

---

TOWN OF PENDLETON, NEW YORK

---

6570 Campbell Blvd.  
Lockport, New York 14094

**2021 Addendum to the Pendleton Town Parks Master Plan of 2007**

***History of Pendleton:*** The Town of Pendleton is a country community located on the Erie Canal and Tonawanda Creek on Niagara County's southern border. Founded in 1827, Pendleton is a mix of agricultural lands and modern subdivisions, serving as Niagara County's gateway to the City of Buffalo and its many suburbs. Over the last few decades, the Town has experienced significant growth, increasing its population from 6,050 to 6,700 from 2000 to 2019 (U.S. Census). There were 972 new residential homes constructed between 1990-2018.

As the Town has grown and more families and young professionals seek out open space, modern subdivisions, and the quality school districts offered in Pendleton, so has the desire and demand for equivalent services and amenities. As of 2019 the Town's population boasts a median age of 44.5 with approximately 1,072 youths (kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) enrolled in public or private school. At the opposite end of the age spectrum an estimated 1,661 residents (25%) are of age 60 or greater and 385 of age 75 and over. Thus, the leaders of Pendleton face challenges to enhance the quality of life for its residents of all ages and abilities as it expects this pattern of growth to continue in the long-term.

***15 years of parks and recreation development***

The 2007 Town Park Master Plan offered various alternative approaches to park development between the two main parks. Focus has drifted away from "Park #2" for a multitude of reasons including, but not limited to:

- a lack of immediate need; wetland and environmental concerns;
- adequate space for public parking; proximity to new residences and businesses;

- change in vision, shifting focus from recreation and entertainment amenities to developing a natural space;
- changing trends in organized sports interests and the potential affect on the use of Town park property;
- lack of sufficient funding sources to develop both parks.

Therefore, park development is focused on more accessible town properties including DePeau Park and the Main Town Park.

### **DePeau Park**

Community interest is renewed for further development of DePeau Park, a small 1-acre park located at the corner of Oakwood Dr. and Tonawanda Creek Road across from the Erie Canal. The Park currently consists of tennis courts, a rollerblading court for roller hockey, some playground equipment and a small shelter.



### ***Needs***

DePeau Park is lacking restroom facilities. Further updates under consideration could include a parking lot expansion and paving, tennis court resurfacing, street hockey court resurfacing, and environmental improvements (landscaping, tree planting, etc).



### **Pendleton Town Park “#1”**

Pendleton Town Park is a destination location within the Town and continues to draw more and more visitors and residents each year, particularly as organized sports leagues have expanded to meet the demands of the growing population and our youths.

Thus, “Park #1” is the main community park and public gathering space, consisting of approximately 23 acres surrounding Pendleton’s municipal facilities and Historical Society Museum, referred to locally as the “Pendleton Center”. The Pendleton Department of Public Works operates adjacent to the south end of the Park, establishing ease for park maintenance. The Park is primarily used for active recreation and organized Town events including Fourth of July celebrations, Farmers Market, and various community events.



The majority of the property is developed and contains baseball diamonds, batting cages, tennis courts, basketball and volleyball courts and newly installed handicap-accessible playground equipment.

Various improvements have been made to athletic facilities over the years. There are permanent restroom facilities and a recent New York State grant has been awarded to the Town to construct a new handicap-accessible restroom facility. Several pavilions with handicap-accessible picnic tables and barbecue grills offer patrons amenities for relaxation and large gatherings.

### *Mason's Mission*

The focal point of the Park's development has occurred over the last five years through a local grassroots partnership between the Town and the Mason's Mission Foundation of Western New York, a non-profit based in Pendleton. Collaborative efforts leveraged two grants of over \$263,000 sponsored by New York State Senator Robert Ort to construct the first phase of an inclusive state-of-the-art recreational playground facility for handicapped and disabled children.



The Mason's Mission Foundations' fundraising efforts raised the balance of funds in just eight month. At a total cost of approximately \$480,000 the Phase I grand opening was held in September 2017. The facility quickly became a destination attraction in Western New York, bringing countless new visitors to Pendleton Town Park and forging new partnerships, donors and intrigue. Mason's Mission has since completed similar special needs facilities in the communities of Holland, New York and Lewiston, New York.



The 11,500 square-foot Phase I project, completed in 2017, includes a unique playground structure, two sets of swings, and robust safety surfacing. All equipment is handicap-accessible.



Phase II estimated to cost \$345,500 will install a 7,200 square-foot splash pad-themed water park; Phase III will construct a roughly 6,200 square-foot ramped play structure estimated to cost \$362,395.



Community and private donations, combined with the state grants, have enabled the *Mason's Mission Campus of Inclusive Lifestyles* to continue to expand and grow with popularity as additional components and amenities for special needs children have been added.

The Pendleton DPW contributes as many resources as possible to support these efforts, and Town Officials are dedicated to supporting the resources required to administrate funding programs. This collaborative partnership of the foundation's fundraising and community engagement efforts and the Town of Pendleton's resources have enabled this multi-phase community development project to continue progressing with final completion anticipated for 2023.

