Passive Uses

- Capture and diversify lake views with topography, planting, and furnishings.
- Design spaces specifically for family use.
- Offer flexible spaces for year-round passive use.

Athletics

- Upgrade sports fields.
- Incorporate additional sports that are important to local cultural communities.
- Expand and improve running and biking routes.
- Introduce winter recreation opportunities.

Play

- Create a signature accessible playground unique to the Buffalo area.
- Incorporate safe, innovative, and interesting play opportunities for all age ranges (including teens and adults), particularly interactive water play elements.
- More swings!

What We Heard

Food

- Include food venues that operate on weekday evenings and weekends year-round.
- Food options should be affordable, varied and local.
- Offer space for food trucks and festivals.

Planting

- Introduce planting that is colorful, varied, and native.
- Plant more trees!
- Integrate the park into broader ecological efforts and create wildlife habitat.

Water Access

- Provide both active and passive opportunities to interact with the water.
- Address concerns about water quality and contamination.

Entrances

- Make current entrances welcoming and add more park access points.
- Provide wayfinding signage.
- Make entrances more bike and pedestrian friendly.

What We Heard

Parking

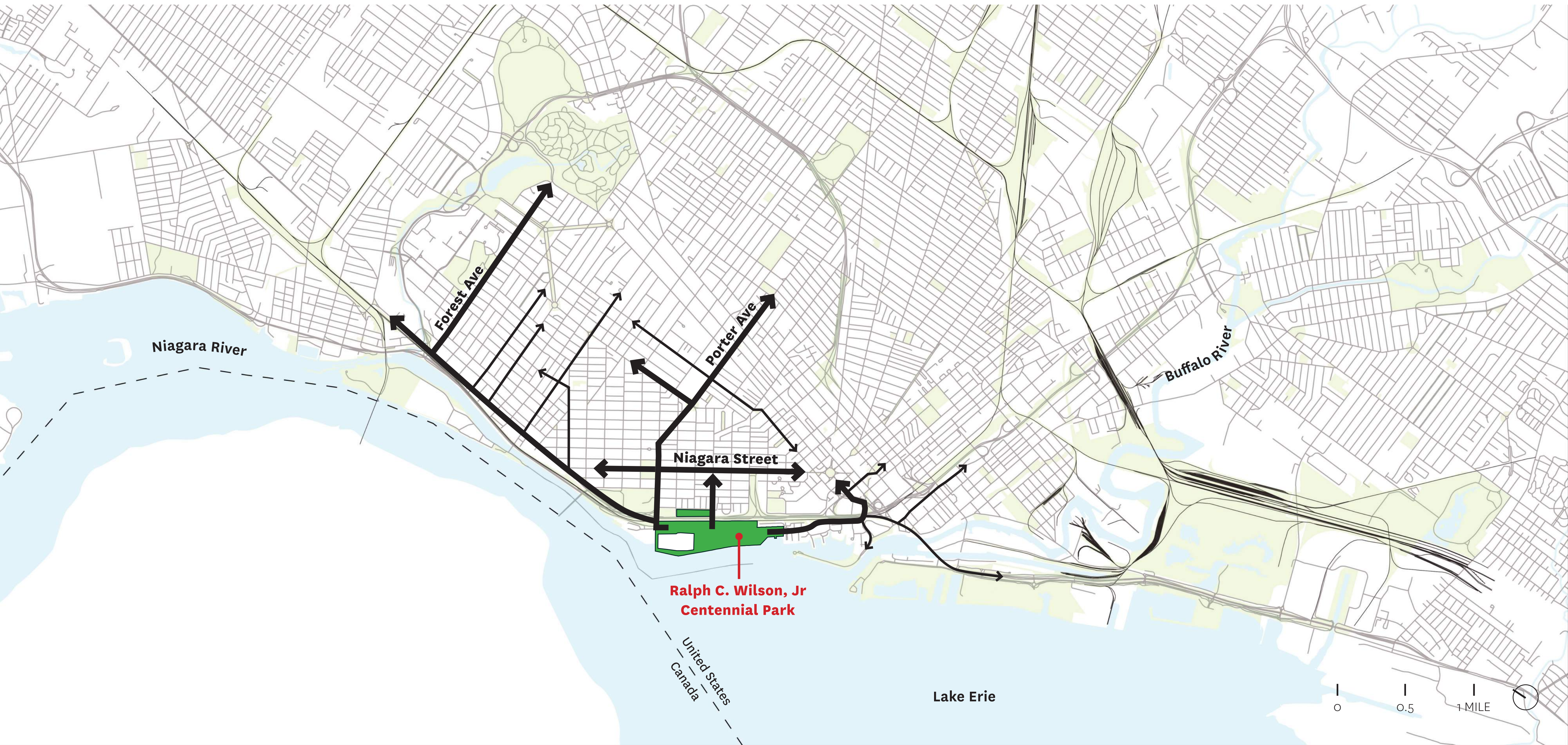
- Provide parking near activities to increase accessibility.
- Create parking areas that can support large events.
- Balance the amount of parking at the water's edge with passive and recreational spaces.
- Add bike parking.

Also

- Incorporate opportunities for youth education.
- Provide opportunities for workforce training during construction and operation.
- Incorporate locally-operated businesses into permanent and event-based park programming.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park is a Regional Asset

