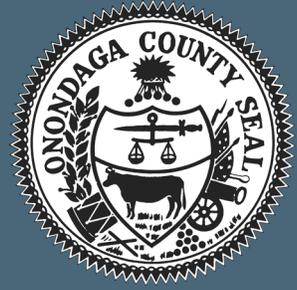


Onondaga County



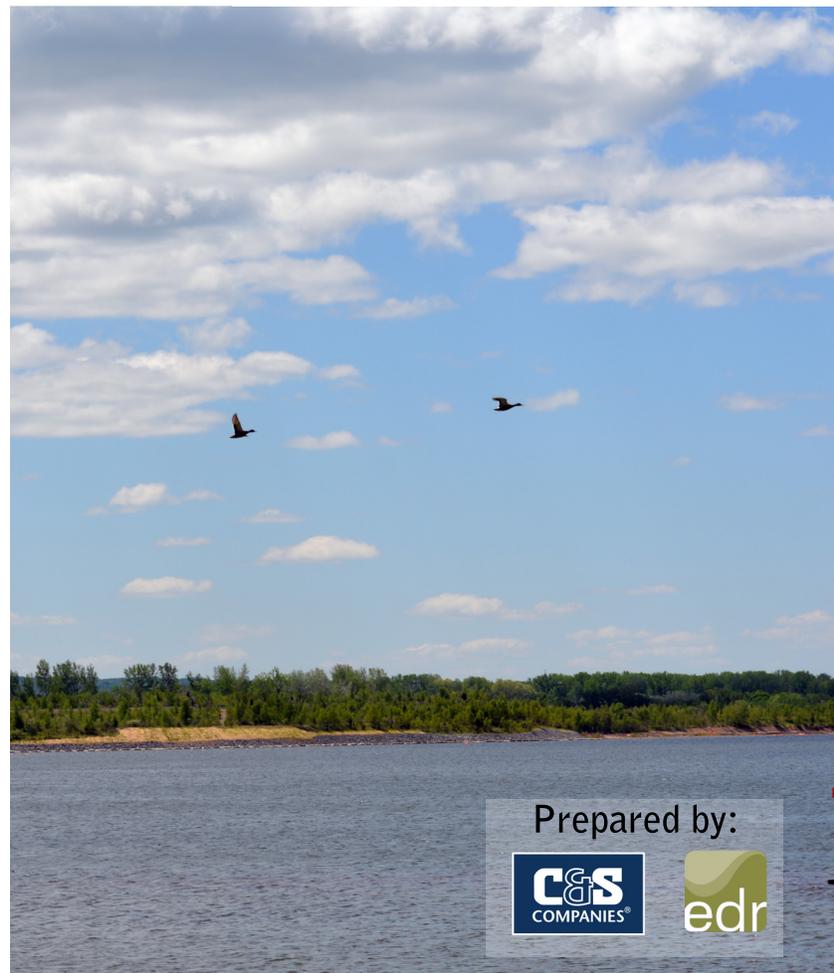
Lakeview Amphitheater

Draft Environmental
Impact Statement

SEQR Lead Agency:

Onondaga County

June 2014



Prepared by:



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Site Description

The Project site is located on Lakeview Point, on the western shore of Onondaga Lake, north of the existing New York State Fairgrounds parking lots and the Interstate 690 (I-690) and NYS Route 695 exchange, and east-southeast of the mouth of Nine Mile Creek. This specific portion of Onondaga Lake's shoreline was historically used as a location to host events and attract tourism. In 1872, the Lakeview Point Resort became the first of many hotels, restaurants, resorts, and amusement parks lining the shores of Onondaga Lake (see Image ES-1 below).