## **Trail Development**

### *Rails-to-Trails*

Pendleton Town Park is also the main trailhead for Pendleton's Rails-to-Trails, constructed over the past 15 years or so along the abandoned railbed of the former Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Line, and passing along the southern edge of the park. The first three phases, begun in 2005 with a matching grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, constructed 3.3 miles of asphalt trail along the old Erie Railroad lines traversing through the center of Town from Mapleton Road to Meyer Road.



In 2013 the Town was awarded a NYSDOT grant for Phase IV and constructed additional asphalt non-motorized trail from Killian Road to Townline Road. The Town looks to further expand both non-motorized and motorized trail improvements where feasible. The Town of Lockport has completed the extension of this trail from its Pendleton border along Lockport Road to a direct northeastern connection with the new Erie Canal Trail at the Stevens St. canal bridge in the City of Lockport, and can be expanded at the southwestern end to the new River Rd. Greenway Trail in North Tonawanda, thus developing the entire segment into a regional multi-use trail.

## **History, Culture and Community**

### *Market Station*

The Pendleton Rails-to-Trails is constructed along and runs parallel to the International Railway Company's (IRC) electric railway that extended from the City of Buffalo through Pendleton to Lockport in the late 1800s. When the IRC electric train began offering freight service in the early 1900s, local Pendleton businessman Benjamin Andrus expanded his existing general store and built a new market station on property he purchased along the new IRC electric train line and built a new market station.



The Market Station provided service to all farmers in the area to store their fruits and vegetables before they could be shipped to Buffalo markets via the IRC. Business boomed until the early 1930s when major fruit and vegetable farming moved to the west coast.

Production in Niagara County declined and, subsequently, so did the need for cold storage in the area. The IRC passenger line ended in 1937, and the building was sold to Pendleton in 1946 for use as a highway garage. While strategically located adjacent to Town Park and the Historical Museum, it has been mostly utilized as a storage building for Town equipment.

In recent years a new community group has formed to promote the history of “Pendleton Center” and to coordinate with the Town about repurposing the historic Market Station as a public space or event center. The Pendleton Business & Community Association received a grant in 2017 to display historic train photo murals on the outer walls and to design and install a “Pendleton Center” Market Station rooftop sign. The sign is installed and the building has been painted as an Eagle Scout project from local Boy Scout Troop 47.



As such, “Pendleton Square” has emerged as a comprehensive plan for the Town Park and adjacent trail system. The plans include further rehabilitation of the old trolley Market Station into space for special events as well as a commercial retail area for local vendors and park concessions.

### *Community Center & Historical Museum*

At present, there are limited facilities of sufficient capacity and dependable availability within the Town for hosting seniors, veterans, community groups and fundraisers, clubs, special events and celebrations. The Town has two very active senior citizen groups, a well-run historical society, and a growing Veteran’s Association. Representatives of these and other groups have made a continuous call for meeting space in the form of a community center. In addition, the Historical Society’s current meeting facility and log cabin-style museum, located adjacent to Town Hall, is in severe disrepair and is in desperate need of a new facility.

The 2007 Master Plan identified widespread community support for a community center at either town park, ranking third to only trail development and playground equipment, respectively. An informal windshield recreational survey in 2016 again demonstrated wide support for the facility.

With development focused on Town Park #1, the Town has sought out various avenues of funding to construct a community center. In 2019-2020 the Town developed a cost-share funding proposal to address both community needs where funding has historically been sparse. In August 2020, the Niagara County Ad Hoc Committee awarded a grant through the Niagara River Greenway Fund for the construction of a new community center at the “Pendleton Center” adjacent to the Market Station to serve as the main focal point and physical gateway to Pendleton Town Park and to all features that the park offers.

“Pendleton Center” is the ideal location to erect a centrally located rustic post-and-beam all-season Town Park Community Center, a reconstructed and landscaped parking area, patio and gazebo for future phases of development.



The community center will serve as an event center during the summer as well as the ability to close its French style doors for winter use. The existing Historical Society Museum will be preserved and renovated by connecting to the new community center by recreating a historic old Pendleton canal storefront facade. The existing gravel parking lot will be paved and landscaped to allow for a possible gazebo to be placed in the middle to act as a focal point for special holiday Town events.

### ***Implementation***

Further development of the Pendleton Town Park system is contingent on state, federal and/or private funding assistance. Most commonly, state and federal grant funding opportunities are cost-share programs and should thus be considered during the Town’s annual budget process. The following sections of the 2007 Parks Master Plan offer a substantial baseline to identify and advance potential projects and funding sources.

***Section VI*** of the 2007 Parks Master Plan provides cost estimates for various town park improvements. The Pendleton Town Board shall re-evaluate such projects for feasibility and community desire; update applicable cost estimates; correlate to potential funding sources in ***Section VII***.

**Section VII** of the 2007 Parks Master Plan provides a list of potential funding sources for recreation and park development projects. Several programs are still offered while various new programs have been created. Town Officials shall re-evaluate this list to capitalize on the park and recreation improvements made throughout the Town over the last fifteen years.

**Adoption Statement**

*Resolution to adopt 2021 Addendum*