



# Western NY Power Proceeds Allocation Board

July 26, 2016  
EXHIBIT 7d v-C-2

## Western New York Economic Development Fund Recommendation Memo

Applicant Name:	Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, Inc. ("NFNHA")	REDC Region:	Western New York
Project Type:	Tourism/Marketing	County:	Niagara
Industry:	Tourism	Locality:	Niagara Falls
Amount Requested:	\$200,000	Start Date:	May 2016
		Finish Date:	October 2017
<b>RECOMMENDED OFFER</b>			
Recommended Total Award:	\$200,000		
Total Project Cost:	\$1,860,368		
% of Project Cost Recommended:	11%		
<b>PROJECT BUDGET (Proposed by Applicant)</b>			
<b>Use of funds</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Trolley Lease Costs	\$1,186,668	WNY EDF	\$200,000
Bike Racks	\$10,000	Committed:	
Program Administration	\$216,000	NYPA	\$500,000
Long Term Business Planning	\$10,000	Niagara Tourism & Convention Corp.	\$100,000
Two Year Marketing Costs	\$437,700	NYS Parks	\$400,000
		USA Niagara	\$120,000
		Niagara University	\$30,000
		Cash Equity	\$100,00
		Potential:	
		Day Pass Revenues	\$120,000
		Assembly Member Item	\$100,000
		City of Niagara Falls	\$50,000
		Town of Niagara	\$50,000
		Town of Lewiston	\$50,000
		Niagara County	\$30,000
		Youngstown	\$30,000
		Less: Allowance for Funding Rejections	(\$19,632)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,860,368</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,860,368</b>
<b>REGIONAL IMPACT MEASUREMENTS</b>			
Job Commitments:	The Funding Track under which the application was submitted does not require job-related impact.		



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Average Salary of Jobs:	N/A		
Indirect Jobs Created			
Other Impact			
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Adapted from Application)</b>			
<p>NFNHA proposes to operate a trolley/bus service as a two year pilot project to provide “hop-on, hop-off” transportation to historic/heritage/tourism destinations located between the Niagara Falls State Park and Youngstown, NY in order to extend visitor stays, increase economic impact for businesses and communities by encouraging tourism spending, provide additional amenities to encourage return visitation, collect visitor data to advance tourism initiatives in WNY and cultivate a culture of strategic planning within the tourism industry and research the development of more routes.</p>			
<b>OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS RECEIVED (See Above)</b>			
ESD:	N/A		
IDA: PILOT, Sales Tax & Mortgage Recording:	N/A		
<b>PREVIOUS STATE ASSISTANCE OFFERED OR PROVIDED</b>			
<b>TYPE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	
ESD	\$	Closed	



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### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The objective of the NFNHA is to enhance public appreciation for the significant historic and natural resources and landscapes offered by the Niagara region. It looks to make interpretive, environmental, economic and social improvements that benefit residents and visitors alike. In pursuing its mission, the NFNHA encourages historic preservation, recreational access and environmental recovery.

According to the U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism, heritage/cultural based sightseeing is among the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry. Approximately 8 million people visit the Niagara Falls State Park annually. However, research has shown that many rarely venture beyond the Park's perimeter and it is believed this is primarily due to transportation constraints. Current transit service in the Niagara Gorge corridor is limited and provides only continuous travel options accompanied by narration. There presently is no opportunity for passengers to disembark to further explore locations of interest secure in the knowledge that shuttles will reliably arrive at twenty-minute intervals to provide return transportation.

Over the last decade, various studies have reinforced the importance of creating reliable and efficient tourist-oriented shuttle service to enable visitors to enjoy the full range of natural resources available along the entire Niagara Gorge corridor. These studies include the:

- Niagara Falls Multi-Modal Transportation Program (2005);
- Niagara County Transit Restructuring Study (2006);
- Concept study for an "Explore Niagara" trolley produced by Niagara University with funding from Assemblyman John Ceretto (2009), and;
- Management Plan for the NFNHA (2012).

The project would also contribute to cutting carbon emissions by reducing motor vehicle traffic and providing bike racks to allow cyclists to explore stop-over areas within the tour route.

### **ANTICIPATED DISBURSEMENT TERMS**



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Fund Benefits could be used to reimburse the applicant for a portion of the costs associated with the annual lease costs for the trolley. A portion of the funds could be dispersed in advance, with the balance distributed in arrears as evidenced by such documentation NYPA may require verifying project start and completion and applicant expenditures.