

Together
with
LSC

EAST SIDE

Launch Report | Economic Inclusion | 2022

With Gratitude & Solidarity

The LISC WNY team is immensely grateful to the organizations, residents, and practitioners of the East Side communities who have shared, taught, and trusted us with their thoughts. Their experiences, especially within the context of the Covid-19 era, inspired us, and shaped the creation of this framework. We are constantly humbled by the leadership, strength and resiliency that we encounter daily from the people who call these places home.

We write these words as practitioners, working in partnership with community, centering the needs, lived experiences, wisdom and leadership of our Indigenous, Black and brown neighbors. We honor the sovereign Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee or hoe-den-oh-saw-nee) Six Nations, original stewards of this land we live on—the Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca and Tuscarora—and the places where the following work took place. May all that we do strive toward partnership with a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration. And from this reconciliation, let us begin to heal.

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 of Architecture & Planning
 University District Community
 Development Association
 Urban Fruits and Veggies
 Urban Land Institute
 Urban Vantage
 vonetta t. rhodes, Poet
 Westminster Economic
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 Wise Young Builders
 WNY Foundation
 WNY Minority Media
 Professionals, Inc.
 WNY Urban Arts Collective
 WNY Women's Foundation
 Workforce Development Institute
 WSP

LISC Commitment

At its core, WITHIN makes space for community members to be the architects of their own neighborhoods. As an open, inclusive, community-driven initiative, we bring together neighborhood voices, trusted partners, and supportive funders in an effort to better the wellbeing of all who call Buffalo's East Side home. Together, we collaboratively identify projects that sustain positive momentum, and together, we get things done.

LISC WNY facilitated planning for three focus areas in the East Side, under the WITHIN WNY program. In alignment with the mission of LISC, to “forge resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity”, WITHIN supports community-activated progress. Centering the concept that to invest in a community, one must know the community, LISC WNY designed the WITHIN East Side process as a two-pronged approach—integrating economic development and quality-of-life planning.

Why an integrated methodology? The two types of planning efforts are largely intertwined. Both economic development and quality-of-life planning require understanding community history and dynamics, collaboratively identifying projects, building relationships with diverse stakeholders, and turning community priorities into progress. In this particular case, we also are planning to drive resources to effectively combat the underlying issues that have created inequities in the East Side.

LISC Commitment continued...

These neighborhoods were selected because of the existing dichotomy. People of color make up 78% of the East Side's total population¹, and this section of our city has not received the same level of investment as others. Showing immense resiliency, these communities still find ways to flourish even without resources; but without additional support and investment, these communities are at risk of displacement and erasure of culture and existing rich narratives. Intentionality is necessary to strengthen the connective tissue between residents and the surrounding developments.

In 2022, the neighborhoods are at a critical juncture. The nexus of adversity and previously unattainable support offers a unique opportunity to enhance these neighborhoods. The framework for WITHIN began with intention to ensure that community members were able to capitalize on imminent large-scale programs like the ESD East Side Corridor Economic Development Fund and lift community goals that still need attention and investment, powering the ideas and vision of the people. With the onset of COVID-19, this work became even more critical. The added trauma following the racist massacre on May 14, 2022, at the Tops Markets on Jefferson Avenue intensified the calls for action and assurance that the surge of funds and recovery efforts truly result in positive transformative change.

Throughout this process, we listened to hundreds of community members around their priorities for health, housing, jobs, small business, mobility, safety, development priorities, and culture. We analyzed demographics,

¹ [Buffalo Billion East Side Corridor Fund Report, 2019](#)

LISC Commitment continued...

economics, employment and housing trends, reviewed existing plans, examined neighborhood conditions, and interviewed stakeholders.

Embedded WITHIN is the intention to connect a diverse network of community builders who share a common purpose—to invest resources and exponentially broaden impacts. This document creates a shared understanding of this local multi-sector context with both on-the-ground organizations and regional funders.

The WITHIN East Side report includes:

- A clear statement of the community's guiding principles, goals and objectives;
- A focused list of prioritized investments and action for 2022–23 to kick start the effort;
- A series of initial performance metrics; and
- A list of additional opportunities for community implementation as resources allow.

Rather than asking one entity to adopt this plan, the project website will indicate which organizations have endorsed the plan and are committed to its implementation.

LISC Commitment continued...

This work is supported by an extensive, data rich analysis, outlining existing conditions, and a series of tools to allow community members to lead implementation: interactive online mapping tools, a development project tracker, a rubric for new development, and scenario planning tools.

The WITHIN East Side strategies are inspired and shaped by ideas and lessons from the neighborhoods. When applicable, WITHIN strategies are aligned with investment initiatives to connect the plan to plausible resources. The strategies call on community members to spark a movement, help neighbors thrive, and choose to stay. They call for community partners to forge new partnerships, drive progress, set the pace, and tap into the power of their neighborhoods. And they call for funders to power the ideas of the people, invest in inclusive and sustainable initiatives, and turn community priorities into progress.

LISC is committed to supporting the community's implementation of this vision through ongoing facilitation and communications support, training, technical assistance, grant writing and funding assistance. We are grateful for every community member that brought us to this important launch point. We are committed to supporting your collective implementation of this shared vision.

We look forward to celebrating your success.

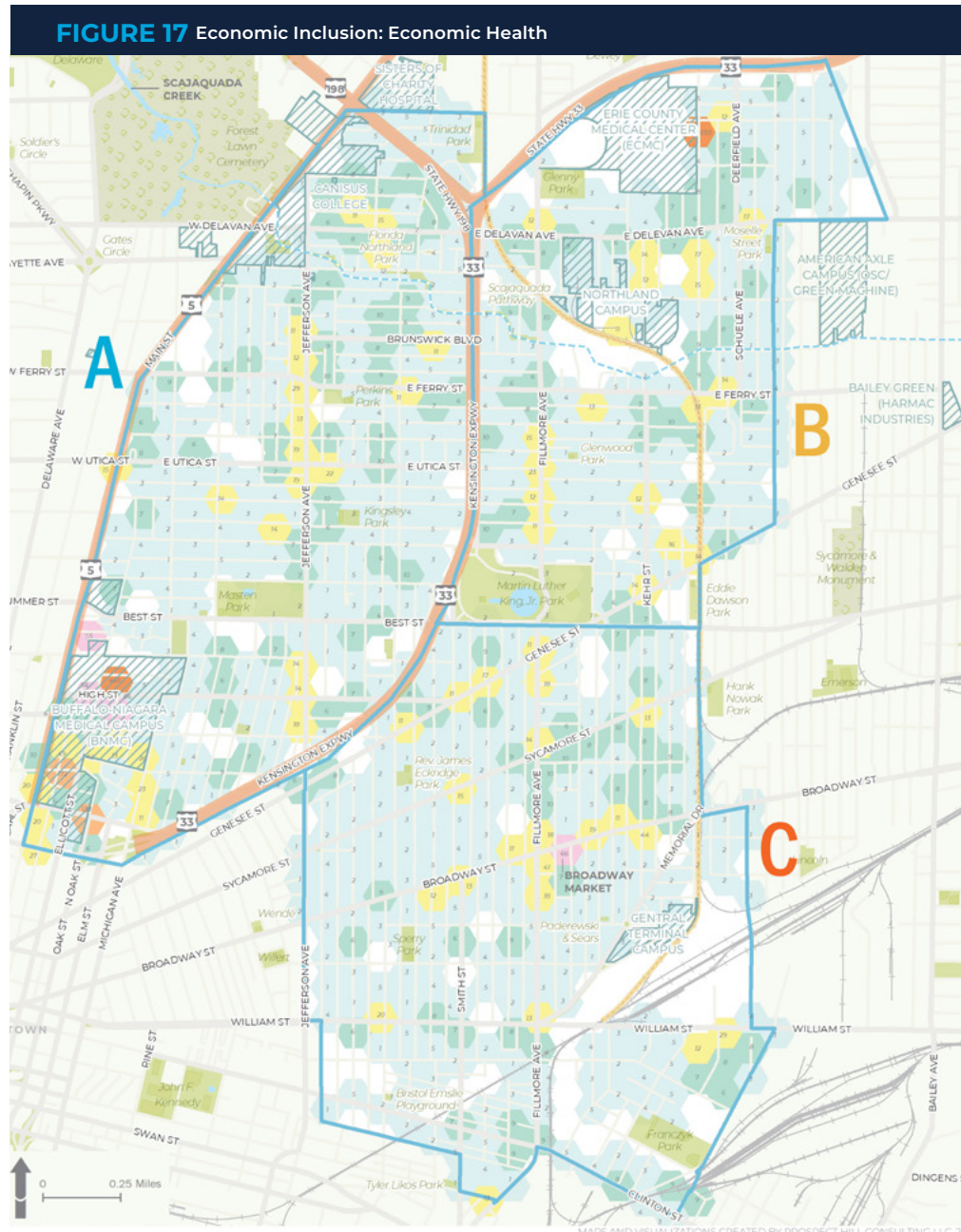
NORTHLAND WORKFORCE TRAINING CENTER
PHOTO: NWTC



Economic Inclusion

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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
 - Anchor in the near East Side
 - Park / Open Space
 - Cemetery
 - Water
 - Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
 - NYS Highway
 - Major Road
 - Local Road
 - Beltline
 - Railroad
- Business Density (count)**
- 1-5
 - 6-10
 - 11-50
 - 51-100
 - 101-200
 - 201-693

What is here now?
 These maps and charts reveal an area of Buffalo offering jobs in both large anchor institutions and small businesses. The inflow/outflow graphic, however, shows that many of these jobs are held by those outside the Planning Areas. Poverty rates and business densities in each area also correlate, suggesting a connection between business and health residential economic health.

Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, data axle-Erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015-2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S census OnTheMap 2018;

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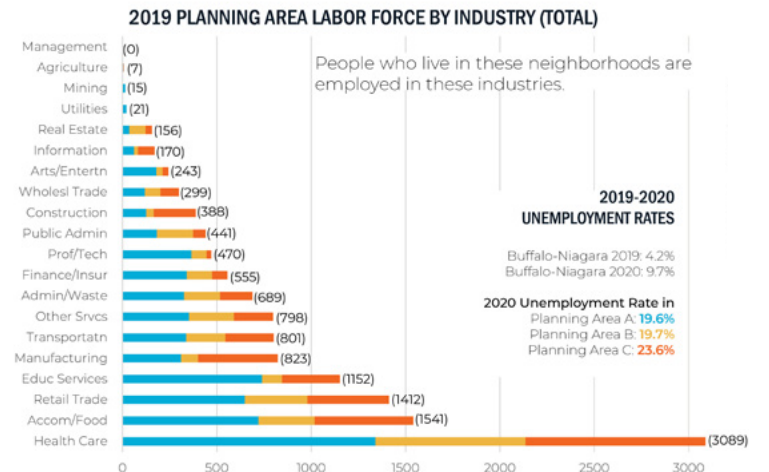
The colors seen on the Economic Health map on the previous page represent business density. We see that there are a number of businesses present in Area A, around the Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC). This area is smattered with yellow, pink, light and dark orange honeycombs, indicating numbers of businesses in a micro-geography.

We also see higher business density along the major commercial corridors and pockets of the planning area. There are yellow honeycombs, indicating 11-50 businesses per honeycomb, along the northern and southern ends of Jefferson Avenue. This pattern repeats along the middle and southern ends of Fillmore Avenue, both North and South of MLK Park. We also see business groupings appearing on Broadway Street and especially around the Broadway and Fillmore intersection. We see east-west clusters along Genesee Street, and a few clusters running north-south off E. Delavan, north of the Northland campus. The highest density we see is a deep orange honeycomb shape right around Erie County Medical Campus (ECMC), highlighting 693 businesses in one cluster.

The top industry for employment in the overall planning area combined is in Health Care. This industry employees over 3000 residents in the area. The second ranked industry for employment is Accommodation and Food, employing over 1500 residents, and the last being Retail Trade, employing just over 1400 residents. When zooming in on the three areas, residents living in Area A are hired primarily in the Health Care industry, followed by Educational Services. Residents living in Area B are hired primarily in Health Care, followed by Retail Trade. Residents living in Area C are also primarily employed in Health Care, followed by Manufacturing.

In 2018, 18,841 people were employed in the entire planning area, but did not reside within any of these three areas. Meanwhile, 11,276 people lived in the planning area, but were employed elsewhere. The overlap of those residents who lived in and

were employed in the planning area was 1,147. Covid -19 had a drastic effect on unemployment throughout our region. The Buffalo-Niagara region had a 4.2% unemployment rate in 2019 and shot up over double to 9.7% in 2020. When looking at unemployment rates in 2020 across our focus areas, we find that the unemployment was much higher than the regional average. Planning Area A had an unemployment rate of 19.6%, Planning Area B was at 19.7%, and Planning Area C was at 23.6%.



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD (HH) INCOMES AND PERC. BELOW POVERTY

	A	B	C
2019	\$29,018	\$26,982	\$20,780
2020	\$27,342	\$25,880	\$21,044
2019 % of HH below poverty level	29.7%	35.6%	43.2%



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When discussing employment, we also need to analyze the large employers and anchors within these neighborhoods who provide jobs and contribute to a sense of place.

Our definition for an ‘anchor,’ is an institution or business that have many facets and moving pieces that collectively makes a “gravitational pull.” These institutions or businesses have long-term visibility, and have rooted place-based investments in a particular location. Their relatively fixed assets are not likely to relocate, and they have nodes of activities that support and/or effect the neighborhood around it. They often consume a sizable amount of land, and have large economic impacts including multilevel employment options, revenue gathering and spending patterns. These institutions and businesses are among the largest purchasers of goods and services in the region and provide incubation and/or contracts with small businesses. The intersection of various woven sectors can spark innovation in a way that wouldn’t happen with standalone businesses, and these anchors have the potential to promote community dialogue.

There is increasing evidence that anchors can catalyze positive community change, but the direction, if not intentional, may not always be equitable. We aspire to bridge community organizations’ common interest with anchor partners in a way that benefits the neighborhood with added amenities, investment, quality job opportunities, business growth, and enhanced public spaces that connect these anchors to the neighborhoods in which they operate. The following exemplifies current anchors’ involvement in community initiatives to date.



5 anchor campuses lie within the planning areas:

1. Canisius College
2. Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC)
3. Erie County Medical Campus (ECMC)
4. Northland Campus
5. Central Terminal Campus

3 additional anchors sit adjacent to the planning areas:

6. Sister’s Hospital
7. American Axle
8. Harmac Industries

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Anchors Within Planning Areas.

Canisius College in Hamlin Park employs 1,250 people. In May 2019, the campus released its [Facilities Master Plan](#). Goals include:

1. Renovation of existing academic buildings
2. Improving, enhancing, and maintaining green space
3. Building repairs, landscape design and wayfinding projects
4. Optimizing space utilization
5. Integrating sustainable design strategies
6. Enhancing the connection to Hamlin Park and surrounding neighborhood. The Hamlin Park Initiative was introduced as a way to return houses previously purchased by Canisius to the neighborhood, but not to investor-landlords.

The **Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC)** in the **Fruit Belt** employed 15,500 people in 2019, pre-pandemic. 150+ companies reside on the Campus. A 2010 [Master Plan](#) outlines a 'Fruit Belt Neighborhood Strategy,' affecting the adjacent neighborhood: 1) With facilitation support, build a unified voice, 2) Amend the regulatory environment, including updated zoning, 3) Devise a workforce development strategy with the neighborhood, 4) Establish a land bank program, 5) Create a Fruit Belt CDC, 6) Use the partnership between BNMC & Fruit Belt as a community development demonstration program, 7) Develop the intersection of Michigan and High St to be treated as a gateway into the Fruit Belt.

The BNMC 2010 [Master Plan](#) also outlines an 'Allentown Neighborhood Strategy,' affecting Main Street development:

1. Develop a Main Street Strategy enforcing higher standards of design for new buildings, making facade and building improvement grants possible, investing in streetscape, infrastructure, and NFTA TOD stations

2. Develop corner lots and active retail
3. Develop a retail strategy, infill/improvement strategy, and regulatory strategy, inclusive of Allentown zoning updates.

The **Erie County Medical Campus (ECMC)** in **Delavan Grider** employ 3,000 people¹⁸ pre-pandemic. They have a large campus footprint and facilities. A campus plan is not publicly available, telling us there is potential to create a stronger tie between the campus and the neighborhood.



Aerial looking northwest. Photo: BNMC

The **Northland Campus**, also in the Delavan Grider neighborhood, houses the Northland Workforce Training Center (NWTC), a \$150 million investment in partnership between the Buffalo Billion and the New York Power Authority (NYPA). The campus also plays host to the \$2 million Buffalo Billion Solar Array investment, a green energy solution and training facility for green energy jobs. In 2016, the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) released their Northland Neighborhood Strategy, outlining the use of Buffalo Billion awarded funding to acquire 50 acres of vacant or underutilized land, and over 700,000 square feet of industrial buildings. Several key parcels for redevelopment are included in the plan¹⁹. Between 2015 and 2020, the City hosted a participatory process, in which residents identified key transformative

¹⁸ ecmc.edu

¹⁹ [BURA Northland Neighborhood Strategy](#)

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sites. Locations included were Harmac's Bailey Green Initiative, the Northeast Greenway Rails to Trails, Persistence Prep Charter School, and the purchase of former Public School #62 at Genesee and Moselle Streets.