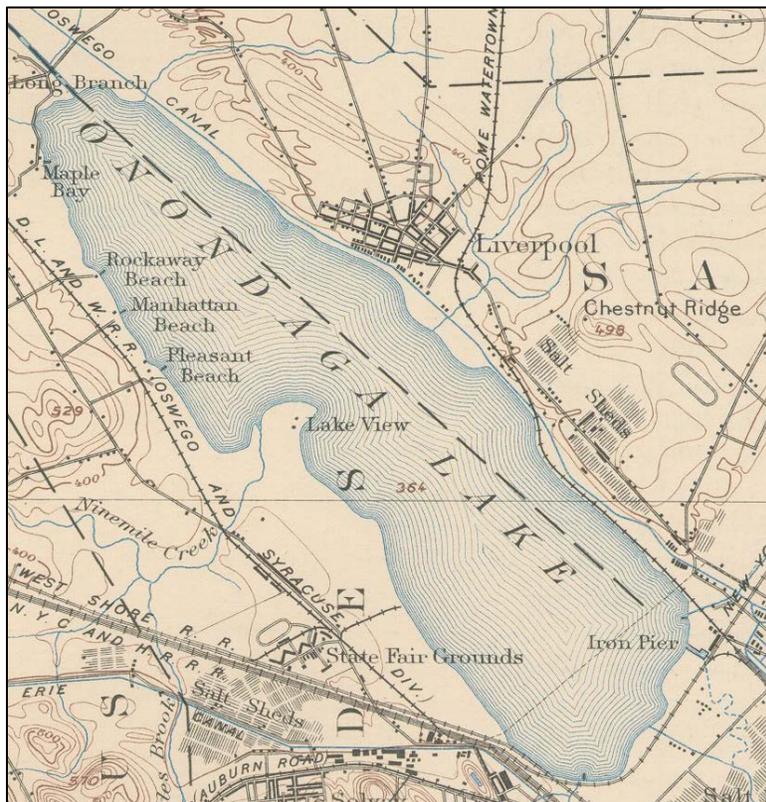


Image ES-1: 1898 United States Geological Survey (USGS) Syracuse Southwest Quadrangle, illustrating the location of the former Lake View Hotel and Rockaway, Manhattan, and Pleasant Beaches.

Subsequent to its use as a resort, this land was used as a waste repository and a landfill, and the Project site is located on what are known as the Solvay Process wastebeds. Wastebeds 1-8 cover an area of approximately 315 acres, and consist of tiered layers of fill above the natural sediments, contained by

perimeter dikes. The fill, which was generated as waste during soda ash production at the former Solvay Process Plant from approximately 1916 to 1943, consists largely of calcium carbonite, gypsum, sodium chloride, and calcium chloride. The Lakeview Amphitheater Project site is generally located on Wastebeds 5 and 6. Portions of Wastebeds 1-4, 7, and 8 are currently used for State Fair parking. In addition, Crucible Specialty Metals began operating a landfill on Wastebed 5 that was used for disposal of both hazardous and non-hazardous wastes, which was Capped in 1988.

The Project site is currently dedicated parkland, owned by Onondaga County Parks, which in cooperation with the Onondaga County Department of Transportation, has recently completed constructing a paved multipurpose trail through the Project site (see Image ES-2 below). This new trail extends the West Shore Trail by approximately 2.5 miles, and is part of a long-term initiative to develop a “Loop the Lake” trail around Onondaga Lake.



Image ES-2: 2014 Photograph of the West Shore Trail

Project Description

The Lakeview Amphitheater will be an outdoor event complex, which will include an amphitheater with an estimated seating capacity of approximately 17,500 (both covered and lawn seats), a nature area, vendor/festival area, a smaller outdoor community theater, recreational trails, an observation pier and other amenities. Associated infrastructure will include access roads/driveways and utilities (power, water, sewer, etc.). It is anticipated that vehicular access to the amphitheater will be provided from I-690 and the local road network, and parking will be accommodated through use of the existing New York State Fair parking lots located between I-690 and Onondaga Lake. Pedestrians will also be able to access the amphitheater through use of the Onondaga Lake Park Trail System and the pedestrian bridge from State Fair Boulevard. Future additional water-based access is also anticipated through use of a seasonal (removable) docking system and associated water taxis.

