

Proposed Projects and Studies

[Project 1 – Enhanced Trail Connection with Amherst State Park](#)

Amherst State Park is located immediately north and west of the Village's waterfront area, with the Ellicott Creek corridor providing a direct connection between Glen Park and the State Park. There is currently an informal trail system that extends along the east side of the creek corridor, north of Glen Avenue, that offers access between the two parks. This project proposes improvements to create a formal entrance to the State Park for enhanced access to the trail along the creek, including appropriate entrance for wayfinding purposes.

[Project 2 – Better Activate the area of Glen Park on the North Side of Glen Avenue](#)

The northern area of Glen Park could be enhanced to improve user enjoyment. The area has a natural play area for children and the walls of the nature center were removed to create an open pavilion-type structure. The area could be further improved with public restrooms and additional seating and picnic amenities to expand use by residents and visitors, as well as a formalized entry point to the path that exists along Ellicott creek for pedestrians, fishermen and others (Project 1).

[Project 3 – Strengthen the Physical Connection between Glen Park and Island Park](#)

The Village of Williamsville WRA includes two significant public parks that are separated from each other by Main Street, with disconnected access. Glen Park is situated north of Main Street and has a formal walkway/pocket park area that extends into the lower area of Glen Park. Island Park, which is located on the south side of Main Street, is isolated behind the municipal buildings, being accessible by way of sidewalks and a bridge over the creek. This project would create a greenway that provides a connection between the two parks, better gateway signage for Island Park (similar to what was created for Glen Park), and installation of wayfinding signage to improve the overall parks connection.

[Project 4 – Better Activate Island Park for Public Use](#)

Island Park is a significant public resource for the Village, offering significant opportunity for public use and enjoyment. The Village created a Park's Guidance Document and Master Plan for local parks that includes recommendations for the future redevelopment of Island Park, including to widen and enhance public use of the park, a flagstone trail/walkway system, a multi-use amphitheater, a kayak launch area, water feature/splash pad area, pavilion improvements and enhance picnic amenities.

[Project 5 – Construct a Dock Area for Fishing and Non-Motorized Boating at Island Park](#)

This project involves establishing a launch site for kayaks and other paddlecraft on Ellicott Creek. The east side Island Park contains the remnants of an historic docking area that could be re-established as a launch area. Additional amenities include storage racks and walkway access, are included in this project.

[Project 6 – Renovate/Restore the Pond System in Glen Park](#)

The small, interconnected ponds in Glen Park are part of the drainage system, supporting a variety of wildlife and providing opportunities for passive recreation. The ponds are very shallow, underlain by bedrock and laden with sediment due to plant decay and poor drainage, and have become overgrown with algae and aquatic vegetation in the summer. This pond system requires clean up, improvements to

the drainage system, and increased riparian vegetation to restore their ecological value and improve aesthetics in the park.

[Project 7 – Establish a Pollinator Corridor along Ellicott Creek](#)

Pollinator gardens provide food (pollen and nectar) to help reverse the decline of pollinators, particularly native bees, and provide habitat (milkweed and other species) for monarch butterflies and other insects. Pollinator decline is attributed primarily to loss of habitat from land conversion and to the wide use of pesticides and herbicides that eradicate wildflowers in the landscape. The goal of this project is to help establish pollinator gardens in Island and Glen Parks, on the Village-owned lands located along the eastern shoreline of Ellicott Creek at Island Park, and along the creek shoreline south of Oakgrove Drive.

[Project 8 – Reduce the Pressure of Invasive Species Growth on Public Lands along Ellicott Creek](#)

Invasive plants, insects, and invertebrates eliminate and displace native plants and replace wildlife food sources with exotic plants. Many species are aggressive and can take over a landscape rapidly. They are often inedible, harmful, or toxic to both wild and domestic life. They can also draw important pollinators away from beneficial native plants and cause an overall reduction in biodiversity, which damages vulnerable ecosystems. There are areas throughout the entire WRA where invasive species are taking hold and need to be managed. This project will be designed to target areas with particularly aggressive and significant species first, and it will be ongoing, including planned maintenance. Public education is also a part of this effort.

[Project 9 – Remediate/Prevent Shoreline Erosion along Ellicott Creek at Island Park](#)

Ellicott Creek experiences seasonal surges and subsequent shoreline erosion that is impacting the eastern shoreline of Island Park and the western shoreline across from the park. Using nature-based solutions, shorelines can be remediated to limit the negative impacts of shoreline erosion on water quality. This project includes reinforcing the shoreline area with vegetation and creating a natural, resilient, and self-repairing riparian area. This kind of functioning ecosystem will reduce shoreline erosion by absorbing and lessening erosive forces. Future decisions for dam repair or replacement will dictate the type of solution that is implemented to remediate erosion and establish a healthy riparian environment.