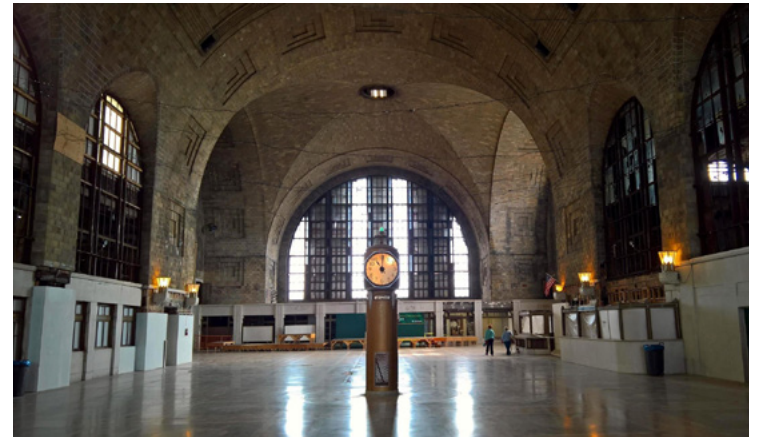
In 2020, while the effects of the pandemic were felt across the country, the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC) worked with the University at Buffalo Real Estate Development graduate students on a report for Northland campus strategies²⁰. Recommendations anchor Northland as a community institution/asset with a great stake in the holistic social revitalization of the community.

The report recommends a tech incubator and/or Life Sciences building, a flex industrial building and/or warehousing. The warehousing and distribution industries have been flourishing and have shrugged off any effects from the pandemic. E-commerce and logistics/distribution due to covid-19 has also led to increased demand for space.

Three special initiatives are summarized in the report, including a commercial condo, a renewable energy initiative and a manufactured housing research facility. Northland Campus is already positioned to be a green energy hub with the Solar Array project occupying 4,000 sq ft within the NWTC. Innovative education and re-skilling could have positive implications for the surrounding workforce. Physically, the Northland Campus forms a link between existing programs and key renewable energy activities:

1. BNMC to the west
2. OSC Equipment & Manufacturing nearby
3. Viridi Parente/Green Machine in close proximity.

An energy plan can converge multiple local and state initiatives with the Northland corridor and NWTC to help reach state goals while leveraging the existing workforce. Finally a community connection through the Houdaille Place Event Space was recommended with significant investment in greenways and bikeways.



Buffalo Central Terminal. Photo: Google

The **Central Terminal Campus in the Broadway Fillmore** neighborhood has recently developed a campus [Master Plan](#) and [Executive Summary](#), outlining one year of planning and engagement work. This engagement led to the recent outcome of a neighborhood framework that leverages the neighborhood's human capital, existing organizations, infrastructure and natural amenities. The following list identifies the top priorities as identified by the neighborhood:

1. Enhance mobility access & options
2. Increase access to open space
3. Celebrate cultural identity
4. Expand neighborhood services
5. Provide equitable housing and workforce opportunities

²⁰ [Near-Term Strategies for the Northland Campus, 2020](#)

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Enhance Mobility Access Options

Improve circulation and access for all mobility types to and around the Terminal with a priority for pedestrian, bicycle and transit through the creation of complete streets.

Increase Access to Open Space

Leverage vacant and underutilized land to expand on the neighborhoods park, recreation and open space network to provide amenities for residents.

Celebrate Cultural Identity

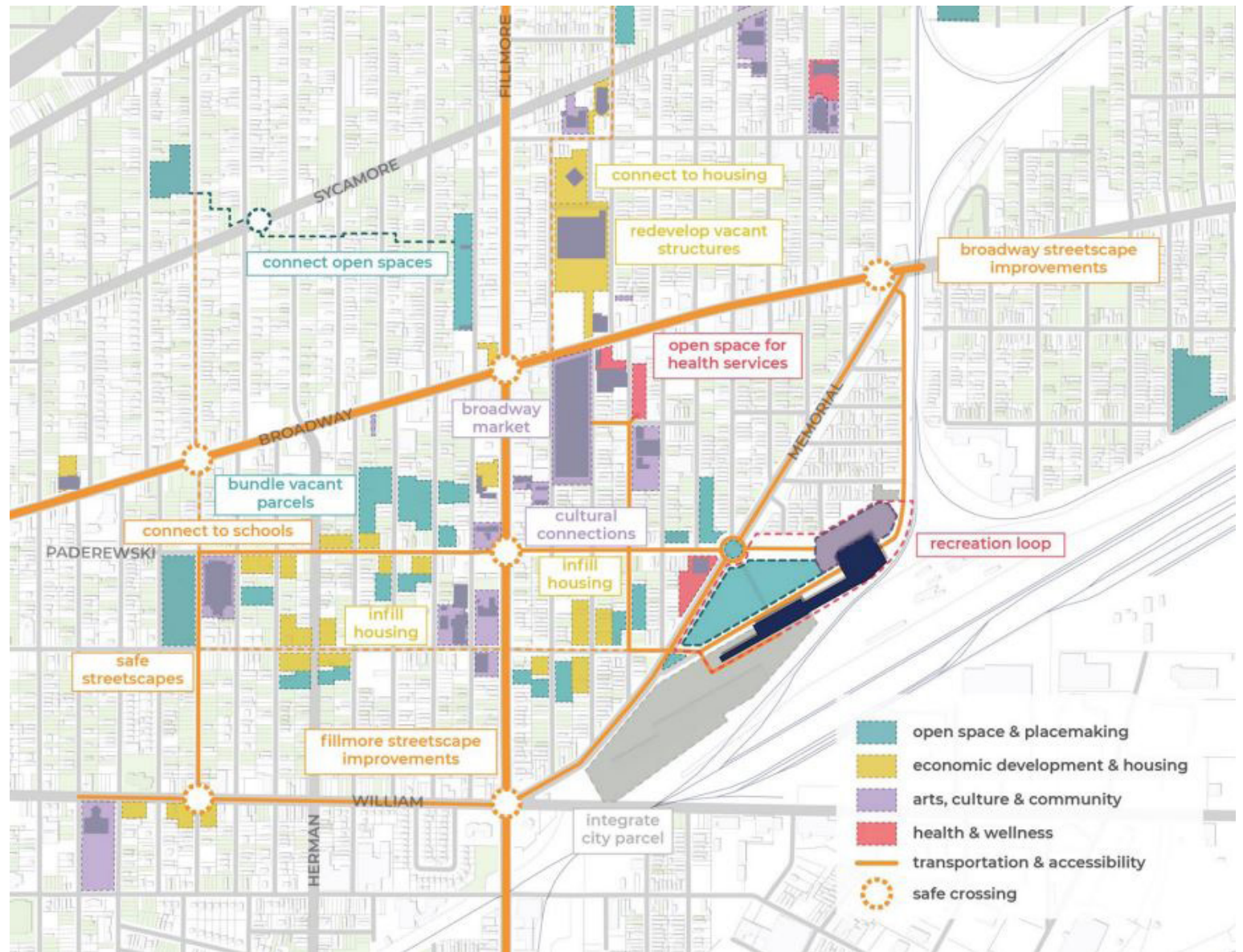
Preserve and activate cultural nodes to celebrate community diversity with events and activities to expand accessibility throughout the neighborhood.

Expand Neighborhood Services

Improve wraparound services for residents through partnerships with neighborhood organizations to help promote a healthy, sustainable quality of life.

Provide Equitable Housing & Workforce Opportunities

Provide accessible training, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities—and housing sizes, types and tenure alternatives to meet resident affordability needs.



Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood Framework Plan. From: Buffalo Central Terminal Master Plan Executive Summary

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Anchors Adjacent to Planning Areas.

Sisters Hospital just north of **Trinidad Park**, employs 3,000 people (google). A campus plan is not publicly available, telling us there is potential to create a stronger tie between the campus and the neighborhood.

The **American Axle Campus** East of the **Delavan Grider** neighborhood is being rebirthed as a manufacturing facility for lithium-ion battery packs and electric drive systems for heavy machinery. Viridi Parente, along with two subsidiary companies, Green Machine Equipment Inc., and Volta Energy Products, Inc. now occupies 25,000 square feet of the overall 850,000 square foot complex and has received significant investment from the Regional Development Council. Its proximity to the Northland WTC and BNMC provides an opportunity for a local green energy manufacturing council²¹.

Harmac Industries in the **Bailey Green** neighborhood, just East of Delavan Grider and MLK Park is a contract manufacturer of single-use medical products for the health care industry, with an international client base that includes Fortune 250 medical technology firms. The company has grown to more than 1,000 employees at three sites, including its headquarters on Bailey Avenue²². The local site is home to 400 local employees. The company has grown to over 1,000 employees worldwide, including its Mexico & Ireland sites. 25% of the local workforce live in the zip code.

The Bailey Green Initiative was designed to build up the neighborhood Harmac is in. This anchor business is working on demolishing abandoned houses, planted 150 trees, worked with the city to fix up sidewalks and install new lighting, and worked with Habitat for Humanity, who built 5 houses nearby. Three of the families who moved into those houses work for Harmac now. The company offers additional benefits like foot baths & prayer room for Muslim workers, college tuition



Harmac Bailey Green. Photo: Harmac

BaileyGreen
a Harmac Initiative



Vision: to transform the East Side of Buffalo to a Healthy Neighborhood for all: by creating greenspace, building affordable housing, increasing safety, and providing job opportunities for the community. Photo: Harmac

assistance, financial education programming, a paid week of summer camp for every worker's child or grandchild, an on-site farmer's market, and an in-house social worker to help employees and families with everything from transportation to family challenges. A highly diverse company, Buffalo's workforce at Bailey Green includes more than 20 nationalities. Company-wide (including sites in Mexico and Ireland), 40 nationalities are represented in the company.

