

## **INTRODUCTION**

The objective of this Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs capstone studio project is to provide a comprehensive plan which includes implementation strategies to complete the capstone class vision of "An accessible and vibrant lakefront utilized by all citizens for live, work and play". The mission of the project was "To connect the people of Greater Cleveland and the region to the lakefront by developing creative and comprehensive strategies to enhance green spaces and reimagine its recreational, ecological, and economic use."

The initial phase of the work plan involved reviewing and collecting information related to critical topics affecting the lakefront. This task built a foundation to the work plan providing documents, plans and information utilized by all groups throughout the project plan. The initial phase also looked to evaluate the 2004 Cleveland Lakefront Plan and provide logical steps to improve and revise the plan.

Three surveys were conducted from March 13, 2009 and March 22 for input from stakeholder groups of citizens, downtown workers, and regional leaders. The results of these surveys were useful in defining the projects objectives.

The work plan was divided into group sections of Land Use, Neighborhood Revitalization through Connective Greening, Parks- Ecology, Economic Development, and Finance. Group section proposals for the lakefront were divided through an implementation strategy of three time frame phases. The three time frame phases were Phase I from 2009 to 2025; Phase II from 2026 to 2025; and Phase III from 2026 to 2040. Throughout the three phases, this plan attempts to reconnect people to the Cleveland lakefront through improved physical connections and recreational opportunities. Strategies are suggested to incorporate changing land use patterns into creative green space strategies. An overview of these suggestions are shown in the project timeline. A comprehensive strategy for the ongoing funding and administration of Cleveland's lakefront parks and green spaces has been developed to span over the three development phases of this plan.

	Phase I (2009-2015)	Phase II (2016-2025)	Phase III (2026-2040)
Neighborhood Revitalization through Greening	Vacant & Land Bank Parcels		
	Foreclosed Parcels		
	½ mile Buffer		Predicted Foreclosures
			¼ mile Buffer
Connectors	Roadway Corridors: West 65 <sup>th</sup> , East 9 <sup>th</sup> , East 105 <sup>th</sup> & Detroit/Superior	Roadway Corridors: West 73 <sup>rd</sup> , MLK, East 152 <sup>th</sup> & Lorain/Carnegie	Roadway Corridors: Madison, West Blvd, Clark, St Clair, Lake Shore Blvd & Neff
	Bikeways: Use Existing Roadways, add Sharrows & Improve Signage	Bikeways: Access to Wendy Park from River Rd, Retractable Bridge across mouth of Cuyahoga River & connect Port Redevelopment to Flats East Bank	
Parks & Ecology	Edgewater: Environmental Stewardship, Facilities Enhancements & Programming	Edgewater: Environmental Stewardship & Facilities Enhancements	
	Wendy Park: Access, Landscaping & Programming	Wendy Park: Hulleys, Facilities & Access	
	North Coast Harbor & Voinovich Park: Capital Improvements		
	Dike 14: Gravel Path & Boardwalk	Dike 14: Facilities, Education & Access	Dike 14: Assessment & Doan Brook
	Gordon Park: Access & Amenities	Gordon Park: Urban Campground	
Economic Development	Build upon projects under development (i.e. West Shoreway, Medical Mart / Convention Center, Towpath Extension)  Marketing campaign to Promote, Educate & Attract	Brownfield Remediation: Parks, Connectors, Greening	Brownfield Remediation: Business Development around Port
		Port Relocation	
		Inclusionary Housing	
		Cleveland Aquarium	
		Riverboat Casinos	Burke Redevelopment
Wind Power			

## SURVEY

During the week of Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to Sunday March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009, 207 telephone surveys of Cleveland citizens living in the lakefront wards were completed. These surveys included 26 questions regarding access to, usage of, and opinions on Cleveland's lakefront parks. An additional 8 demographic questions were included within this survey. The same survey was posted online and a link to the survey was e-mailed to downtown workers. This survey generated 144 responses. In addition, 27 face-to-face interviews were conducted with various Cleveland leaders during this same time period. The Leader Survey interviews touched on similar themes as the Citizen's Surveys and Worker's Surveys, but utilized a set of more open-ended questions.

## Key Findings

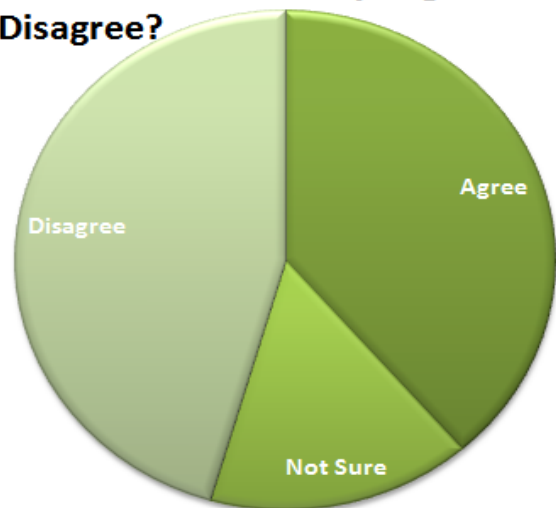
The results of the Citizens Surveys indicate broad support for improving access to lakefront parks and improving the lakefront in general. Edgewater Park is, by far, the most frequently visited lake front park. Cleveland citizens reported using the lakefront parks for a wide variety of active and passive recreation. The idea of closing some parks in the winter as a means of saving money was considered acceptable by a large majority of survey respondents.