Connect Park Circulation to the Larger Regional Network



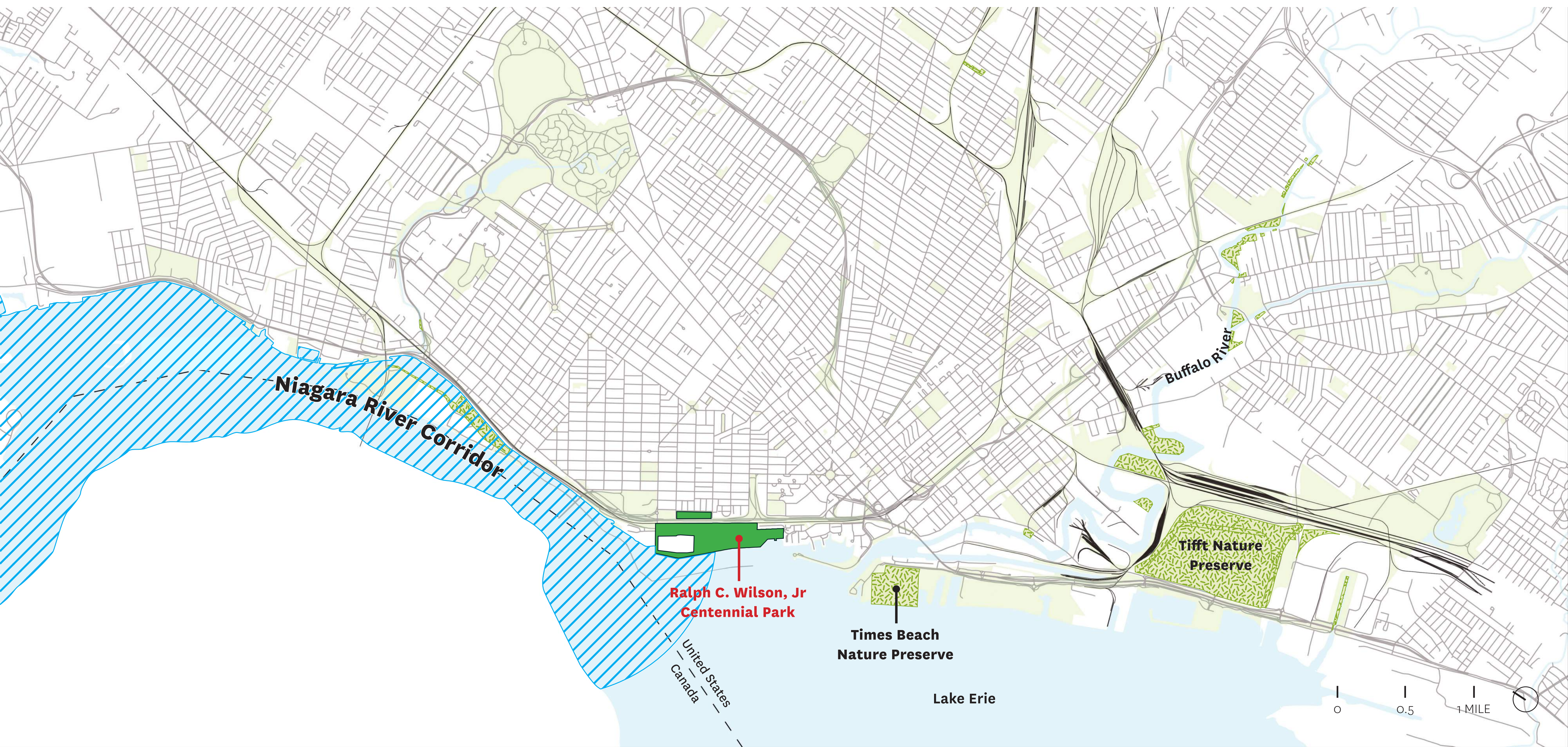
Give the Park its Own Identity



Access to the Waterfront



Build on the Regional Ecological Assets



Build Connections to Regional Cultural Assets



Albright-Knox
Art Gallery

Art



BUFFALO NIAGARA
WATERKEEPER®

Education

BUFFALO AUDUBON
— SOCIETY —



Food

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.
Centennial Park

Dogs



Events



Athletics

West Side Little League



Initial Design Goals for Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

1. Build on the Strengths of LaSalle Park

Use strategic interventions to develop Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park into a world class park.

Strengths of LaSalle Park



Legend:

- ➡ Lake Views
- Active Recreation
- Project Boundary
- - - Additional Study Area

0 250 500 FT

Breathtaking Views of Lake Erie



Active and Passive Uses



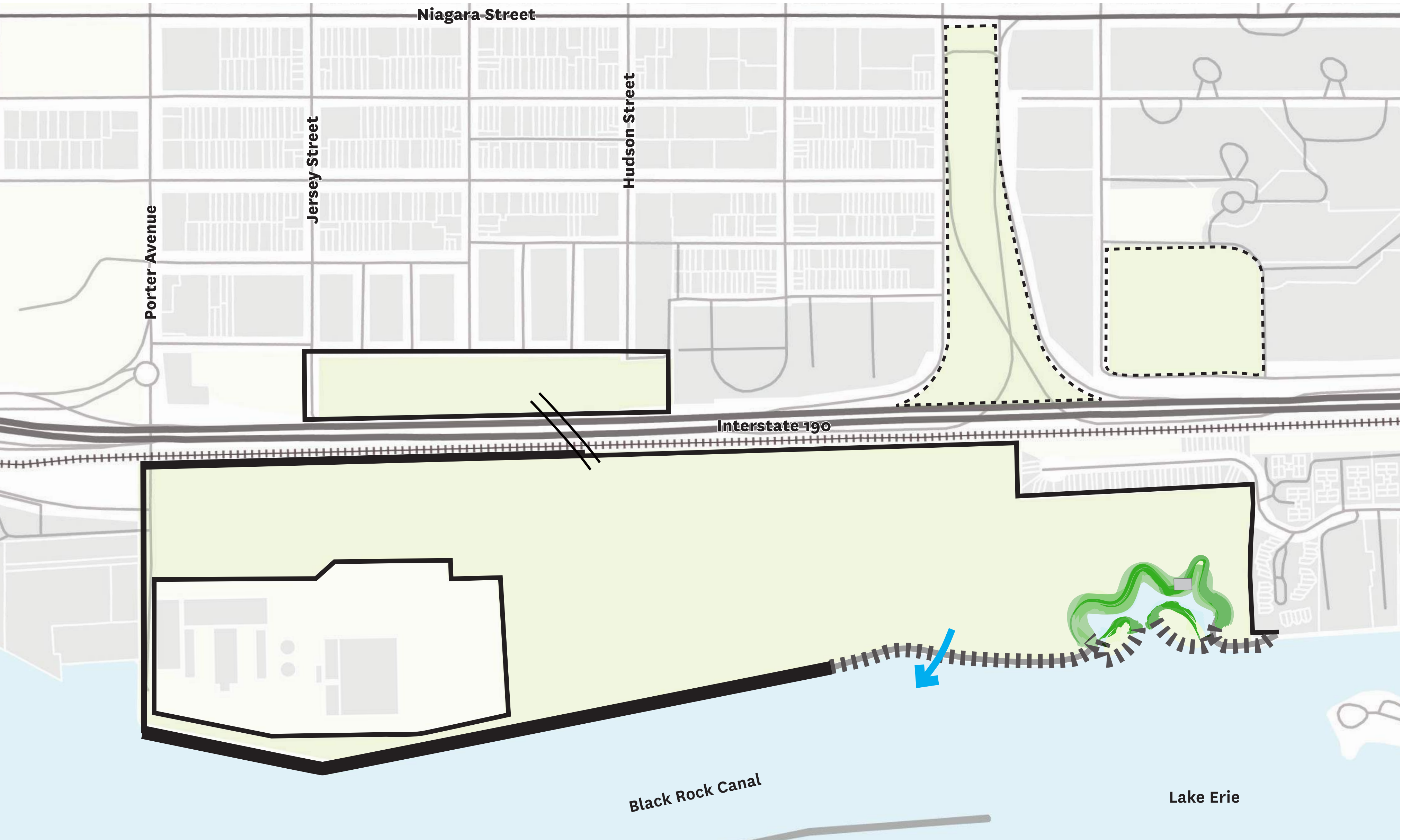
2. Engage the Waterfront.