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22 [Buffalo Business First](#)

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Business Leaders Initiative.

The Buffalo Center for Health Equity, Population Health Collaborative, the UB Community Health Equity Research Institute, and LISC have begun to build relationships among business leaders and anchor institutions. The topics for the convenings have included the local racial health and wealth equity gaps, equitable anchor business practices, and community development. A [briefing book](#) was created to summarize and describe the type of collaborative anchor strategy work that may be possible in our region, and several of the session's materials are included below:

1. [How Racial Equity Can Build Your Financial Equity](#)
2. [Building a Strategic Framework for Racial Equity](#)
3. [Fueling an Inclusive Workforce, slides](#)

Most recently, the Buffalo Center for Health Equity and the UB Community Health Equity Research Institute brought Heidi Gartland, the Chief Government and Community Relations Officer, University Hospitals, Cleveland to discuss, "[The Anchor Mission: Tackling Economic and Racial Disparities to Create Equitable Health Outcomes](#)" at the [2021 Virtual Igniting Hope Conference](#). The conversation among partners continues to be an open table, and we look forward to developing a local, collaborative and coordinated anchor strategy.

Equitable Transit Oriented Development (e-TOD).

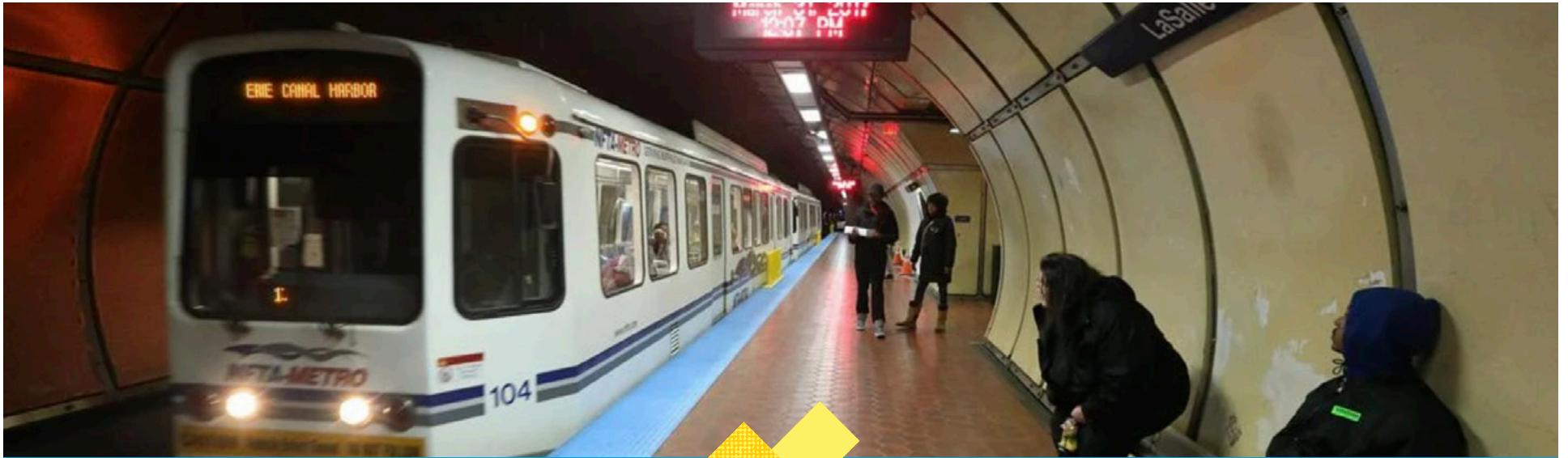
Buffalo's Land Use Plan, the basis for its Unified Development Ordinance aka "Green Code", establishes strengthening anchors along the Knowledge Corridor as a principal economic revitalization strategy.

The plan establishes several goals that relate to the planning area including:

1. Reinvent the area around Metro Rail stations as high-intensity, mixed-use neighborhood centers; and maximize population and employment densities.
2. Prioritize traffic calming and infrastructure improvements to make Main Street more active, attractive, and bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly.
3. Encourage transportation demand management strategies that shift single-occupant vehicle trips to modes such as walking, cycling, transit, and ridesharing.
4. Support the continued growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus

Transit-Oriented Development, or TOD, aligns investment in transit with a region's vision for growth and economic development. TOD promotes the development of vibrant, walkable, mixed-use communities in and around transit corridors and transit stations. The concept leverages public investment in transit to drive private investment in order to enrich neighborhoods and drive regional smart and sustainable growth. An emphasis of TOD empowers communities to become dynamic places where people live, work, and play. The typical walkshed area around a transit station is 1/4 mile and represents the distance most people are comfortable walking.

Equitable Transit Oriented Development (e-TOD) is development that enables all people regardless of income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, immigration status or ability to experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development near transit hubs. eTOD elevates and prioritizes investments and policies that close the socioeconomic gaps between neighborhoods that are predominately people of color and those that are majority white. eTOD projects and processes elevate community voice in decision making processes and in realizing community-focused benefits such as affordable housing, public health, strong local businesses, and environmental sustainability, to name a few. When centered on racial inclusion and community



Metro Rail. Photo: Buffalo News

A new knowledge-based economy is emerging on Main Street.

While Buffalo's industrial economy has declined along its waterfront and rail corridors a new knowledge-based economy is emerging on Main Street. The city's historic cultural dividing line is now the location of its primary economic drivers:

The light rail line that runs the length of Main Street is positioned to tie this all together. With 22,600 weekday passengers, and connections to numerous bus lines, Metro Rail links employment centers, educational and medical institutions, and mixed-use neighborhoods.

It offers the opportunity to combine a traffic-free commute with easy access to dining, entertainment, and recreational amenities. A combination of residential, retail, employment, and entertainment uses will generate riders throughout the day and evening and reduce periods of low ridership; while enhanced cross-town connections will help bridge the divide to employment opportunities. Higher density and a more vital public realm along the Knowledge Corridor will support both Metro Rail and a revived Main Street.

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wealth building, eTOD can be a driver of positive transformation for more vibrant, prosperous, and resilient neighborhoods connected to opportunities throughout the city and region.

The [NFTA's Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Plan](#) demonstrates that Metro Rail expansion has the opportunity to not only enhance regional mobility, but to serve as a part of a regional investment strategy to leverage economic and community development opportunities associated with transit investment. Some key regional findings:

1. The Metro Rail Corridor is projected to grow faster than the region.
2. Employment in the Metro Rail Corridor represents about a fifth of all regional jobs, and almost a fourth of all office and health, education, and government jobs in the region. Employment growth is projected to be stronger, on average, in the Metro Rail Corridor than in the total region, particularly for office jobs.
3. Employed residents both living and working within the Metro Rail Corridor could benefit from a significant reduction in transportation costs. Currently, almost 5,000 employed residents living in the existing Metro Rail Corridor also work in the corridor. Considering the Metro Rail extension, and not assuming any new residents in the corridor, this number would increase by 3,656. Moreover, based on projected future growth, and conservatively assuming current patterns of location of workers, an additional 1,339 workers could both live and work in the corridor by 2040, reaching a total of 9,942. This figure is likely to be higher as residential and commercial development intensifies within half a mile of Metro Rail stations.
4. The land supply of available vacant, underutilized, and/or redevelopment parcels in the Metro Rail Corridor is more than sufficient to accommodate the projected household and employment growth expected to occur in the corridor through 2040.

5. Future development resulting from the extension of Metro Rail is expected to add approximately 8.4 million square feet of commercial (office and retail) and residential space throughout the Metro Rail Corridor, worth a total assessed valuation of approximately \$1.7 billion. Existing properties where the current buildings and uses are expected to remain should see their cumulative assessed value increase by upwards of \$310 million as a result of their proximity to the Metro Rail extension.
6. In the scenario where the Metro Rail extension is built, the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst would collect approximately \$61.5 million in property tax revenues from properties in the Metro Rail Corridor, 32 percent more than in a scenario without the Metro Rail extension project.
7. The retail development linked to the construction of the Metro Rail extension would lead to approximately \$8.7 million in sales tax revenues for the State of New York and \$10.3 million in sales tax revenues for Erie County.

WITHIN East Side area Main Street Metro Line stations were included in Segment 2 of the study which extends from the City line to Best street. The analysis indicated that over 1400 new housing units have been constructed in the area between 2014 and 2017. The study projects that segment 2 may see a 2% increase in population, 2% increase in households and 5 % increase in employment – adding 1,700 jobs.

LISC WNY and GOBike Buffalo are currently partnered under NFTA's Comprehensive Transit Oriented Development Plan to convene an education and advocacy series with community members covering a wide array of topics in eTOD. The series is called [Developing Our Transit Future](#), and the goals include increasing informed community participation, community leadership, and community benefits in the eTOD landscape.