The Leaders Survey indicates a general agreement that Cleveland should make increasing access to the Lakefront a civic priority. In addition to improved access, adding mixed-use developments was cited as an important objective to advance the overall goal of improving the Lakefront. Summarized findings of the Leaders Survey are presented in Appendix. Copies of each of the survey instruments along with detailed results are located in Appendix.

### **Do you feel the Lakefront needs to be improved?**



### **The Cleveland Lakefront is Easy to get to Agree or Disagree?**



## Detailed Results

The discussion below focuses primarily on the Citizens Survey of lakefront residents. However, results from the Workers Survey are listed alongside results from the Citizens Survey. Citizens Survey results are indicated by a subscript "c", Workers Survey results are surrounded by parentheses and indicated by a subscript "w".

Among those who expressed an opinion 47%<sub>c</sub> (31%)<sub>w</sub>, of respondents felt that the Lakefront was easy to get to while 74%<sub>c</sub> (82%)<sub>w</sub> of those who expressed an opinion agreed that making the Lakefront more accessible should be one of the City's major priorities. Of the survey respondents, 83%<sub>c</sub> (96%)<sub>w</sub> agreed that Cleveland's Lakefront needs to be improved. Opinions varied widely as to how citizens would like to see the lakefront improved with 'More Events' (48%), 'Better Access' (41%), and 'More Programs' (33%) being the most frequently cited areas needing improvement. A total of 30%<sub>c</sub> (23%)<sub>w</sub> respondents indicated that they visit Edgewater Park at least once a month. Among citizens, the next most visited Lakefront park was Gordon Park with

11%<sub>c</sub> (6.3%<sub>w</sub>) of respondents visiting at least once a month. (19%<sub>w</sub>) of Downtown workers visited Voinovich Park at least once a month, although this was the least attended park for citizens of lakefront wards with only 5%<sub>c</sub> visiting at least once a month.

For activities at the lakefront parks, 'Walking' was the most popular activity, with 49%<sub>c</sub> (60%<sub>w</sub>) of respondents indicating that they engaged in this activity the last time they visited a lakefront park. Other significant uses included picnicking 18%<sub>c</sub> (18%<sub>w</sub>), swimming 12%<sub>c</sub> (6%<sub>w</sub>), sunbathing 9%<sub>c</sub> (8%<sub>w</sub>), fishing 7%<sub>c</sub> (4%<sub>w</sub>), organized sports 5%<sub>c</sub> (5%<sub>w</sub>), and biking 5%<sub>c</sub> (4%<sub>w</sub>).<sup>1</sup> 94% of trips to lakefront parks originated from home with 85% of trips made by car.

As many as 65% of citizens supported additional funding for parks generally, although only 49% supported adding additional funding to parks from a public revenue source (Park Levy, Sales Tax, User Fees). About 45% of respondents were willing to close some parks to keep others open, although opinion varied as to which parks should be closed. However, 71% of respondents were willing to close parks in the winter to save money. Citizens expressed limited interest in volunteering time (29%) or donating money (31%) in support of the lakefront parks. As many as 54% of the survey respondents expressed an interest of living near the lakefront if more housing options existed.

## **LAND USE**

### **Phase I (2009-2015)**

Phase I begins with updating the lakefront land use plan with already approved projects and those in the pipeline for development within the near future. The Cleveland Medical Mart & Convention Center, Cleveland Lakefront West, and the Towpath Trail are examples of current projects.

An analysis is performed on the lakefront ward maps to create connectors to the lakefront using existing roadways. The areas included in the plan are the neighborhoods along the lakefront from Edgewater Park to Euclid Beach/Wildwood Park, which are located in wards 18, 17, 13, 11, and 8. This area includes neighborhoods such as Detroit -Shoreway, Ohio City, Downtown, and St. Clair-Superior. Based on these connectors, specific areas are strategically suggested that are potentially suitable for future redevelopment.

Using existing green space mapping, parcels within 50 feet of current green space are identified in an effort to classify properties that could be used for expansion of existing green space. Finally, Phase I identifies parcels that currently lay outside of current green space in order to identify new areas that will meet the objective of having green space within ½ mile of residents in defined wards per Re-Imagining a More

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents were permitted to list multiple activities.