[Project 10 – Address Stormwater Inflow and Infiltration into the Sanitary Sewer System](#)

Large portions of the stormwater management system in the Village of Williamsville are old and inadequate; several areas need inflow and infiltration (I/I) remediation to address sanitary sewer overflow problems. Sewer effluent also combines with stormwater runoff through leaking sewer pipes, ultimately finding its way into the stormwater collection system through catch basins, manhole covers, and overland flow. This results in untreated sanitary wastewater getting into Ellicott Creek. The Village is proposing a series of remedies to address these ongoing problems. This project is an important part of the Village's efforts to consolidate the management of its sanitary sewer system with the Town of Amherst. This cannot be achieved until the Village successfully remediates the I/I problems.

[Project 11 – Implement Best Management Practices to Reduce Discharge of Non-Point Source Pollutants into Ellicott Creek](#)

Nonpoint source pollution is another significant problem affecting the water quality of Ellicott Creek. Contaminants carried in roadway runoff (petroleum products), yard wastes and pet wastes, as well as sediments and litter, all impact this waterway. This project involves implementation of best management practices on public properties to address this problem, as well as public education and outreach on the benefits of these practices to residents. Additionally, property owners should be encouraged to reduce the extent of lawn area, leaving areas natural or replacing lawn with planting beds hosting native species that can supplement the pollinator gardens recommended under Project 7.

[Project 12 – Implement Best Management Practices and other Measures to Reduce Use of Pesticides and Fertilizers](#)

Water quality in Ellicott Creek is also being impacted by stormwater runoff that carries a variety of contaminants including pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer. There are a number of measures and programs that can be utilized to help educate residents, particularly those the have property that fronts along the creek, on proper ways to use of lawn care products and irrigate to mitigate water quality impacts. Using these best management practices on public lands and developing a local public education program to incentivize better yard care practices and evaluate and identify actions that currently are ways to address this problem. Educating residents and encouraging the reduction in the amount of lawn area and the replacement of lawn with native plantings, as noted under Project 11, will also help.

[Project 13 – Educate the Public on Proper Septic System Maintenance in Subarea 2](#)

Dream Island in Subarea 1 and the properties on Creek Road, Danbern Lane and Creek Heights in Subarea 2 are not connected to the public sanitary sewer system and utilize septic systems for waste management. Many of the septic systems are old and their history of proper management is unknown. Effluent from poorly maintained or failing septic systems finds its way through groundwater into Ellicott Creek, contributing to water quality impairments in the creek. To protect the water quality of Ellicott Creek, residents should be educated on the proper care and maintenance of their on-site septic systems.

[Project 14 – Evaluate the Reconstruction/Relocation of the Dam at Island Park](#)

The Island Park dam was constructed on Ellicott Creek in the 1930's and is located just south of where the west branch the Creek joins the main branch at the north end of Island Park. The dam's concrete piers are deteriorating, and the flood gates that are installed each spring to control water flow in Ellicott Creek do not work properly. This project involves the reconstruction or replacement of this dam to ensure its full functionality. Before this can happen, a study should be undertaken to identify an appropriate solution for dam reconstruction that addresses proper control and level of water flow around Island Park, shoreline erosion on the east side of Island Park and flooding and erosion of properties in the upper reach of the creek. This study should build off the Flood Resiliency Study for Ellicott Creek Interim Final Report that was completed in the Spring of 2021. This proposed study should evaluate if dam reconstruction in the current location is warranted as the best and most cost-effective solution or if a similar or other type of water control structure installed further upstream of Island Park could properly

address existing problems and ensure sufficient water flow around Island Park throughout the year. The potential for public access by way of the dam or some other means should be examined as part of this study to determine the feasibility of establishing access to Island Park from the east.

[Project 15 – Reconstruct the Weirs that Manage Water Flow around Island Park](#)

Two stone weirs were constructed at the mouth and terminus of the west branch of Ellicott Creek, which flows around Island Park, to control water flow in that area. The weirs were part of the Island Park dam construction project in 1930 to maintain flow and mitigate flooding in the lower reaches of Ellicott Creek. These structures have significantly deteriorated and no longer function as originally designed. Depending on the identified solution for dam replacement, the weirs likely need to be reconstructed/reestablished to ensure proper flow control and water levels for residential properties along the west branch of the creek. Therefore, this project should be integrated into the larger investigation for the replacement or reconstruction of the dam.