Construction will occur in phases, anticipated to begin in the late fall/winter of 2014 and conclude in the fall of 2015. The Lakeview Amphitheater Facility will be owned by Onondaga County, and the entire site is expected to remain in public ownership.

Purpose, Need, and Benefit

The purpose of establishing an outdoor events center at the Lakeview Point site is to 1) enhance public access to the western shore of Onondaga Lake, 2) take advantage of the new opportunities available as a result of the remediation and restoration efforts taking place on the western lakeshore, and 3) further economic opportunity and revitalization in the Town of Geddes, Village of Solvay, and surrounding area. This Project will create a new waterfront attraction offering entertainment, gathering and recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors from the surrounding region. This vision is to be fulfilled consistent with the concepts developed by local planners as expressed in the *Onondaga Lake Development Plan 1991*, the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA) *1995 Land Use Plan*, the community's vision for the future of a revitalized Onondaga Lake as provided to the Onondaga Lake Partnership in the 2007 EcoLogic report and consistent with findings in the recent report *F.O.C.U.S. on Onondaga Lake – A Road Map to Facilitating Reconnecting the Lake with the Community*.

Regulatory Process

The SEQR process was recently initiated for the proposed Lakeview Amphitheater. The basic purpose of SEQR is to incorporate the consideration of environmental factors into the existing planning, review, and decision-making processes of state, regional, and local government agencies at the earliest possible time. To accomplish this goal, SEQR requires a determination of whether a proposed action may have a significant impact on the environment, and if it is determined that the action may have a significant adverse impact, prepare or request an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It was the intention of the State Legislature that protection and enhancement of the environment, human, and community resources should be given appropriate weight with social and economic considerations. Accordingly, it is intended that a suitable balance of social, economic, and environmental factors be incorporated into the planning and decision-making processes of state, regional, and local agencies. However, it is not the intention of SEQR that environmental factors be the sole consideration in decision-making.

The SEQR process for the proposed Lakeview Amphitheater has included or will include the following actions:

- Preparation of Parts 1, 2, and 3 of a Full Environmental Assessment Form (EAF).
- Issuance of a Positive Declaration.
- Preparation of a Draft Scoping Document.
- Public Scoping Process.
- Issuance of Final Scoping Document.
- Preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).
- Notice of completion of DEIS and notice of public hearing and comment period.
- Public hearing on DEIS (must be held at least 14 days after public notice is published).
- A minimum 30-day public comment period on the DEIS.
- Revisions to the DEIS as necessary to address substantive/relevant comments received.
- Preparation of Final EIS (FEIS).
- Filing notice of completion of FEIS.
- 10-day consideration period.
- Issuance of Findings Statement.

Opportunities for detailed agency and public review in relation to this specific action will continue to be provided throughout the SEQR process. This DEIS, along with a copy of the public notice, will be distributed for review and comment to the public and agencies. In addition to a public comment period (during which time written comments will be accepted), a duly noticed public hearing concerning the DEIS will be organized and held, in accordance with SEQR requirements. Additionally, a 2005 amendment to SEQR, (Chapter 641 of the NYS Laws of 2005; "Ch. 641") requires every Environmental Impact Statement be posted on a publicly accessible internet website. A DEIS is to be posted as soon as it is accepted and remain posted until the FEIS is accepted. The FEIS should be posted when completed, and must remain posted until one (1) year after all final approvals have been issued for the Project that is the subject of the FEIS. In accordance with this amendment to SEQR, the DEIS will be posted to: <http://www.ongov.net/environment/amphitheater.html>.

Summary of Potential Impacts

In accordance with requirements of the SEQR process, potential impacts arising from the proposed action were evaluated with respect to an array of environmental, social and cultural resources. The analysis of potential impacts is summarized in Table ES-1.

Table ES-1. Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts.