Sustainable Cleveland.<sup>2</sup> These identified parcels were used specifically by the Neighborhood Revitalization through Greening group for this project plan.

Phase I, Major Activities
Update Current Land Use Plan With Already Approved Projects
Introduction of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority Move
Introduce the International Trade District
Cleveland Medical Mart & Convention Center
Cleveland Lakefront West (West Shoreway Boulevard)
Towpath Trail
Canal Basin District Plan
Ohio Hub Rail Plan
Create Connectors to the Lakefront
Identification of Areas for Redevelopment
Identify Properties for Greening

## Phase II (2016-2025)

Capital improvement projects and economic generators to the Lakefront begin in Phase II. The projects include the goal of creating accessibility for all residents to enjoy the Lakefront. Overall, this phase represents a step in the direction of growth and sustainability along the Lakefront.

An updated land use map is presented that includes the Phase II projects and presents a comparative view of the evolution from Phase I. The theme of connecting the Lakefront is continued: major streetscapes and pedestrian paths are expanded and new bike paths and sharrows are identified. These work toward the goal of creating connectors using existing roadways.

The Entertainment District is introduced in Phase II; it represents an attempt to maximize the assets of the lake and capitalize on surrounding amenities. This district includes unique elements such as an International District with a cultural center, casino boating, and an aquarium.

Additional projects range from distinctive and fresh ideas such as floating homes to basic and simple suggestions such as improved camp grounds and facilities at Gordon Park. Boating docks and boardwalks are added to the Lakefront. Equity is also a significant factor in the choices made in this report; recommendations are made for inclusionary housing.

## Phase III (2026-2040)

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<sup>2</sup> Re-imagining a More Sustainable Cleveland: Citywide Strategies for Reuse of Vacant Land. Adopted by the Cleveland City Planning Commission on December 19, 2008. Prepared by the Cleveland Land Lab at the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Kent State University. Available at [http://www.cudc.kent.edu/shrink/Images/reimagining\\_final\\_screen-res.pdf](http://www.cudc.kent.edu/shrink/Images/reimagining_final_screen-res.pdf)

Phase III expands on the capital improvements introduced in Phases I and II, which include the Gordon Park Marina, the Aquarium in the Entertainment District, the Port Relocation, in addition to exploring other major improvements. An updated land use map is presented that includes the Phase III projects and presents a comparative view of the evolution from the first two phases. The theme of connecting the Lakefront is continued.

In this phase, the redevelopment of Burke Lakefront Airport is introduced. City leaders have expressed interest in exploring new development opportunities and or creating green space/open space on the property and mixed-use on the lakefront generally.<sup>3</sup> The City of Cleveland and the 2004 Waterfront Plan support retention of the airport but with development on the site. Two scenarios in particular are explored: (i) retention of the airport, but with approximately 200 acres of new mixed-use development and green space around the airport, and (ii) an urban village development of approximately 450 acres without an airport.

Additional projects are presented within Phase III. These range from cooperative housing to ferry and tour boat attractions. Similar to Phase II, Phase III represents a long term approach in the direction of growth and sustainability along the Lakefront.

## **PARKS-ECOLOGY**

The revitalization of the Cleveland Lakefront Parks, which are owned by the City of Cleveland and managed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) was the focus of the parks-ecology group. As a prominent natural resource of the region, the lakefront parks need to continue to attract visitors and protect its sensitive environment. The Cleveland Lakefront Parks are heavily visited by the regional population but the parks, along with Lake Erie, have suffered the price of Cleveland's industrial history. Historically the lakefront and the lakefront parks have played a vital role in the economic, cultural, and social areas of the residents of the Greater Cleveland region. By restoring the natural beauty of the lakefront parks and promoting its recreational opportunities, the lakefront parks can be preserved for future residents to enjoy.

The current Cleveland Lakefront Parks selected were Edgewater Park, Gordon Park, Villa Angela, Wildwood Park, and Euclid Beach Park comprising 478 lakefront acres. Added to this configuration were Wendy Park/Whiskey Island and Dike 14. Together these parks encompass 599.7 acres of lakefront property. The value and demand of quality lakefront parks is explored in a regional context. Suggested park enhancements are discussed across three phases. These goals are developed into lakefront park standards to provide implementation guidelines. The park standards focus on:

- Educational and Recreational Programming

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<sup>3</sup> CSU Cleveland Leaders Lakefront Survey, Capstone, Spring 2009. See also "Flight Plan," *Inside Business*, November 2007.