[Project 16 – Establish a Multi-Use connection between Oakgrove Drive and Island Park](#)

At present, the only means of access to Island Park is via the bridge from the municipal parking lot behind Village Hall. Providing a connection to the park from the east would enable easier access from businesses and residences on Oakgrove Drive, in the eastern portion of the WRA. Such a connection could be gained from Oakgrove Drive, across the Ed Youngs parking lot/private property, to the Island Park dam, and would require an easement from the owner of these lands. It is recognized that the parking lot is very congested and poorly designed, making public safety of utmost concern. This project is viewed as a long-term effort that would be dictated by the current and/or future ownership and value of the land and structures that occupy the property, as well as the future solution for the Island Park dam.

[Project 17 – Mitigate Low Water/Flow Problems in the Lehn Springs Area](#)

The WRA boundary straddles a few small islands that exist in the Ellicott Creek corridor along the Village of Williamsville boundary with the Town of Amherst. These islands create a narrow tributary that separates the homes along Lehn Springs Drive from the main branch of the creek. Residents along Lehn Springs Drive have expressed significant concern that water flow to this area of the creek has been diminished, leaving the bottom exposed and muddy. Water/drainage flow to the area is believed to have been compromised as the result of the reconstruction of Wehrle Drive to the east. This project requires an investigation of this problem and the identification and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures to restore natural water flow back to the creek.

[Project 18 – Evaluate a Means to Reinforce/Repair the Walls on the East Side of Glen Falls](#)

The retaining walls along the east side of Ellicott Creek, above Glen Falls, on both sides of Main Street were installed in the early to mid-1800's to support milling activity that occurred throughout the area. These walls have held up over the years but are deteriorating in a few places, requiring remediation. In particular, the wall that extends along the east side of Ellicott Creek from the top of Glen Falls to Main Street has developed areas where stone support is failing and needs repair. A large hole has developed in the wall near the top of Glen Falls that reveals the large grist stone from the former mill that was located

at this location. The four private properties located between Mill Street and the Creek in this area own the walls. The wall extending along the east side of the creek south of Main Street is also in private ownership. Therefore, these property owners are responsible for repairing the walls. As failure of the walls would result potential property damage and loss of the creek bank, the Village desires to help identify possible means of addressing this problem.

[Project 19 – Provide Opportunities for Bike Lanes/Widened Roadway Shoulders in the WRA](#)

Biking is a popular recreational activity in the region, which offers numerous multi-use trails and pathways. Like many other places, access to these trails is inhibited by a lack of on-road facilities to safely accommodate bicyclists. There are locations in the WRA where designated bike lanes and improved roadway shoulders that create a “Bike Boulevard “could provide a safer means of travel for residents and visitors to the area. Examples include Glen Avenue, Mill Street and Oakgrove Drive in Subarea 1. In addition, this project should address current hazards for bike travel, such as the lack of an adequate creek crossing south of Main Street.

[Project 20 – Install Historic Interpretation Signage in Appropriate Locations in the WRA](#)

Ellicott Creek and Glen Falls were the source of water supply that powered several historic mills in the WRA. The history of milling activities is long and of interest to the public. The historic Williamsville Water Mill is the last remaining resource and a testament to the legacy in this area. As a way of sharing this historic information, interpretive signage and kiosks could be installed in certain locations in Glen Park to educate residents and visitors about what used to exist and how the park was used in the past. As noted in Section 2.6, Ellicott Creek powered not just the Williamsville Water Mill, but sawmills, grist mills, tanneries, and distilleries, that were supported by dams and raceways. All of it was started by Jonas Williams, whose collection of early industrial buildings formed the nucleus for the pioneer settlement of Williams Mills, which became known as Williamsville. This should be shared with the public.

[Project 21 – Support More Commercial Activities on Main and Spring Streets in the WRA](#)

The Village of Williamsville has a prosperous central business district, which includes portions of the WRA. Businesses along Spring Street and Main Street benefit from tourism activity associated with local parks, Glen Falls, and Ellicott Creek. A marketing strategy is needed that links the promotion of local cultural events in parks, the historic value of the area, and the attraction of Glen Falls and the local parks as a significant draw for tourists, with business and economic development. Such a strategy could strengthen the vitality of this area and make the Main and West Spring area a greater focal point for activity, as recommended in the Village’s comprehensive planning documents.

[Project 22 – Install Dark Sky Compliant Lighting in Public Parks](#)

Public enjoyment of the parks and of the community as a whole is an important and controlling lighting in the parks is a part of this effort. The Village Department of Public Works will ensure that lighting that is installed in Glen Park, Island Park, and other public spaces in the WRA will be dark sky compliant to reduce the amount of light that is emitted from these areas that impacts the night sky. It is also important that lighting fixtures in these areas are designed to not emit glare that could adversely impact adjacent residential properties.