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SYA Machine Tool Lab. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

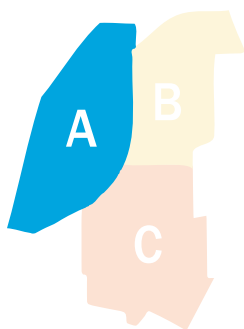
Regional planning efforts have designated growth industry sectors to target for workforce development and funding opportunities. Therefore, in recent years workforce programming has taken a sectoral employment approach, which provides jobseekers with training in the technical or “hard” skills needed for specific growing sectors of the local economy. Yet the growth of the regionally selected industries has not necessarily translated to job opportunity on a neighborhood level.

The unemployment rates in the Planning Areas have been persistently higher than that of the region. In fact, the unemployment rate reported for 2020 was about twice as high of that of Buffalo-Niagara. In 2020 Buffalo-Niagara had an unemployment rate of 9.7%, while Planning Area A was 19.6%, Planning Area B was 19.7%, and Planning Area C was 23.6%. It is evident that these communities face very different economic circumstances than the region is experiencing as a whole.

Furthermore, there is a spatial mismatch between the number of employees in the area and those actually living in the area that are also employed in the Planning Area. Our research shows that in 2018 over 18,000 people were employed in the Planning Area but did not live there, compared to approximately 1,100 people that both lived and worked in the area.

This mismatch begs the question, “Are the employers investing in community-based strategies?” Workforce service providers and communities have engaged in some promising new efforts in the last decade. Yet it is clear much work remains to concentrate employment opportunities in these neighborhoods experiencing poverty. In 2019, Planning A had 29.75% of households below the poverty level; for Planning Areas B and C it was 35.6% and 43.2% respectively. It is worth noting that the phrase workforce development implies more than employment training. Workforce development improves worker skills to enable long-term success and growth into a career.

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Job training brings an immediate and obvious benefit; it is complete when employees prove competency in particular areas. Whereas workforce development is ongoing and requires not only employer engagement and job placement, but also includes community connections and supportive services.

The number of organizations engaged in the development of the region's workforce, from public schools and vocational centers, to reentry job training programs, to the employers, private foundations and public agencies that support these programs are vast. Additionally, the role of faith-based institutions and networks in recruiting, mentoring, and supporting jobseekers is immeasurable. Workforce programs are constantly shifting and evolving. Therefore, an exhaustive list of agencies and providers targeting job placement, skills training and case management is not the focus of the discussion below. Instead, the discussion below pinpoints workforce service providers that are located in or in the periphery of the Planning Area; and organizations that are place-based with a primary goal of seeking to alleviate the barriers impacting these communities experiencing high unemployment.

Area A

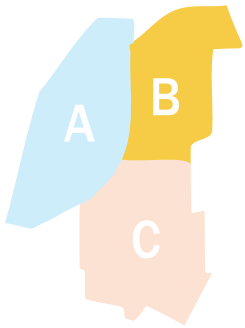
The labor force in all three Planning Areas represents a large number of service sector jobs, with health care employing nearly double the amount of any other industry. By contrast, those employed in tech and manufacturing (also part of the regions sectorial approach), represent a much smaller fraction of employees in the area. As highlighted below, the sector-based approach, which creates employment opportunities within a cluster of firms that share markets, technologies, and/or suppliers, is common in these areas. However, they cannot be effective without workforce pipelines, with a focus on neighborhoods and specific populations, improving the preparation and readiness of jobseekers. Health care is the most dominant industry in Planning Area A, anchored by the Buffalo Niagara

Medical Campus to the south and abutted by Sister's Hospital to the north. The health care institutions have developed partnerships with schools, colleges, and public workforce institutions. For example, the Health Sciences Charter School is found in Planning Area A. And perhaps most well-known is the Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT) which uses a nationally recognized model to provide jobseekers health careers (medical billing, medical coder, pharmacy technician, and phlebotomy.) As of April 2021, BCAT was awarded a state grant to train people in Erie County for information technology jobs, including as help desk technicians and system administrators.

BCAT is also known for its tuition-free arts and technology program for youth, which complements the many creative businesses and institutions located in Planning Areas A. Although there is no regional approach to workforce development in the creative economy, the assets in this area suggest that it is worthy of further investigation and investment. Other organizations providing training for the creative economy include the Apollo Media Center, offering studio production classes, and the Foundry, a makerspace offering programming for afterschool arts and maker-based businesses. Area A also includes the Performing Arts High School, Community Music School and Locust Street Art. Artspace Buffalo is also here, providing 60 affordable housing units to artists and their families.

Canisius College anchors the northern border of Planning Area A. It has three main academic units: the College of Arts & Science, the School of Business, and the School of Education & Human Services. Canisius College is home of the New Buffalo Institute that "aligns research, service and educational programming toward the many neighborhoods on Buffalo's East Side." Just a block away from the southern border of Planning Area A is the Buffalo Employment Training Center (BETC) and the Community Action Organization (CAO) Pratt Willert Community Center. Billed as a "one-stop" center, BETC brings together workforce development organizations, training agencies and

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employers. BETC is overseen by the Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board (WIB), “charged with developing, coordinating, and overseeing publicly funded workforce development/training initiatives.” CAO provides career counseling and job placement. Additionally, CAO has a college preparation program.



Regional priorities aimed to strengthen challenges in job growth & wealth creation:

Job readiness.

Strengthen the pipeline between P-12 systems, higher education and business.

Smart growth.

Reinvest in urban centers.

Culture of entrepreneurship.

Nurture a risk-taking “ecosystem,” and offer practical business services

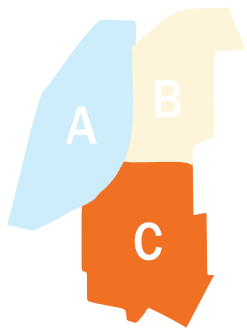
[Strategic Plan, 2011](#)

Area B

Manufacturing businesses, and more specifically “Second Stage” manufacturers with more than 10 employees and \$1 million in revenue, are most highly concentrated in Planning Area B. It is fitting that Area B is also the location of the Northland Workforce Training Center (NWTC). This training center is recognized as a pivotal accomplishment of the state’s Buffalo Billion Initiative. The development and operation of NWTC requires strong partnerships between businesses, colleges, public workforce institutions, and community groups. The Buffalo Niagara Manufacturing Alliance, one of the operators of NWTC, states, “The vision of Northland is to be the premiere model of public/private partnership providing education, training, and workforce development services, driven by industry and employment focused.”

A few blocks north of the Planning Area B on Kensington Avenue, is Burgard High School, which houses the Advanced Manufacturing Program. With investment from the state, the students in the program are working to obtain credits towards an Associate’s degree from Alfred State College. This program is considered a “feeding faculty” for NWTC. Outside of manufacturing, Planning Area B has several other vocational programs. The Outsource Construction Training Center is located south of NWTC on Fillmore Avenue. The Outsource center works with developers, contractors and non-profit organizations to train unemployed workers in the construction trades. East Delavan Academy, located in the American Axle Campus a few blocks east of the Area B border, is a short-term vocational training program which provides classroom, hands-on, and soft skills training with a focus on construction trades and telecommunication certifications. East Community High School builds a pipeline to careers in law, forensics, firefighting or police work.

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Area C

Planning Area C has multiple social service support organizations coupled with workforce development programs. These organizations provide training work closely with employers to ensure relevancy. In addition, they provide interpersonal “soft” skills training. For example, the Goodwill of Western New York has been providing workforce development in Buffalo for over 100 years. In fall of 2021 Goodwill launched their Goodskills Career Builder program, designed in partnership with the University at Buffalo Regional Institute and several local employers in Advanced Manufacturing and Technology. The program includes career counseling, job placement, and retention assistance.

Other social service organizations in this planning area include the Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers (BFNC) and the Matt Urban Center. BFNC “offers a network of community resources to assist individuals and families with career services, financial planning, and management to build future wealth.” And the Matt Urban Center’s Hope Works, provides “low barrier and practical job experience, training, and employment services to help individuals currently or previously experiencing homelessness”. Additionally, Matt Urban Center is planning a Culinary Arts Training program.

Within one block of the southern border of Planning Area C is Harvest House’s the New Hope Innovative Health Career Center. This program provides certificate-based, hands-on training in health and life sciences. Harvest House also partners with Erie 2 CC BOCES and the Buffalo Public Schools to provide adult education classes and certificate-based training.



The prevalence of health institutions located on the East Side are shaping both the neighborhoods and the city’s economic growth.