- o Environmental Stewardship for habitats, water/land/beach quality, and maintenance.
- o Facility Enhancements
- o Public Access

**Group 3: Neighborhood Connectors, Ecology, Parks, Open Space, & Park Programming**

05/2009



**Edgewater**  
**Phase 1**  
**Environmental Stewardship & Education:**  
 Restore native plant and animal habitat  
 Identify and remove invasive species  
 Install educational signage and kiosks  
**Facilities Enhancements:**  
 Increased equipment rental options  
 Expand recreational areas  
**Recreational Programming:**  
 Tournaments  
 Lake kayaking lessons and outings  
 Beach cleanups  
**Phase 2**  
**Environmental Stewardship:**  
 Storm water management  
 Minimize impervious surfaces  
**Facilities Enhancements:**  
 Install additional fishing pier  
 Improve boat launch access & ramps  
 Expand & improve concession area  
 Install new picnic pavilion  
**Phase 3**  
**Environmental Stewardship:**  
 Remove combined sewer overflow (CSO)  
**Facilities Enhancements (Perkins Beach)**  
 Jettv construction

**Wendy Park/Whiskey Island**  
**Phase 1**  
**Phase 2**  
 Facility Enhancement  
 Sunset Grill  
 Coastguard Station  
 Public Access  
 23' Bridge  
 Tow Path Trail  
 Reassemble Hulett's  
**Phase 3**  
 Assess incomplete park projects

**Gordon Park**  
**Phase 1**  
 Increase pedestrian access & amenities in park  
 Institute wayfinding signage  
 Install pedestrian level street lighting  
 Improve current pedestrian bridge  
**Phase 2**  
 Create connections  
 Wayfinding signage  
 Pedestrian ease of access  
 Campground at south Gordon Park  
 Deconstruct old Aquarium for camp amenities  
**Phase 3**  
 Construct sound barriers  
 Provide campground amenities and activities

**Dike 14 Nature Preserve**  
**Phase 1**  
**Facility Enhancements**  
 Gravel on trail  
 Boardwalk  
 Observation decks  
 Benches  
 Eye-viewers  
**Access**  
 Wheelchair friendly  
**Environment and Education**  
 Kiosks  
 Interior intact  
**Phase 2**  
**Facility Enhancements**  
 Nature Center  
 Green building techniques  
 Environment and Education  
 Invasive species  
 University research collaborations  
 Increase programming  
**Access**

**Wildwood Park & Euclid Beach**  
**Phase 1**  
 Advertise to community  
 Improve identification signage  
 Improve/maintain landscaping  
 Install sand volleyball courts, bocce ball courts, and "cornhole" areas and equipment rental.  
 Install shoreline benches  
 Carousel Carnival (Euclid Beach)  
 "Passport around the City" destination  
**Phase 2**  
 Euclid Beach carousel  
 Combine and rename to "The Shores of Euclid"  
 "Carousel Carnival" yearly festival  
 Tournaments  
 Steelhead tournaments at Wildwood  
 Extended fishing and SCUBA

**Other:**  
 Extend and improve lakeshore bike trail to Edgewater; add signage (solar powered); promote "iron man" tournament ; children's activities though the park system: "passport around the city" (participating kids have a passport for different activities that can be completed. Passport gets stamped when completed. Activities take place at different parks around city and the lakefront areas. One activity: bike ride along the bike trail, identifying birds at dike 14, fishing at one of the fishing piers, etc.)  
 Possible corporate sponsorship of concessions (Pizza Hut, McDonalds, Chipotle, Chick Filet, like at Metroparks Zoo- maybe more healthy options if possible)  
 Fishing tournaments: coho salmon in spring at Wildwood, walleye in summer at Wildwood, steelhead and salmon at Gordon Park in winter (this part of Lake Erie is known for walleye, perch, smallmouth and white bass, channel catfish, and freshwater drum)

**Phase I (2009-2015)**

The primary goal of Phase I is to attract residents and visitors to the lakefront. Park value and demand are determined as well as the current conditions of the lakefront parks. Historical significance is considered for planning aspects of certain lakefront parks. Educational and recreational programming is the instrument used by the park group to achieve the objective of increased visitation to the lakefront parks. Specific activities are outlined that take advantage of each lakefront park's current unique location and amenities. General maintenance proposals are suggested for existing facilities throughout the parks.