Integrate a mix of hard and soft edges along the waterfront that reveal daily and seasonal water level changes and provide opportunities for the community to interact with the water in diverse ways.

Existing Waterfront Edge



Proposed Waterfront Edge



Legend:

- Seawall Edge
- Rocky Edge
- Soft Edge
- Boating Access
- Seaplane Ramp
- Project Boundary
- Additional Study Area

0 250 500 FT

Examples of Waterfront Edges



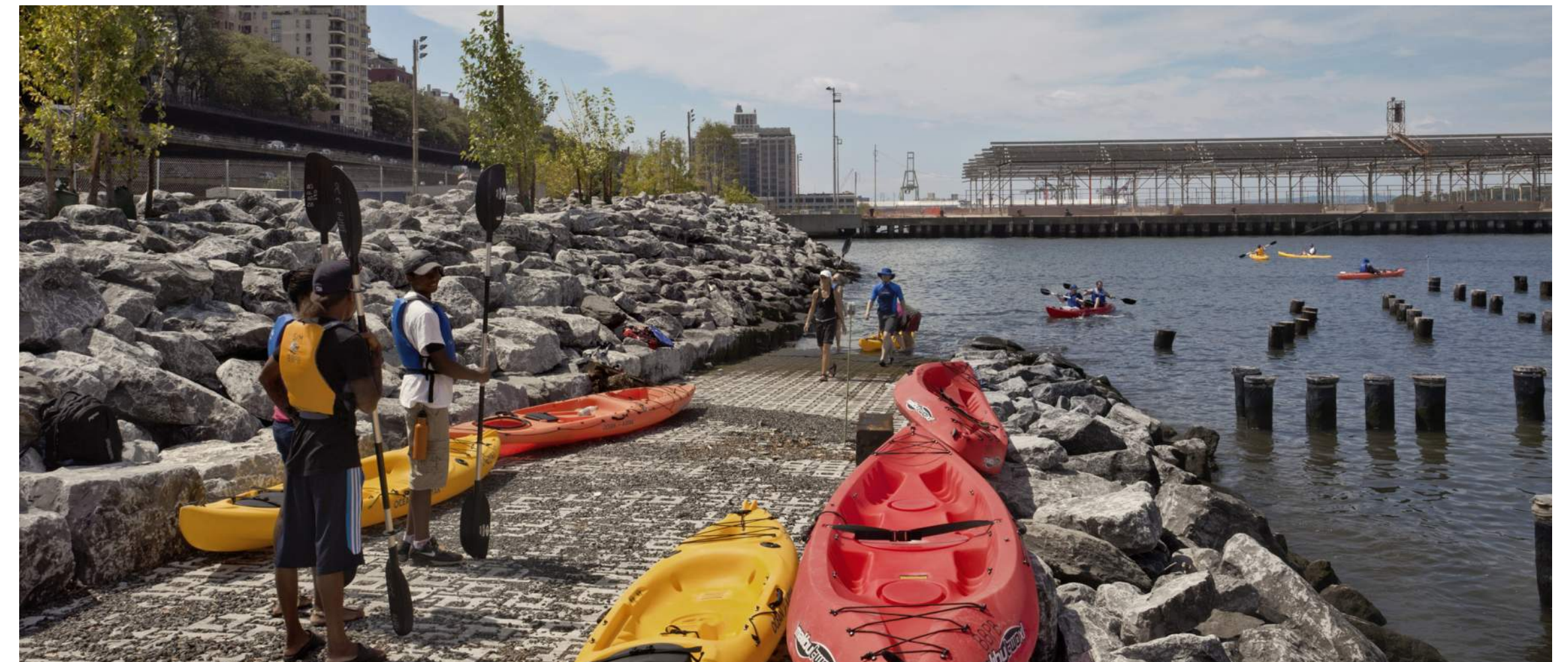
Seawall



Soft Edge



Rocky Edge



Water **Access**

Opportunities to Interact with the Water



Park Elements that Encourage Education



3. Add Topography and Planting.

Introduce topography and planting to articulate spaces, hide and reveal views, block undesired sounds and sights, add rhythm and complexity to circulation network, display seasonality, and provide protection from elements.

Existing



Proposed Topography and Planting



Legend:

