

Hochul: 'Niagara Falls is an enduring reminder of strength and power'

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An interactive Cave of the Winds pavilion, which highlights the natural and cultural history of Niagara Falls, opened in 2017.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo joined with other elected leaders in offering praise for the project, which connects the circa-1885 park with the City of Niagara Falls.

"Niagara Falls is one of most awe-inspiring destinations in this country and a key part of New York's environmental identity," he said. "The completion of this revitalization plan strengthens this legacy while enhancing the region's tourism industry and I encourage all to discover this amazing park in New York state."

The completion of the \$6.2 million project creates a more seamless connection between the park and the City of Niagara Falls business district, which will help visitors better orient with the offerings both inside and outside of the park; improves pedestrian and vehicular safety and helps reduce traffic congestion through the redesign

of the motor coach arrival area; and enhances the patron experience through general landscaping upgrades, clearer wayfinding signage, uniform park furnishings, enhanced lighting and improved pedestrian circulation.

Kulleseid said, "Niagara Falls State Park is a gem in our State Park system. Those visiting from around the world deserve a first-class experience and, with the completion of this project, they will get just that. The project competes a vital tie to the City of Niagara Falls, which plays host to the park. With the new Cataract Commons and Old Falls Street, downtown Niagara Falls is becoming an exciting piece of the robust tourism industry the city is cultivating."

Morinello said, "The completion of the welcome plaza effectively creates a park within the city. For too long, the State Park appeared to be a separate entity creating a visual barrier between the City of Niagara Falls and the State Park. Thank you to Gov. Cuomo and the



See a related video at www.wnypapers.com



New York State Parks Department for your vision and completion of this important piece of the Niagara Falls tourist experience."

Restaino said, "The City of Niagara Falls has long treasured the beauty of the Niagara Falls State Park. With the investment over the last several years, our state partners have truly elevated the visitor experience. The completion of the welcome plaza at Prospect Point is the capstone of this investment and helps add to the exciting development in our downtown tourism district."

New York State Sen. Robert Ort said, "The renovations completed at the Niagara Falls State Park Welcome Plaza will help accentuate and improve on the incredible wonder of the world we are fortunate enough to have located in our backyard. This project will also help strengthen the connection between our state park and the business community surrounding it."

"You can only make a first impression once, and this investment into the park's welcome plaza will provide guests from all over the



Visitors will find a brand-new entryway at the oldest state park in America.

world with a positive experience that will stay with them for a lifetime."

Destination Niagara USA President and CEO John Percy said, "I couldn't be more pleased with the complete transformation of the welcome plaza at Niagara Falls State

Park. Not only is it a more open and attractive space, it has also created a much stronger connection to the City of Niagara Falls. Visitors can now clearly see and more easily access all that we have to offer outside of the park."

Niagara Falls State Park attracts

more than 9 million visitors annually.

Hochul said, "Niagara Falls is an enduring reminder of strength and power. We need to have that right now. We've been through a lot. Our country's been through a lot. And as we emerge from this pandemic, and enter the post-pandemic world, and find ways to build back better, come here for inspiration."

"I'm encouraging every New Yorker to make the trip here. Take that staycation. You don't need to get on a plane to have a great, great, fantastic vacation in your own backyard. Come see how magnificent this is - and if you've not been here in the last three to five years, you won't recognize this place. And I mean that as someone who scoured every corner of this great park. Come visit."

"But also look at Niagara Falls. Look - it's been here through the ages, resilient, strong, a source of power. That's in our DNA as New Yorkers, as the stewards of this magnificent natural wonder that's spoken about in awe around the world. Don't forget that. Don't for-

get that, as we chart our comeback and make our state stronger and more powerful than ever before."

She added, "I think this is gorgeous. I love everything that you've done here. It is just a fitting tribute to something that's been long overdue, and we finally were able to accomplish it under Gov. Cuomo and our administration, and I thank everyone involved."

Project Pride of North Tonawanda completes downtown rain garden plaque project

Project Pride recently completed the installation of the rain garden informational plaques on Manhattan Street in downtown North Tonawanda. Project

Pride is a North Tonawanda grassroots, volunteer-driven organization that strives to promote identity and pride among the residents and business people in North Tonawanda by focusing on the beautification of the city's downtown area and Oliver Street corridor. The signs were installed to educate the community on the importance of rain gardens.

Project Pride completed its efforts with the help of its dedicated board members and volunteers, including Alderman-at-Large Austin Tylec who completed the design work; and ASI Signage, which provided the fabrication for the plaques. The project funding was made available through a grant administered by the East Hill Foundation. Project Pride noted these informational plaques are designed to educate the public on the benefits that rain gardens have to offer the city: serving as a natural water filter, filtering pollutants before the water reaches storm drains and local bodies of water.

"Even with the COVID restrictions this summer, our members were still happy as ever to complete this signage project and were just as excited to carry out the plantings downtown," Project Pride President Steve Surawski said. "We're overcoming every obstacle and are currently in the planning phase for many other impactful community projects to come in 2021."

Due to the evolving situation surrounding the pandemic, Proj-

ect Pride did not seek sponsors for its annual summer plantings throughout the Oliver Street corridor and downtown, acknowledging the fiscal stress on many of the local businesses that usually participate. However, the organization was still able to carry out the annual planting project.

For more information on the group, visit facebook.com/ProjectPrideNT/.

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IN THE NEWS

4 more states added to travel advisory

Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Tuesday announced four additional states meet the metrics to qualify for the

travel advisory requiring individuals who have traveled to New York from those states, all of which have significant community spread, to quarantine for 14 days. The newly added states are Minnesota, New Mexico,

Ohio and Wisconsin. Delaware has been removed.

The quarantine applies to any person arriving from a state with a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average, or a state with a 10% or higher positivity rate over a seven-day rolling average. Yesterday, Cuomo announced a travel enforcement operation will commence today at airports across the state to help ensure travelers are following the state's quarantine restrictions and to help contain the rates of COVID-19 transmission in New York.

The number of new cases, percentage of tests that were positive and other helpful data points are available at forward.ny.gov.

"New Yorkers showed incredible courage and resiliency throughout this pandemic, and nowhere is their work more evident than in the numbers we release every day, including in New York City, once a global hotspot," Cuomo said. "However, the success of our efforts depends on citizens' willingness to comply with state guidance, socially distance, wear masks and wash their hands, and rising cases around the country continue to threaten our progress, which is why four new states have

been added to New York's travel advisory."

"It's also clear based on contact tracing that many of the new cases in New York are a result of a lack of compliance during the July 4 weekend and illustrate how quickly the virus spreads, with one party, for example, infecting more than a third of attendees," Cuomo added. "I cannot be more clear: Look at what's happening in the rest of the country: If we are not smart, if we don't wear masks and socially distance, cases will spike. No one wants to go back to the hell we experienced three months ago, so please stay vigilant."

State and local contact tracing efforts found 35% of people who attended a Fourth of July weekend party in Suffolk County - or more than one-third of the entire party - became infected with COVID-19, demonstrating how quickly the virus can spread.

The full, updated list of states on the travel advisory includes: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

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