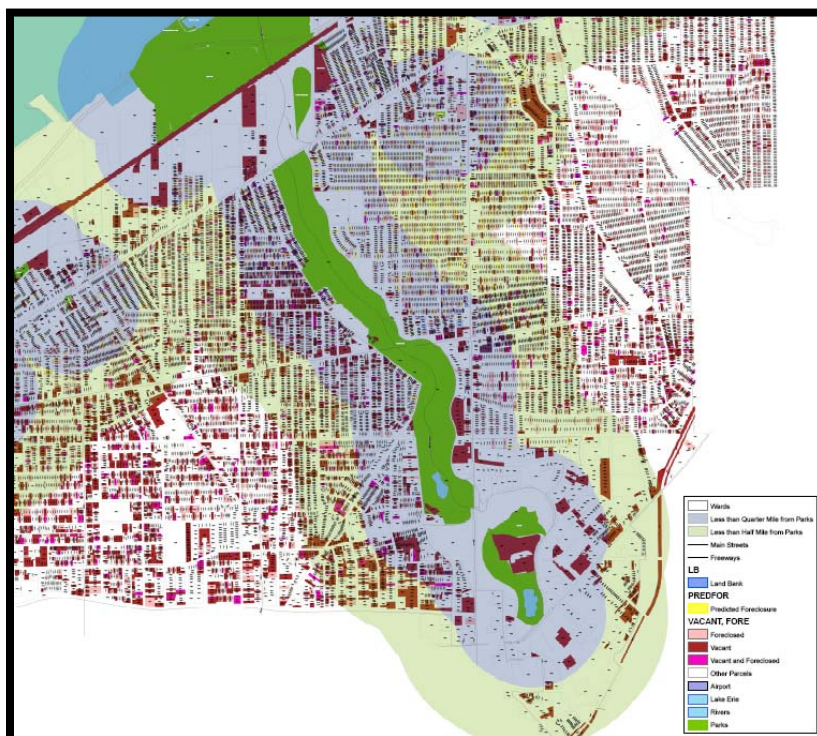
## Phase II (2016-2025)

Phase II continues to facilitate the ambition of visitors returning to the lakefront parks. A strong focus begins to address the environmental issues of the lakefront parks in order to preserve this natural asset for the future. Environmental issues are identified throughout the particular parks and remedies are suggested for those issues. The remedy of these environmental issues is crucial not only to the long term health of the lake but the physical, mental, and economical health of the residents of the region as well.

## Phase III (2026-2040)

With the prospect of Phase III so far into the future, suggested alterations to the parks are kept broad and far-reaching. These suggestions are dependent on the particular situation and completion of the work proposed in the previous two phases. In addition, any recommendations not implemented or not feasible for the previous phases should be reconsidered and addressed for Phase III. For the future it is hoped that by abiding to the park standards, progress which began in educational and recreational programming will continue to move forward in these areas. Facility improvements, public access, and maintenance should persist throughout the parks. The focus of environmental stewardship should continue to improve and protect the lakefront natural resources. With the recommendations by the parks group, it is hoped that the goal of enjoying the lakefront parks will prove to be true long into the future.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION THROUGH CONNECTIVE GREENING**



Cleveland's current situation is one of declining population and increasing vacancy and blighted structures due to foreclosure and decades of disinvestment. Although troubling and problematic in its own right, this situation can be viewed as one of opportunity, especially for issues pertaining to land use. For all three phases of the Lakefront Revitalization Plan we have outlined



objectives and criteria they felt were quantifiable and attainable goals for creating green space. We have given examples of parcel selection and design recommendations for how the plan could be implemented in the five lakefront wards while effectively working towards connecting the neighborhoods to the lakefront in later phases. The Lakefront Revitalization Plan hopes to address and make recommendations in Phase I for how the Re-Imagining a More Sustainable Cleveland plan should be carried out and identifies the precise locations of where and how it should be done. This unfortunate foreclosure crisis must be viewed as an opportunity to reclaim land for this purpose. Responsible reclamation of vacant properties for greening, phyto-remediation, and storm water management should be a top priority for land use decisions going into the short-term as well as, the future. Below is the summary of objectives and criteria:

### **Phase I (2009-2015)**

#### Greening Objectives

- Expand current green space by identifying land banked, vacant and foreclosed properties that are adjacent to current green space
- Identify land banked, vacant and foreclosed parcels for green space, so that all residents within the defined wards are within a 10 minute walk or ½ mile of green space

#### Parcel Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

- Land Bank Parcels
- Vacant Parcels

### **Phase II (2016-2025)**

#### Greening Objectives

- Identifying land banked, vacant and foreclosed parcels for green space, so that all residents within the defined wards are within a 5 minute walk or ¼ mile of green space

#### Parcel Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

- Land Bank Parcels
- Vacant Parcels
- Foreclosed Properties

### **Phase III (2026-2040)**

#### Greening Objectives

- Identifying land banked, vacant and foreclosed, and predicted foreclosure parcels for green space, so that all residents within the defined wards are

within a 5 minute walk or 1/4 mile of green space in order to create connectors to the Lakefront

Parcel Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

- Land Bank Parcels
- Vacant Parcels
- Foreclosed Properties
- Predicted Foreclosures

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Phase I (2009-2015)**

As part of this plan, economic development is defined as implementations that enhance the lakefront by improving competitiveness, increasing sustainable economic growth and ensuring that this growth is inclusive of all residents in the planning area. A common goal of the proposed economic development projects is to generate investments that encourage positive economic activity creating spin-off developments. Phase I lays the groundwork for the following proposed projects:

- Port and the International Trade Zone
- Wind Energy
- Targeted Brownfield Remediation
- Urban Gardening and Agriculture
- Lakefront Boardwalk
- Burke Lakefront Airport
- International Cultural Center

The Phase I marketing campaign assumes, as its baseline, a need to introduce the Cleveland Lakefront as a vibrant destination for the city, region, and beyond. Many residents, workers and visitors are not aware of the diverse attractions and amenities of the Lakefront, such as the parks, museums, residential and commercial uses. An umbrella marketing campaign entitled *Cleveland's North Coast: Get Your Lake On!* is to be launched through three audience-specific strategies: Promote, Educate, and Attract. More over, improved signage will guide visitors to the lake.