- Valley
- Hills
- Project Boundary
- Additional Study Area

0 250 500 FT

Proposed Topography and Planting



Valley

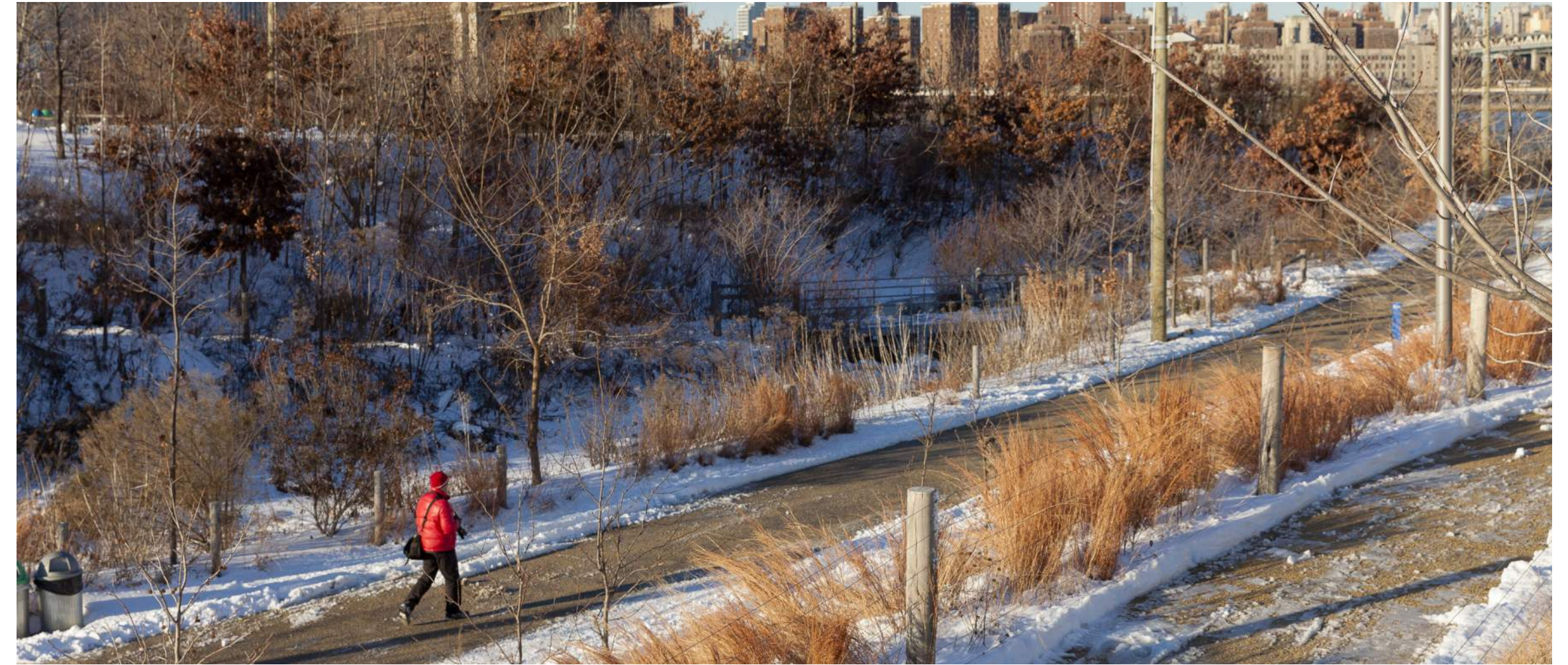


Hills

Diversify Lake Views



Framed View



Hidden View



Close View