Topic	Potential Impacts
Geology, Soils, and Topography	Disturbance of contaminated materials and/or elements of the site remedies. Increased loads on site soils, slope stability issues.
Water Resources	Construction runoff into waterways. Increase in impervious surfaces.
Climate and Air Quality	Emissions and fugitive dust during construction. Short-term increases in vehicle exhaust emissions.
Biological, Terrestrial, and Aquatic Ecology	Direct loss of vegetation and wildlife habitat. Displacement, incidental injury or mortality during construction. Alteration/conversion of wildlife habitat. Removal of potential roosting habitat (trees) for rare bat species.

Topic	Potential Impacts
Aesthetic/Visual Resources	Minor temporary impacts during construction. Visibility of new building (Amphitheater).
Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources	No significant impacts to historic or archeological resources.
Open Space and Recreation	Temporary impacts (closures, relocation) to the West Shore Trail during construction. Positive impacts associated with increased access to the Onondaga Lakeshore.
Traffic and Transportation	No adverse impacts associated with small events. I-690 traffic flow impacts during large/sold-out events.
Noise and Odor	Noise levels in excess of 65 dBA during portions of concert events. No significant odor impacts anticipated.
Documented Environmental Conditions	Intrusive work associated with installation of utilities, preliminary site grading and installation of foundations.
Public Health and Safety	Intrusive work associated with installation of utilities, preliminary site grading and installation of foundations.
Land Use and Zoning	Temporary impacts to land use during construction. Conversion of a vacant lakeshore parcel into an area utilized by the public periodically for special performance events.
Growth and Community Character	Minor inconsistencies with some community planning documents.
Community Facilities and Services	Temporary closures of the West Shore Trail.

Summary of Mitigation Measures

The Project will include various measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate potential environmental impacts, as described in Table ES-2.

Table ES-2. Summary of Measures to Avoid, Minimize, and/or Mitigate Impacts

Topic	Proposed Avoidance/Mitigation Measures
Geology, Soils, and Topography	Sediment and erosion controls during construction, and SWPPP compliance. Engaging nationally recognized geotechnical experts, familiar with the soil conditions and this site in particular, to assist the design team. Care and maintenance consistent with the long term Site Management Plan and Institutional Controls to preserve integrity of remedial actions put in place by Honeywell and Crucible.
Water Resources	Multiple measures will be engineered into the site development plans to capture, treat and/or reduce stormwater runoff from the site, which is expected to enhance groundwater and surface water quality over existing conditions.

Topic	Proposed Avoidance/Mitigation Measures
Climate and Air Quality	<p>Best management practices (BMPs) during construction, including dust control measures.</p> <p>Construction will be performed consistent with a NYSDEC-approved Site Management Plan, developed as part of the ongoing remediation effort for the larger wastebed 1-8 area.</p>
Biological, Terrestrial, and Aquatic Ecology	<p>Development of an overall Project master plan that maximizes the protection/integration of natural communities to the extent practicable.</p> <p>Adherence to designated work/disturbance limits and avoidance of off-limit sensitive areas during construction.</p> <p>Restoration of all temporarily disturbed areas, and coordinating restoration efforts with the long-term remedy to be implemented by Honeywell.</p> <p>The buildings associated with the Project will incorporate bird-friendly design.</p> <p>To avoid mortality of protected bat species that could be roosting in trees at the Project site, tree cutting will be restricted to between October 15 and March 31, when bats are hibernating off-site.</p> <p>Lighting fixtures associated with pedestrian pathways, roads, parking areas, and building exterior areas for the proposed facility will be consistent with "Dark Sky" initiatives.</p>
Aesthetic/Visual Resources	<p>Implementing a Project design intended to blend with the environment through use of textures and materials (e.g., stone, wood) representative of nature.</p> <p>Lighting fixtures associated with pedestrian pathways, roads, parking areas, and building exterior areas for the proposed facility will be consistent with "Dark Sky" initiatives.</p> <p>Project visibility does not necessarily equate to an adverse visual impact; adding a visually interesting focal point, attracting the attention of potential spectators, and creating a source of community pride can be considered a benefit.</p>
Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources	<p>No impacts to historic or archeological resources; therefore, no mitigation required or proposed.</p> <p>Consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Law (and, for NYSDEC, DEC Policy CP-42: Contact, Cooperation and Consultation with Indian Nations).</p>
Open Space and Recreation	<p>Since overall impacts to open space and recreation from the proposed Project are believed to be positive, no mitigation required or proposed.</p>
Traffic and Transportation	<p>Implementation of various operational and/or capital improvement measures for large, sold-out events.</p>
Noise and Odor	<p>Implementation of best management practices for sound abatement during construction.</p> <p>Sound level monitoring and adjustment of specific sound sources (medium-scale roof speakers) during performances as necessary.</p>