**Phase II (2016-2025)**

Phase II economic development strategies build from the foundation set in Phase I. The major project of the Port and International Trade District continue their transition to their new facility site while the other projects gain momentum, with site acquisition and construction beginning in this phase. The initiatives of Phase II continue to strengthen the lakefront while also allowing opportunity to remain.

At the commencement of Phase II, the *Cleveland's North Coast: Get Your Lake On!* campaign's Phase I success will be measured against the baseline survey data gathered during this planning process. The central goal of Phase I was to increase awareness of park amenities and to increase park attendance. Assuming the survey results reveal these goals have been met, the Phase II marketing will build off the foundation begun in Phase I and expand its scope. Although the campaign will continue to market Cleveland's lakefront as a unique destination for *play*, in Phase II the lakefront will also be marketed as a unique and desirable location to *live* and *w*

### **Phase III (2026-2040)**

The marketing and economic development strategies will continue their long-term goals of revitalizing the lakefront. The marketing strategies outlined in previous phases will continue in this last phase to take advantage of new outlets to promote, attract and educate audiences about the lakefront. Through constant reinforcement of the lakefront's assets and amenities the audiences will continue to be encouraged of Cleveland's invaluable lakefront.

By the end of this phase, the long-term economic development projects will be in their operational stage. The Port of Cleveland will be relocated with the International Trade Zone bringing new business and jobs transforming the area into a logical hub for a variety of companies. Burke Lakefront Airport will be transitioned to allow for development and other uses along the lakefront, with economic development offering incentives and assistance in a seamless transition of this vital lakefront property. With the completion of the long-term projects, it is anticipated that new and complementary projects will emerge that seek to capitalize on the synergy created from these investments.

### **FINANCE**

With fiscal distress dominating the State of Ohio, Cuyahoga County and the City of Cleveland, public money is in short supply. This has stressed effective operation of the Cleveland Lakefront parks. However, survey information from citizens, workers and community leaders of Cleveland indicates strong support for making the Cleveland lakefront a major priority.

In other cities, it is clear that creation of an organization whose sole purpose is to focus on the city waterfront has been the catalyst for transformation. Based on an inventory of various cities across the United States, creation of a 501(c) 3 non-profit conservancy organization has proven to be an effective framework for accomplishing comprehensive city waterfront management, maintenance and programming including park revitalization. Formation of the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership as a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation is therefore recommended. The mission of the Partnership would be to:

- Advocate for the Cleveland lakefront.

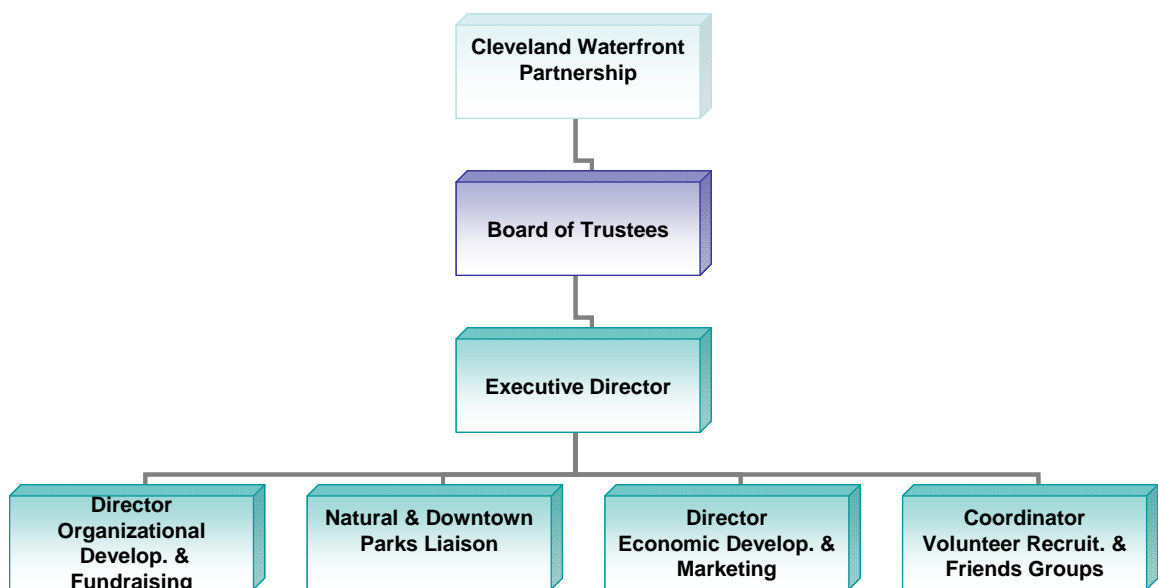
- Create, fund and implement a strategy for revitalization of the lakefront parks.
- Market and promote the lakefront.
- Serve as an umbrella organization for lakefront interests.
- Prioritize and fund lakefront related plans and projects.