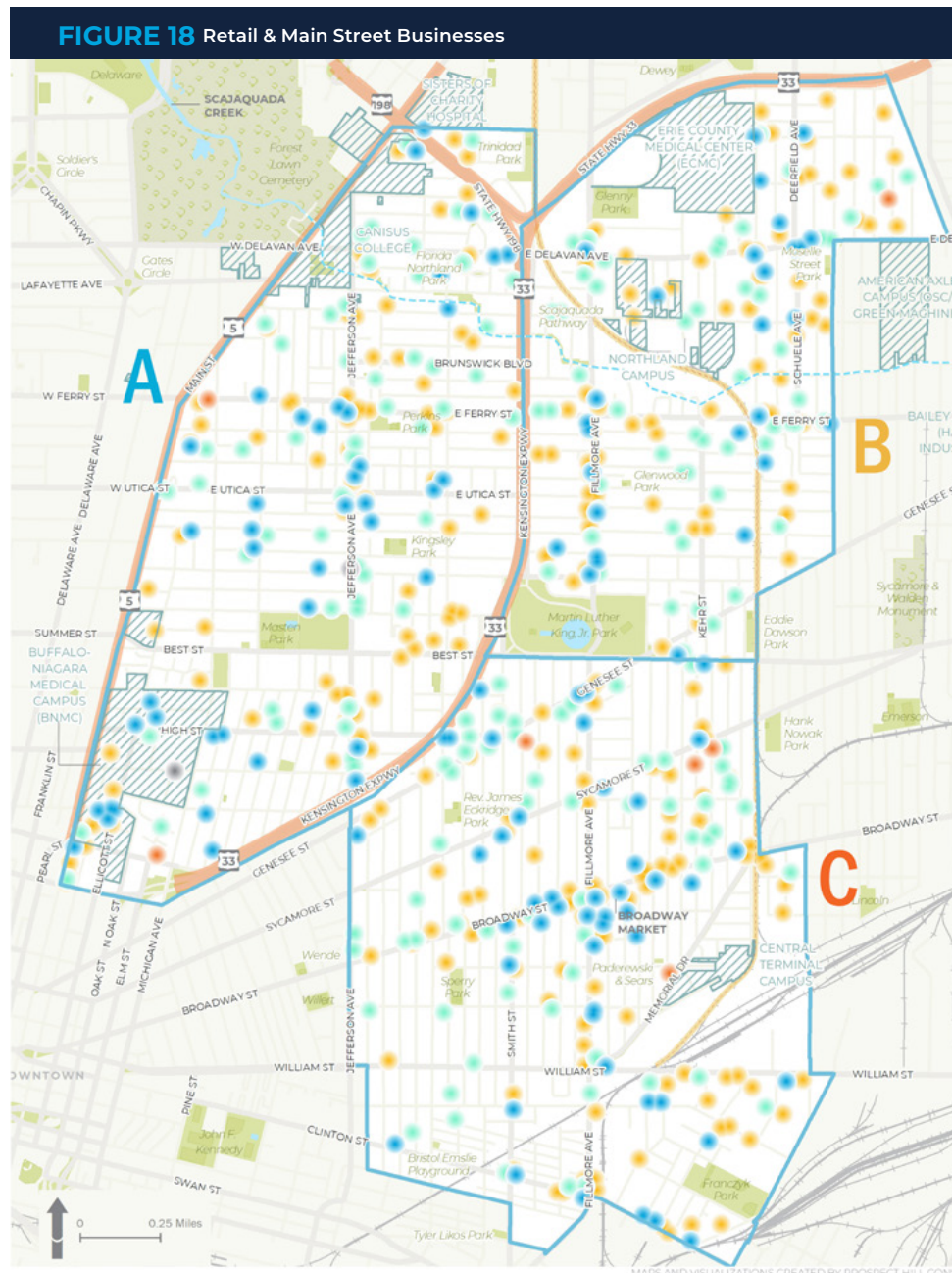
According to [Mobile Safety Net Numbers in Need](#), six of the top 10 employers are healthcare providers in the East Side:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Buffalo General | 6. Sisters of Charity Hospital |
| 2. Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center | 7. Buffalo VA Medical Center |
| 3. Erie County Medical Center | 8. Mercy Hospital of Buffalo |
| 4. Buffalo City School District | 9. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority |
| 5. University of Buffalo | 10. Lactalis |



Northland Workforce Training Center, feat. Rhonda Farr and Xi Laing. Photos: NWTC

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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Retail Trade
- Main Street Services
- Health Services
- Food Services
- Parking Lots & Garages

Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, data axle-Erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015–2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S. census OntheMap 2018; Invest Buffalo Niagara 2021

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Existing East Side Small Businesses.

Active commercial areas are an important amenity for quality of life, with 'Main Street' style businesses providing goods and services that support resident needs. They provide employment to the surrounding areas and facilitate the circulation of local money. The Planning Area, host to over 5,000 businesses in a post-pandemic reality, is highly entrepreneurial. The map on the previous page shows several types of Main Street businesses:

1. Retail Services, specifically shops that sell goods to customers, such as corner stores, grocery, home goods, clothing, hardware, etc;
2. Services, supplying services to residential customers such as auto repair, home and garden, beauty sales and barber shops;
3. Restaurants and food service include all full service and limited service dining establishments;
4. Health Services are comprised of fitness and recreation facilities that support residential living, including dance centers, pools, gyms, basketball courts, and other avenues for fitness. Clusters of retail industries are evident in pockets around Fillmore Ave, north of MLK Park, at the junction of Fillmore and E. Ferry, at the corner of Jefferson Ave and E. Ferry, in the blocks just north of Best Street, west of the 33, in the blocks around High Street and Jefferson Ave, on Broadway Street near the Broadway Market, and just south of William Street. Clusters of food-based businesses are forming on Broadway Street in tandem with the retail shops, and we see a similar pattern on Fillmore Avenue, north of MLK Park. Food industry businesses also seem to be clustering on Jefferson Ave between the E. Ferry and Utica stretch, and also in Area B, around E. Delavan and Deerfield, between ECMC and the Northland Campus. Clusters of Main Street Service businesses are also present, with the two highest in density being south of MLK Park in the blocks next to Genesee Street, and in the blocks just south of Sycamore Street.

Though there are public health facilities such as the Johnnie B Wiley Stadium and MLK Park fitness courts, private health facilities are minimal within the Planning Area. Two such businesses can be found in Area A, one in Area B, and four in Area C.

Ecosystem Level Business Support.

Western New York has a robust selection of technical assistance providers, public partners, and programs aimed at supporting entrepreneurs. Although the more established and larger institutions have not historically been aligned to drive inclusive entrepreneurship in East Buffalo, there is a more recent emergence of place-based business supports. Neighborhood level services are critical yet are lean in the Planning Area. Entrepreneurs in the Planning Area face multiple barriers when it comes to starting and growing successful businesses, including institutional and racial barriers. In addition to basic business services, tailored technical assistance for communities of color needs to be integrated.

Public resources include the Small Business Administration (SBA), The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at SUNY Buffalo State, and the Women's Business Center (WBC) at Canisius College. These resources offer technical assistance, classes and networking opportunities. All have specific programming aimed at certifying and increasing state, city and private procurement opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses (MBE/WBE). Although the WBC is on the perimeter and all offer virtual programming, these providers do not have offices geographically located in the Planning Area.

The City of Buffalo spearheads the development of the Beverly Gray Business Exchange Center, now rebranded as The Exchange at Beverly Gray. It was established in 2019 and is located on Utica near Jefferson, one of the East Side's

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predominate business corridors within the Planning Area. The Exchange’s goal is to “serve the underrepresented and BIPOC entrepreneurial community in Buffalo.” Beverly Gray is a technical resource center for entrepreneurs. Housed within the building is Pursuit Lending, a community focused lender for small to medium sized businesses.

The Community Action Organization (CAO) mission is “to promote opportunities for low-income individuals, families, and communities to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency”. CAO is a large organization, most often noted for their early childcare and workforce services. CAO also holds a Business Development Workshop series with a focus on developing “urban business districts” and the creation of “safe, walkable and prosperous communities, particularly in the Martin Luther King Jr. Park district”. CAO has worked in collaboration with the PathStone Enterprise Center. Pathstone is a community development corporation with an office in Rochester and ties to Buffalo. The Pathstone Technical Assistance program “pairs small-business owners and entrepreneurs with subject-matter experts and consultants who can assist with needs including basic business plan creation, financial planning and analysis, web design, and social media marketing.”

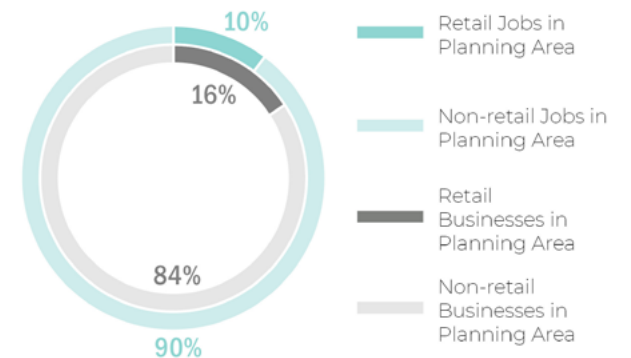
Also in the Planning Area is The Foundry, a coworking and makerspace. This mission-based organization welcomes “low-income, minority, women-owned and neighborhood-based businesses”. The Foundry is unique in the region in that it has continuing youth programming for hands-on and entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, the Foundry assist with business incubation, providing affordable rental space, business classes and support services. It is the only incubation space that explicitly invites underrepresented populations.

There are several other incubation programs on the periphery of the Planning Area which include Z80 Labs, 43North, LaunchNY and the University at Buffalo’s incubator. Yet, these

A TOTAL OF 798 RETAIL & MAIN STREET BUSINESSES PROVIDE APPROX. 4,000 JOBS.