Elevated View

Sun - Wind - Noise



Improve Flexible Event Spaces



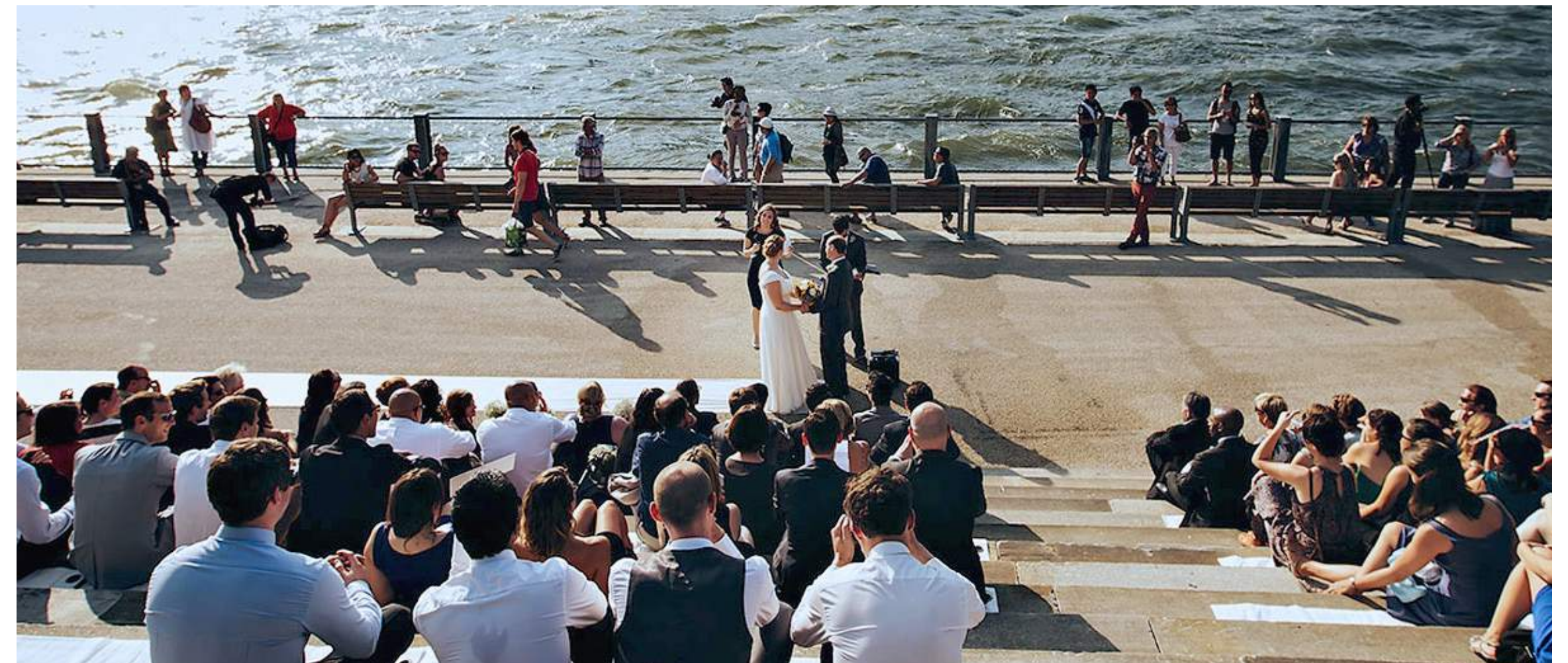
Large Gatherings



Small Events

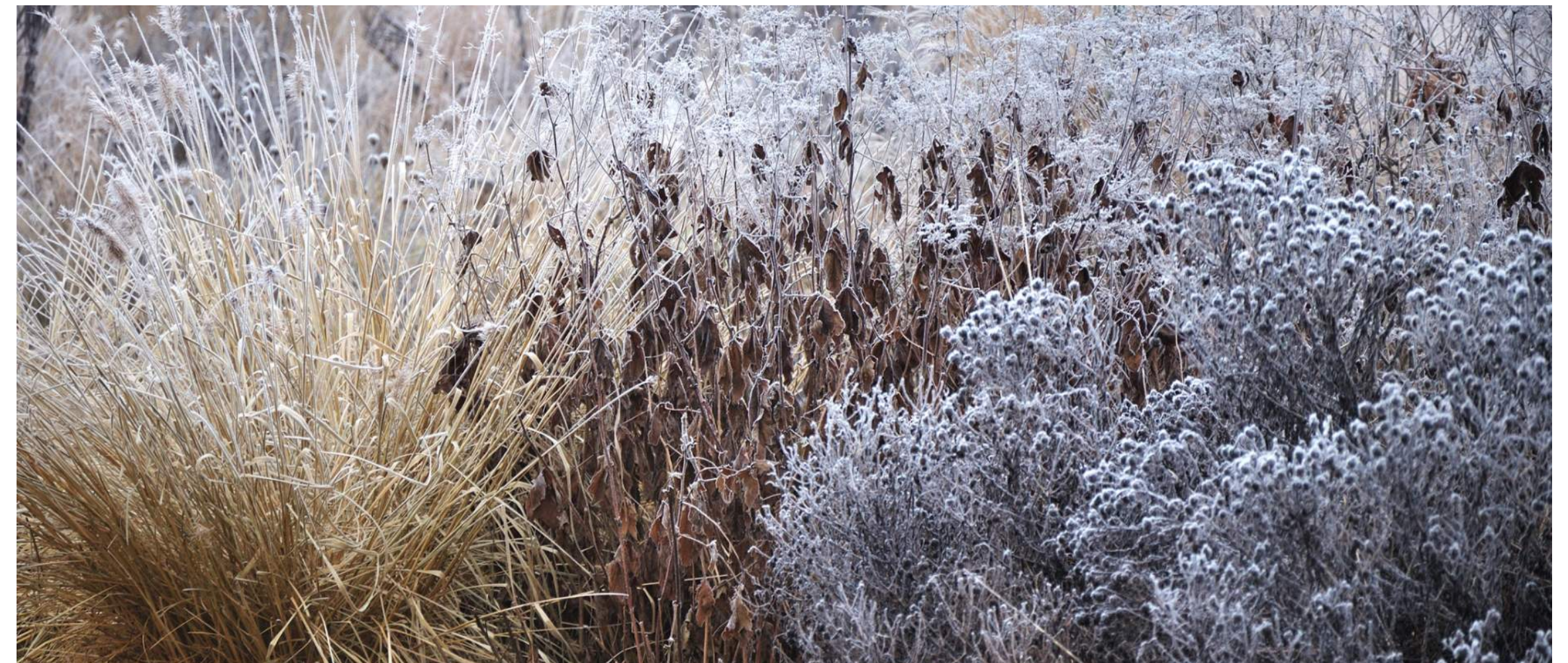
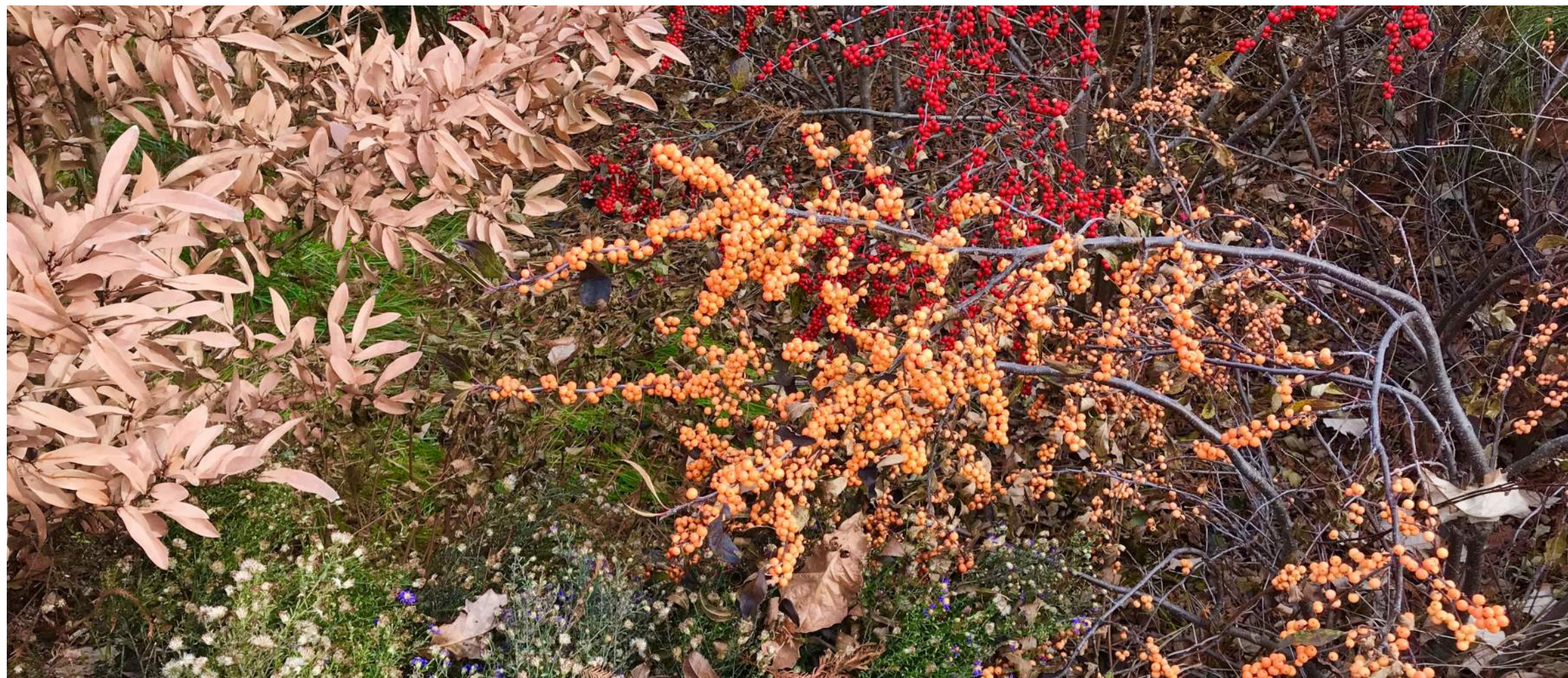