Topic	Proposed Avoidance/Mitigation Measures
Documented Environmental Conditions	Implementation of BMPs during construction (e.g., dust suppression, sediment and erosion control measures). Implementation of controls to promote access to desired areas during events. Care and maintenance carried out consistent with the long term Site Management Plan and Institutional Controls put in place to preserve the integrity of the site cover and other remedy components both for the Crucible Landfill and the wastebeds.
Public Health and Safety	Implementation of construction and site management plans to control access and vehicular traffic, which will be site specific addressing the range of potential physical and environmental hazards associated with each phase of the work, as well as the potential pathways by which workers and the public could be impacted and by incorporating proactive and conservative prevention and control measures for those situations. Care and maintenance carried out consistent with the long term Site Management Plan and Institutional Controls put in place to preserve the integrity of the site cover and other remedy components both for the Crucible Landfill and the wastebeds. Site security will be enhanced through design features which include fencing, specific area lighting, video surveillance, emergency communications network, and routine police/park ranger patrols.
Land Use and Zoning	The proposed Project is consistent with existing land uses and land use, and consequently mitigation measures are not required or proposed.
Growth and Community Character	The project is generally consistent with the major goals common to many of the existing planning documents, and consequently mitigation measures are not required or proposed.
Community Facilities and Services	Temporary trail closures coordinated with appropriate park officials and communicated to the public.

Alternatives

Alternatives considered include the No Action alternative, an alternative west shore site, and an alternative that would rely upon design or scale modifications to either reduce or avoid potential impacts. Alternatives are evaluated for their potential to mitigate impacts and for their ability to meet the goals of the project sponsor, which are to 1) enhance public access to the western shore of Onondaga Lake, 2) take advantage of the new opportunities available as a result of the remediation and restoration efforts taking place on the western lakeshore, and 3) further economic opportunity and revitalization in the Town of Geddes, Village of Solvay, and surrounding area.

With respect to an alternate west shore site location, there are few other apparent sites along the western shore where a project of this scale could be located with sufficient access, parking, and space to

accommodate a development of this size. Based on spacial constraints as the first criterion, alternative locations were reviewed and one alternative site was identified. However, Lakeview Point is considered the preferred alternative because it fulfills the objectives of the project sponsor, minimizes site related impacts as compared to other on site locations, has lower expected construction and operating costs and allows for full facility and amenities buildout.

With respect to alternative project design and scale, several different concepts and settings are being evaluated. The preferred alternative (Cove setting) minimizes physical disturbance of the upper surfaces of the wastebeds, provides additional cover and reinforcement of the northern wastebed dikes, helps to control drainage and runoff in the steeper slope areas, reduces impacts to the Crucible landfill site and has a lower visual impact on the surrounding areas. An important factor in assessing a reduced scale project is maintaining a critical size to support a viable project. The current project concept is based on providing adequate facilities and amenities to attract top tier national tours.

Under the no action alternative, the pre-existing site conditions on Wastebeds 5 and 6 would generally be maintained, and the final remedy selected for the sites would be a function of the intended future use (which would remain unidentified under this alternative). Access to the general area has increased recently as a result of the opening of the new bike trail segment of the West Shore Trail; however, under this alternative, the remaining features of the area would remain similar to those currently experienced with the exception that a proposed remedy would be completed by Honeywell to support a less intense use. Impacts related to construction would not occur at this time. The full potential of the site as envisioned in earlier planning documents, along with the project purpose, needs and benefits, would not be realized.