Capital projects that will be funded by the Partnership have to meet one of the following criteria:

- Improve or expand the existing parks or greenspace along the lakefront.
- Create or enhance the physical connection between parks and greenspace along the lakefront.
- Facilitate public access to the parks and greenspace along the lakefront.

### Phase I (2009-2015)

The focus is on formation of the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership as a nonprofit organization which will serve as an engine for the lakefront waterfront parks and as a centralized active fundraising resource. In addition, reallocation and consolidation of primary responsibility for the lakefront natural parks will create an effective structure for revitalization. The Cleveland Waterfront Partnership will serve as a central location and forum for discussion, implementation and prioritization of plans and projects for the waterfront including volunteer development. The Board of Trustees would be represented by lakefront stakeholders. A proposed organizational chart is as follows:



Examination of current ownership, park funding and capital projects along the Cleveland waterfront was the basis for study. A Cleveland Waterfront Partnership budget was prepared and funding sources such as a property tax levy, a Business Improvement District and property assessments were analyzed and are included in this report.

## **Phase II (2016-2025)**

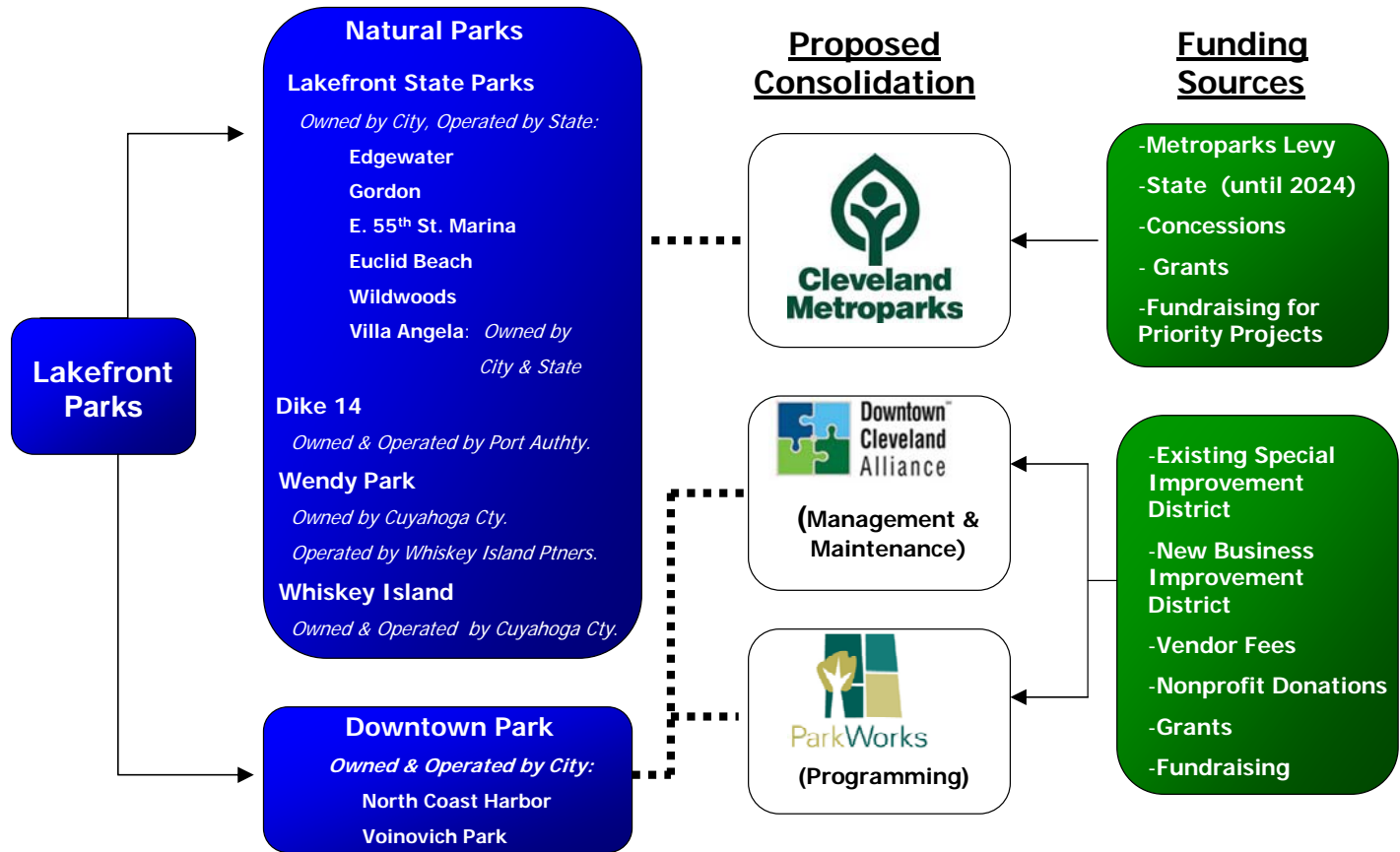
The Cleveland Waterfront Partnership will continue to build the organization as an advocate for the Cleveland lakefront. It will work to implement transition of the natural lakefront parks over to operation by Cleveland Metroparks, as well as support the downtown North Coast Harbor park oversight and operation by the Downtown Cleveland Alliance and Park Works.