Temporary Uses



Intimate Happenings

Introduce Plantings that are Colorful, Varied, & Native



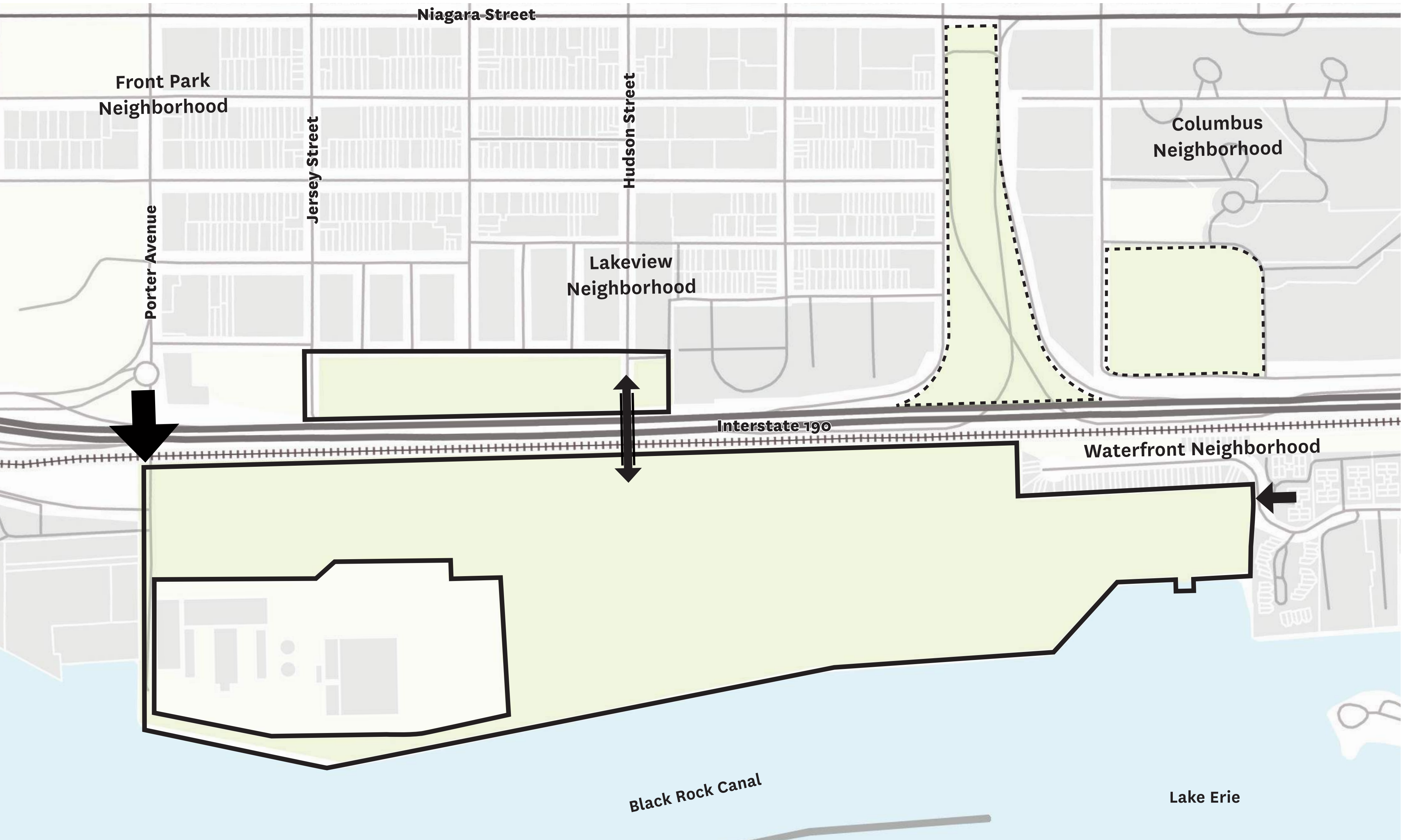
4. Improve Park Circulation and Strengthen Neighborhood Connections.

Provide safe, welcoming, and accessible entrances to the park to facilitate arrival from surrounding neighborhoods. Establish a hierarchical circulation network that allows visitors to move and experience the park in unique ways.