RETAIL & MAIN STREET BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT IN PLANNING AREAS



incubators are focused on “high -growth startups”, companies that are designed to be scalable. Given that most ventured-backed startups are overwhelmingly white male, the

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perception is that these spaces are not representative of the adjacent neighborhoods to the east.

Also, worth noting are two national nonprofit organizations, one on the perimeter of the Planning Area and the other within close vicinity with a focus on mentoring—SCORE and Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll). SCORE Buffalo Niagara is volunteer based and provides face-to-face mentoring at 12 locations in Western New York, including a downtown Buffalo location. SCORE’s services include helping to start a business and write a business plan, advise on business funding and growth. EforAll in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus launched in 2021, its mission is “to accelerate economic and social impact through inclusive entrepreneurship”. Their model provides a combination of business training, mentorship and an opportunity to win seed money.

An additional program that uses a mentorship model is the Minority and Women Emerging Entrepreneurs (MWEE) program, a joint venture by the UB School of Management’s Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership and the UB Center for Urban Studies. Pre-pandemic, programming for MWEE was held in the UB Downtown Gateway Building near the medical corridor. The MWEE program assists business owners to moving to the next stage of development, by assigning a mentor, offering business development seminars and networking events, and requiring participants to complete or revise a developed business plan.

Anecdotal research suggests that non-traditional entrepreneurs represent a significant number of emerging East Side entrepreneurs, yet are often overlooked by the business development initiatives. Non-traditional entrepreneurs, those that operate without official licensing or under the radar, often begin without a business plan or a business bank account. The Westminister Economic Development Initiative (WEDI), located on the West Side, has had success with this category of entrepreneur, as they work “to tackle systemic inequities that

affect Buffalo’s underserved residents”, providing education and microloans. In 2012, WEDI expanded their service offering to the East Side, including the operation of a commercial kitchen at the Broadway Market.

There has been some collaboration among the aforementioned business support organizations to streamline efforts and address the gaps. It appears there is a need to strengthen and support services at the neighborhood level, recognize business competitiveness strategies specific to the community and focus on the needs of non-traditional entrepreneurs the opportunity to use their inherent talents positively participate in the rise of the business ecosystem.

Business District Support.

Active business districts are an important amenity for quality of life. A high presence of shuttered businesses are an impediment to new investment. Without needed goods and services nearby, transportation burdens are heightened, in both time and expenses. And access to local job opportunities are diminished. An early [Masten District Neighborhood Plan](#) (2004) recommends the redevelopment of several commercial business districts that, when redeveloped, will jumpstart the revitalization of neighborhoods surrounding them. The report outlines the development of marketing campaigns to promote these districts as great places to live, work, and raise a family, and suggests targeting major thoroughfares for landscaping and streetscaping to increase attractiveness and positive image for the surrounding neighborhoods:

- E. Delavan Commercial Corridor
- Jefferson Avenue Commercial Corridor
- Fillmore Avenue Commercial Corridor
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Commercial District.

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Fillmore Forward Banner Implementation Project. Photo: Fillmore Forward

Since this report was created in 2004, steady progress has been made. Fillmore Forward, a grassroots nonprofit organization was created in 2016. This team of individuals has been using the Main Street approach, endorsed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to support physical transformation of the environment, improving health and safety, encourage economic development, and create more vibrant walkable neighborhoods. The 2017 [Fillmore Avenue Streetscape Concept Plan](#) outlines strengths and opportunities within the district and provides a gaunt chart of

work to be done through 2025. Since the report was released, Fillmore Forward was involved in the development of the Square Community Garden, installation of pedestrian banners, development of murals, and a successful Storefront Makeover program. The report highlights priorities including the Belt Line park, a bridge mural, strengthening the Broadway Bazaar, improved signage, bus stops, street lighting, and the installation of trash bins.

Jefferson Avenue, the main commercial thoroughfare in Masten Park, was once the central commercial hub of Buffalo's Black community. After years of disinvestment, and economic suffering through the civil unrest of the 1960s, this strip has long been overlooked, but still holds major historical and cultural significance to the neighborhood. A concerted effort to invest in and redevelop this neighborhood is helping to launch its revival. Among recent developments, investor Greg Daniel is converting a former supermarket at 1507 Jefferson Ave into a health and wellness center, and is also renovating the former New York Telephone Co. Building at 299 Jefferson Ave into a 33-unit apartment building. People Inc., Sinatra & Co. and Creative Structures Services Inc. developed the Jefferson Avenue Apartments at 1184 Jefferson Ave. with 84 units, totaling a \$24 million investment. Ahmed Saleh expanded the Mandela market at E. Ferry and Jefferson Ave, adding 1,500 sq ft of space to sell fresh fruits and vegetables. Michelle Frazier is expanding Nanny's Nook Quality Day Care Center at 1495 Jefferson Ave, and is investing in her neighborhood that's been in business on the strip for 6 years. And Sunshine Vegan Eats, at 893 Jefferson Ave has opened up, offering a new type of food experience for local residents, who have traditionally been situated in a food desert. A Jefferson Avenue Business Association has historically been in operation. Though operations were minimal for a few years, there has been a resurgence of energy in this organization, starting in 2021, with the organization exploring 501c3 status, and holding stakeholder engagements with business owners and residents.

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Breaking Ground at Mandela Market.

St John's Church started a Community Development Corporation (CDC), with a goal of redeveloping the 42 block Fruit Belt, adjacent to BNMC, with a specific lens on the redevelopment of High Street. Goals include: Building a sense of community, enhancing the commercial district and entrepreneurial opportunities, increasing residential density in the Fruit Belt, establishing gateways to opportunities at BNMC, and creating jobs for residents of the neighborhood²³. Key nodes and areas of possibility outlined by the CDC include the intersections of High St & Mulberry, High St & Locust, High St & Lemon. Other priorities include gateways, monuments, art, streetscaping, parks and the development of third spaces, and developing High Streets community identity and narrative, from the neighborhood level. The Fruit Belt Community Land Trust is also active in the Fruit Belt neighborhood, providing services to commercial and residential lessees and owners.

Beyond these grassroots efforts, the East Side Avenues program, explained in the following section, is funding three nonprofit organizations to act as Local Program Administrators (LPAs) for state funds. These three organizations are: Citizen's Alliance, supporting the work on Jefferson Avenue, Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services, supporting the work in the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood, and the University District Community Development Association (UDCDA), supporting the work on Bailey Avenue through the Bailey Business Association.

The Buffalo Billion.

In the Spring of 2019, Empire State Development, in conjunction with the ambitious Buffalo Billion project, announced the East Side Corridor Economic Development Fund. This fund provides \$65 million of investment toward the

23 [Fruit Belt/East Side Community Development Project](#)

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Fillmore Forward Storefront Makeover Program 1474 Fillmore Ave.
 Photo: Fillmore Forward

stabilization of homeownership, strengthening commercial corridors, improving significant historical and natural assets, and supporting and growing entrepreneurship²⁴.

The East Side Corridor Economic Development Fund has committed to investing in 4 North-South commercial districts spanning from Main Street to the I-190 in the south: Michigan Ave, Jefferson Ave, Fillmore Ave, Bailey Ave. They have also identified 9 Investment Areas on these four corridors: Historic Michigan, Jefferson Ave Commercial District, Main & Fillmore, Northland, MLK Park Business District, Broadway Fillmore, Kensington Bailey, Bailey Green, and Clinton Bailey. Beyond the grassroots efforts mentioned earlier in this section, the East Side Avenues program, is funding three nonprofit organizations to act as Local Program Administrators (LPAs) for state funds. These three organizations are: Citizen's Alliance, supporting the work on Jefferson Avenue, Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services, supporting the work in the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood, and the University District Community Development Association

