Buffalo, New York

Sears Paderewski Park
Lang Weber Park
Roosevelt Park

MNLA
September 2021
Buffalo Parks

In 2019, with the generous support of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and New City Parks (NCP) partnered and collaborated with the City of Buffalo to create a city-wide Parks Master Plan. In accordance and alignment with the plan, New City Parks—working with the City of Buffalo and the local communities—has selected several initial pilot sites for revitalization in the city’s highest need areas: Sears Paderewski Park, and potentially Lang Weber Park and Roosevelt Park. These parks are either completely abandoned (Sears Paderewski Park) or in various stages of being wholly deteriorated, inaccessible and unsafe with little or no programming, thereby not meeting their potential to serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

The parks were chosen based on high levels of poverty and diversity; high indices of poor health (diabetes, obesity, heart disease and depression); high levels of environmental problems contributing to the poor physical condition of the parks (floodling, stormwater issues, heat islands, lack of trees); and the dire need for green space by the respective communities. New City Park’s Landscape Architect, MNLA, has created concept designs for all three parks. NCP will be working closely with the City of Buffalo and engaged communities through block clubs, schools, and nearby churches to fully restore these neighborhood spaces and ensure their stewardship and programming.

New City Parks is now actively raising public and private funding for the build-out of Sears Paderewski Park, which is the farthest along in planning. In fall 2021, NCP and its partners will engage the broader community in a participatory design workshop to translate community vision into the final design plan. NCP hopes to break ground on the park in the summer of 2022. NCP will continue to work with the city on future priorities, such as Lang Weber Park and Roosevelt Park or parks similar in need and nature. As NCP raises and leverages additional capital funding, Lang Weber and Roosevelt will be ready for community input, planning and design, and full revitalization.

These important pilot projects can have immediate beneficial impacts for residents and build trust with partners and citizens. The process also establishes bonds between city and community through successful results and demonstrating the strategic capacity to design and build parks. New City Parks will be a driving force for creating and building new parks over the next several years and is providing a model to catalyze future parks’ revitalization in Buffalo.
Potential Improvement Projects
Potential Park Rebuild to Serve Low-Income and Communities of Color
SEARS PADEREWSKI PARK

Existing Conditions

.28 acre
Create a multi-purpose gathering space and community beacon in the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood that builds on the momentum of adjacent cultural developments and serves nearby families.

Utilize a beautiful open structure or covered pavilion that provides gathering space for a small performance or an outdoor market.

Provide play area accessible to all children and incorporate nature play as well as attractive play equipment.

Incorporate permeable pavers and an infiltration planter responding to the site’s location in a priority CSO basin.

Adjacent Landmarks:
- Torn Space Theater
- Central Terminal
Existing Conditions

Field
COURT
PLAYGROUND
Lang Ave
Weber Ave
LANG WEBER PARK

Reorient the park to place active spaces along Lang Street with a passive open field behind yet fronting Weber Street.

Provide a 200’ x 250’ Multi use field

Create one sports court at the south end of park.

Create a new and larger playground.

Provide an entrance space that creates a civic identity to the park with shaded seating and gathering space.
Existing Conditions

PHOTOS
Objectives:

- Reorganize program to shift active uses to the west side of park.
- Move playground and splash pad away from the highway.
- Provide new pathway network for exercise and connectivity.
- Plant trees to provide shade and improve experiential quality of the park.
- Add green infrastructure to allow for infiltration of drainage from parking lots and hard surfaces.
- Level and re-grade lumpy fields to better accommodate active sports and general use. Remove fencing around fields.
- Provide picnic pavilions.