Existing Pedestrian Bridge at Hudson Street



Existing Neighborhood Connections

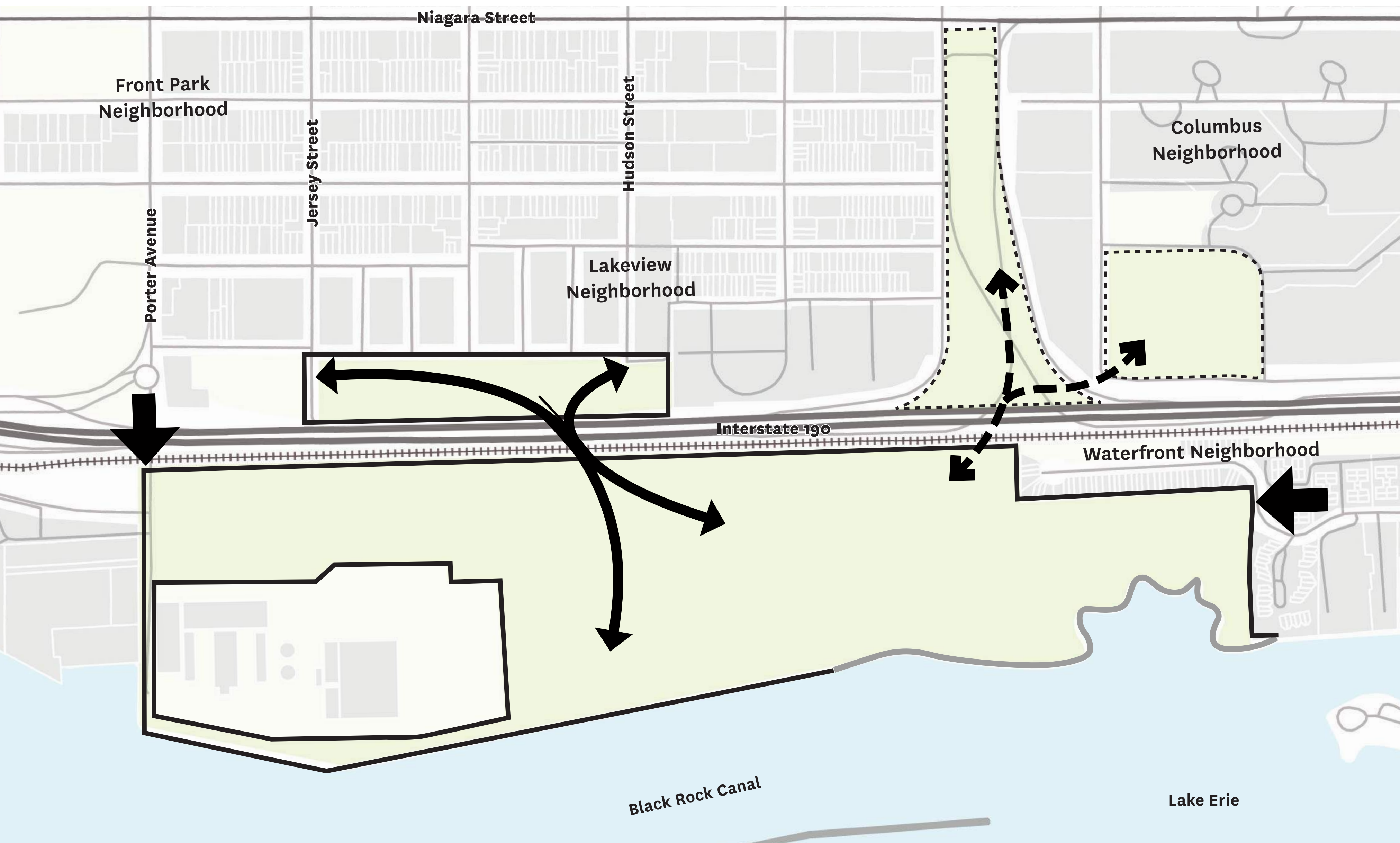


Legend:

- ➔ Neighborhood Connections
- Project Boundary
- - - Additional Study Area

0 250 500 FT

Proposed Neighborhood Connections

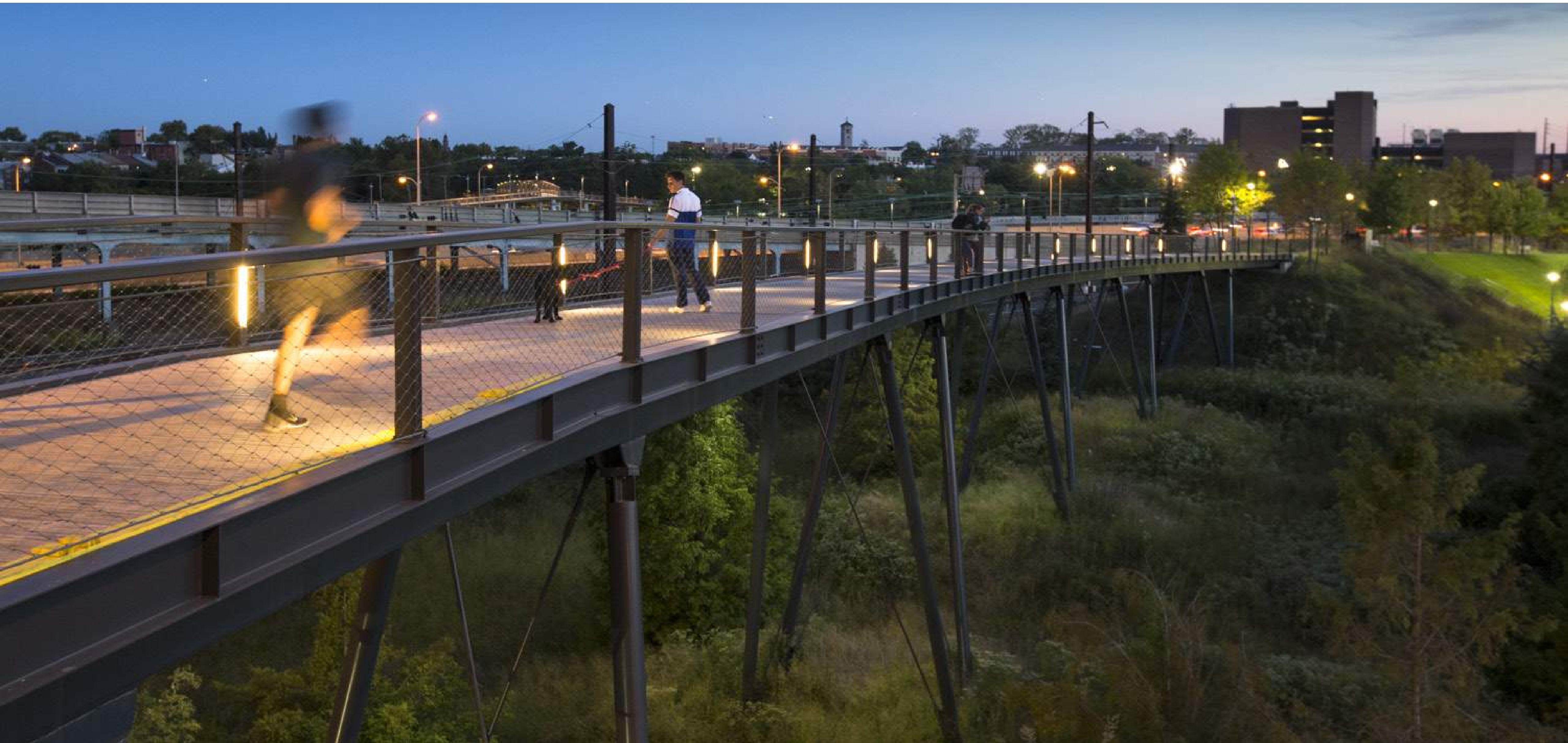


Legend:

-  Neighborhood Connections
-  Future Neighborhood Connections
-  Project Boundary
-  Additional Study Area



