

Planning & Development

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Canal Basin Park

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Submitted by David Beach | Last edited March 12, 2009 - 1:07pm

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In December 2003, the effort to create Canal Basin Park—a new urban park in the Flats combining historic tourism and recreation—got a big boost. The city of Cleveland received the approval from the U.S. Senate Finance Committee for \$3 million in land acquisition funds for the park.



The money will be used to assemble parcels from more than two dozen landowners who are sitting on mostly vacant parking lots in the 20-acre area under the RTA bridge (at the bend in the river between the east and west banks of The Flats). Topping the list, planners and developers are eyeing a two-acre parcel at the river's edge that is a failing parking lot. The lot was once considered a possible home for the Hulett ore unloaders, the giant crane-like lifts that were salvaged from the lakefront.

The park will also include a home for the Western Reserve Rowing Federation and the final destination for the Towpath Trail and the Cuyahoga Valley Historic Railroad—creating new links to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Akron.

Certain developers are also eyeing the possibility of redeveloping some abandoned buildings in the area and creating new infill development that supports the expected influx of tourists (the Towpath Trail, for instance, attracts more than one million visitors annually).

See [Ohio Canal Corridor \(OCC\)](#) for more information.

Updates

1/5/08—OCC and the city of Cleveland secured the first piece in the puzzle of the proposed urban park that will serve as gateway to the Towpath. John and Mary Coyne were the only parking lot operators so far to take the city up on the offer to sell their surface lot, located next to the Flat Iron Café. The city will use part of its \$1.3 million federal grant and \$434,200 from the Clean Ohio Fund for the purchase of the 1.4 acres.

1/7/08—The city released an RFP that seeks a design firm to draw up plans that “redefine the northern Cuyahoga Valley area as it establishes dedicated waterfront access with corresponding recreational opportunities and greenspace. Safe, attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes to nearby neighborhoods are integral.

The future land use scenarios defined in the Canal Basin District Plan will further encourage interest in the region by...promoting tourism and recreation, and attracting new housing, commercial, light industry, and warehousing ventures.”

One outcome is a plan that envisions how the area where the Towpath ends will connect cyclists and pedestrians to the city and its neighborhoods. A preferred trail alignment connector system with narrative descriptions and rough sketches of streetscape elements, linkages to GCRTA facilities, and integration with future land use scenarios.