The natural Cleveland lakefront parks are currently owned by the City of Cleveland and operated by the State of Ohio. The State of Ohio is obligated to continue to manage and operate the Cleveland parks until 2024 with an annual budget of approximately \$3 M. It is recommended that the City of Cleveland lease these natural lakefront parks to Cleveland Metroparks to manage, maintain and program.

Alternatively, the City of Cleveland could continue to lease to the State of Ohio, who in turn could sublease operation to Cleveland Metroparks to allow for the continued flow of money to the natural parks already receiving funding. It is recommended that the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership work towards adding the additional non-city owned natural lakefront parks to the Cleveland Metroparks system. Additional non-city owned natural parks include: Dike 14, Wendy Park and Whiskey Island and a portion of Villa Angela. A special Waterfront Park Levy would provide additional funding in Phase II.

Continued operation and management of the downtown North Coast Harbor park will be funded by a proposed Cleveland Waterfront Improvement District. In addition, the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership will continue to advocate for the lakefront, prioritize projects and focus on fund raising resources for targeted capital projects.

## **Proposed Lakefront Parks Consolidation & Funding:**



### **Phase III (2026-2040)**

The vision is for the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership as a fully functioning, well staffed, nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation which serves as a strong advocate for the Cleveland lakefront. The Partnership has become a centralized umbrella organization for the varied stakeholders on the lakefront, as well as a fundraising arm for the lakefront parks. It has successfully launched a marketing program which has engaged and renewed interest in the lakefront. The organization is also focused on prioritizing, funding and implementing lakefront plans and projects and supporting economic development efforts and has strong volunteer support.

Creation of a Cleveland Waterfront Partnership is the catalyst for change and the solution to issues that have plagued the Cleveland lakefront. The Partnership will

- Facilitate consolidation of the Cleveland Lakefront Parks for more efficient budgeting and operation.
- Prioritize and fund raise for targeted capital projects & park operations.
- Market the Cleveland Lakefront Parks as a regional destination.
- Centralizes varied stakeholder interests & actively recruit volunteers.
- Focuses on creating a vital, accessible & sustainable Cleveland lakefront.

Cleveland has significant foundation support to fund the start up costs for the Partnership. Cleveland Metroparks is an established, highly regarded and proven organization managing over 21, 000 acres of parklands in northeast Ohio. There is survey support for a possible Waterfront Park levy to provide monetary support in addition to existing state funding. The Downtown Cleveland Alliance and Park Works are also proven well respected organizations and the possibility of a Waterfront Special Improvement District could fund these entities for operation of the North Coast Harbor downtown park.

Existing designs, plans and new ideas for the Cleveland lakefront create excitement about possibilities, but funding and implementation have been the challenge. With the creation of the Cleveland Waterfront Partnership as a dedicated lakefront advocate, there is no reason that the Cleveland lakefront cannot become the vital, accessible and sustainable regional waterfront it deserves to be.

### **CONCLUSION**

The constructive plans for revitalizing Cleveland's lakefront are designed to generate future connectivity and development along the waterfront. Bringing together a cohesive plan with realistic partnerships, implementation steps, goals and issues allow



for the plan to be practical and applicable. It is the hope that plans presented will effectively accomplish the mission “To connect the people of Greater Cleveland and the region to the lakefront by developing creative and comprehensive strategies to enhance green spaces and reimagine its recreational, ecological, and economic use.”

Cleveland’s unique ability to attract citizens, workers, tourists and businesses to the lakefront make it a resource that must be rejuvenated and continuously updated. The vision of “An accessible and vibrant lakefront utilized by all citizens for live, work and play” is an attainable goal through the analysis and recommendations provided. By connecting these groups to the lakefront the expectation is that the linkage will further amplify a world-class resource that other cities strive to emulate.