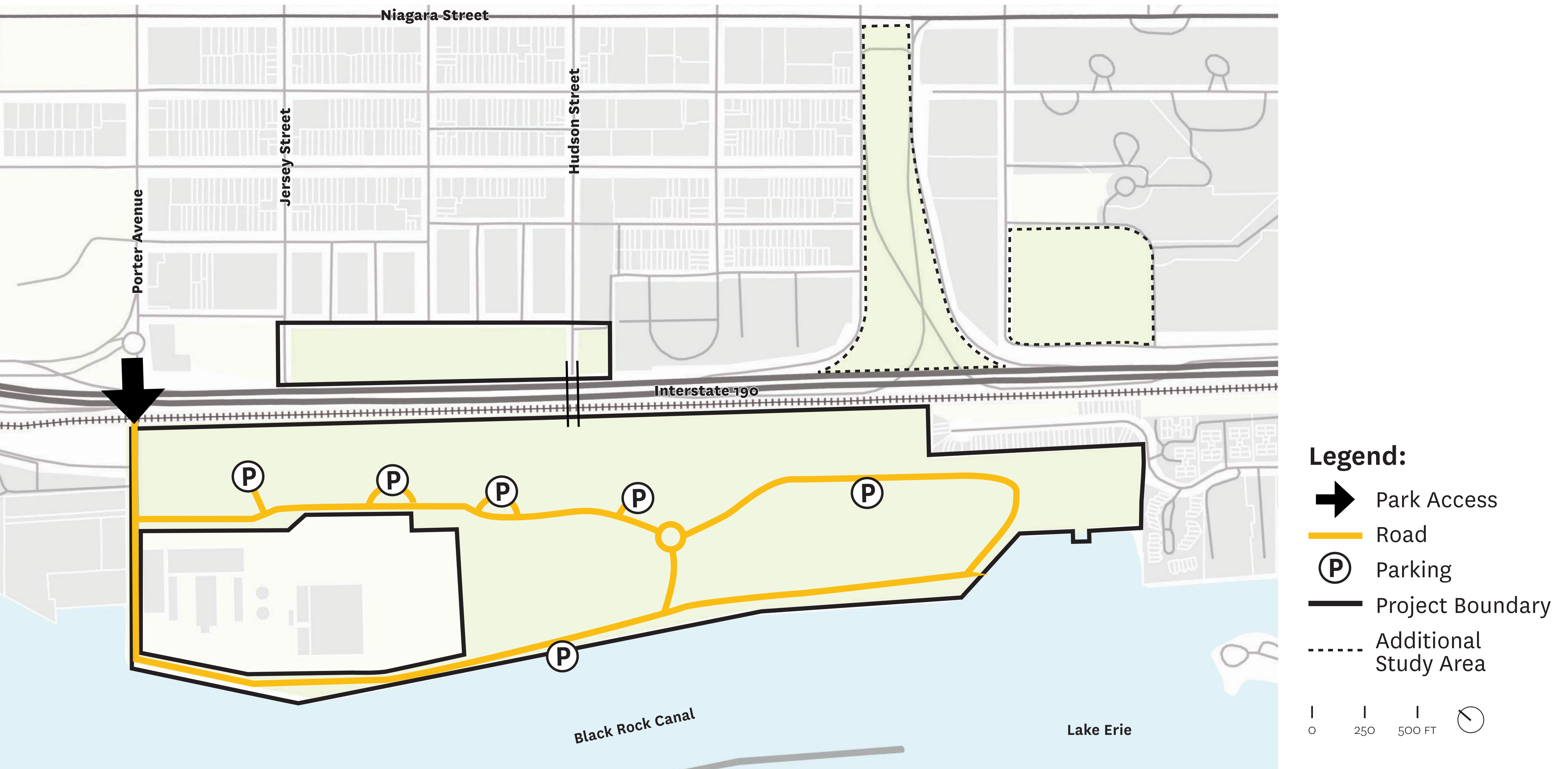
Make Entrances Bike & Pedestrian Friendly



Existing Roads and Parking



Existing Park Circulation - Vehicular + Parking



Proposed Park Circulation - Vehicular + Parking



Parking Near Activities



Accommodate Food Trucks and Food Festivals



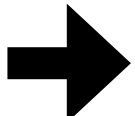





Existing Bike and Pedestrian Circulation



Existing Park Circulation - Cycle + Pedestrian



Legend:

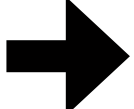





-  Park Access
-  Bike and Pedestrian
-  Bike and Pedestrian on Road
-  Pedestrian
-  Project Boundary
-  Additional Study Area



Proposed Park Circulation - Cycle + Pedestrian



Legend:

-  Park Access
-  Bike and Pedestrian
-  Potential Bike and Pedestrian Connection
-  Pedestrian
-  Project Boundary
-  Additional Study Area



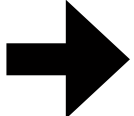








Expand Running & Biking Routes



Proposed Park Circulation



Legend:

-  Park Access
-  Bike and Pedestrian
-  Potential Bike and Pedestrian Connection
-  Pedestrian
-  Road
-  Potential Road Connection
-  Parking
-  Project Boundary
-  Additional Study Area



Proposed Neighborhood Connections and Park Circulation



Vehicular Circulation and **Parking**



Bike and **Pedestrian** Circulation



Bike Parking



Pedestrian Circulation

5. A Place that is Diverse and Welcoming Year-round.

Orchestrate an ensemble of diverse and flexible spaces that provide opportunities for active recreation, passive uses, and temporary occupation throughout the year for Buffalonians of all backgrounds and age ranges.

Existing Program



Legend:

- Passive
- Active/Athletics
- Playscape
- Picnic
- Barkyard
- Nature
- Circulation
- Project Boundary
- Additional Study Area

0 250 500 FT

Proposed Program



Legend:

- Passive
- Active/Athletics
- Playscape
- Picnic
- Barkyard
- Nature
- Circulation
- Project Boundary
- Additional Study Area



Upgrade Sports Fields



Increase Variety of Sports



Volleyball



Sepak Takraw



Basketball



Pickleball

Introduce Winter Recreation Opportunities



Sledding



Ice Skating



Art



Cross Country

Design Spaces for Families



Picnicking



Grilling



Gatherings



Play

A World Class Playground



Nature Play



Themed Play



Swings



Water Play

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park



Legend:

- Park Access
- Bike and Pedestrian
- Pedestrian
- Road
- Potential Road Connection
- Parking
- Passive
- Active/Athletics
- Playscape
- Picnic
- Barkyard
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0 250 500 FT