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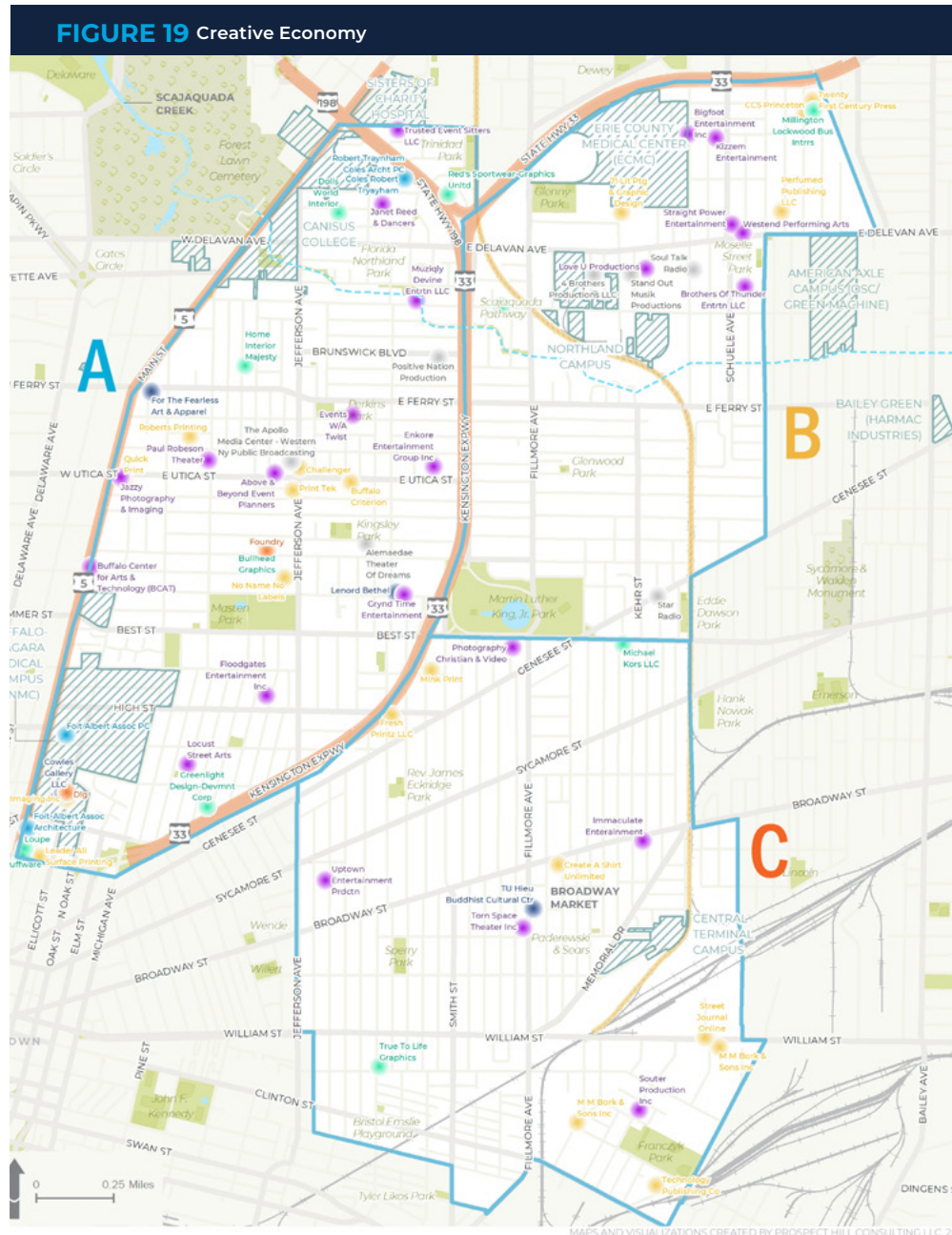
This significant investment is backed by Buffalo's Racial Equity Roundtable Racial Equity Report, which states that people of color are less likely to live in neighborhoods with intact commercial areas. While almost nine in ten white residents in the region live in neighborhoods with low commercial vacancy rates, fewer than two in three people of color do (p. 44).

As such, this \$65 million of investment in East Side infrastructure and commercial districts is a significant state investment in the East Side neighborhood's economy. In 2021 through early 2022, East Side Avenues (ESA) contracted with LISC WNY to provide a 6-part [Commercial District Management Training](#). This beginner to intermediate level training provided best practices for district organizers, based on the National Main Street 4-point Approach. The Main Street 4-point Approach (or Main Street Model), provides a time-tested framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization of commercial districts. The four points relate to: district design, promotion, business development, and organization of resources.

Though the series was geared towards East Side Avenues participants, LISC was permitted to promote the series to all district organizers within Erie and Niagara Counties. 16 attendees, representing 8 separate organizations, and one newer organization in it's development stages attended. Outside of the East Side Avenues funded training, LISC WNY has continued to convene district managers and organizers monthly to continue conversations started in the training series, and dive deeper into place-specific opportunities and challenges with attendees. This 'Community of Practice,' going by the name of the 'Corridor Collaborative,' is funded by the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, and is ongoing through 2022.

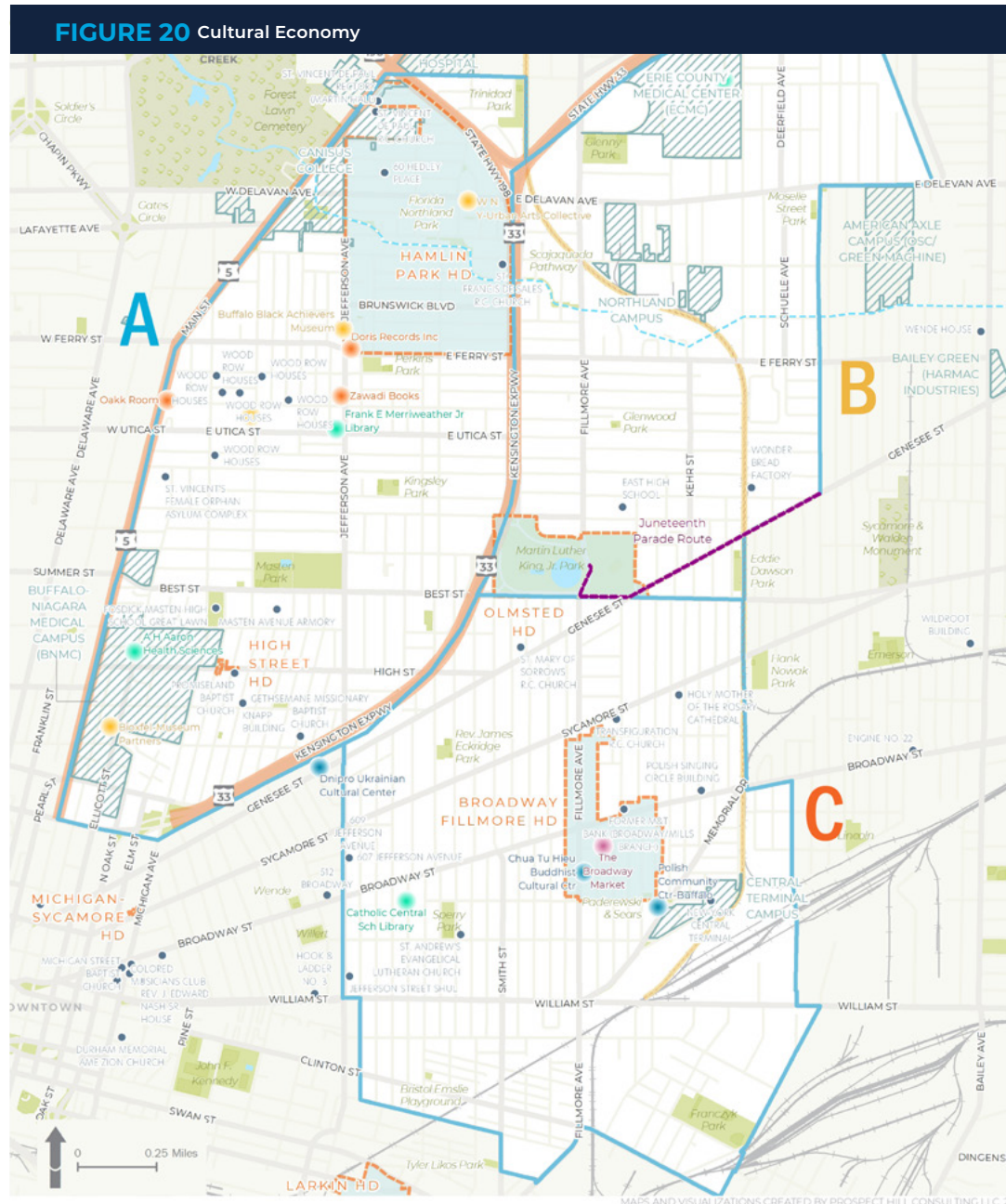
24 [Buffalo Billion East Side Corridor Fund Report, 2019.](#)

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Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, data axle-erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015–2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S. census OnTheMap 2018; Invest Buffalo Niagara 2021

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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- East Side Landmark
- Historic District (HD)
- Culinary Arts
- Cultural Center
- Cultural Economy Business
- Library
- Museum

Source: ESRI 2020; City Of Buffalo 2021, Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, Data Axle-Erie County Public Library 2021; U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019; Citizens For Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021, BLS 2021; U.S Census OntheMap 2018; Visit Buffalo Niagara 2020; Operation Road Trip 2010; Albright Knox 2017; Preservation Buffalo Niagara 2021; Arts Services Inc. (ASI) 2017

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Work & Play Mural Completed. Photo: Fillmore Forward

Creative Economy.

Though there are many definitions and interpretations for the creative economy, for the purposes of this report, the creative economy includes sectors whose goods and services are based on intellectual property. The creative economy occurs where individual creativity is the main source of value and cause of a transaction (Howkins, 2001).

Examples include: Architecture Firms, Publishing, Software Design, Museums & Galleries, Visual & Performing Arts, Crafts & Artisan Goods/Maker Spaces, Film, TV, video, radio, broadcasting & photography, Design Firms: Product, graphic & fashion/textile



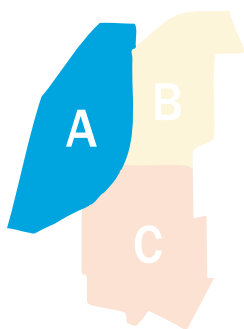
BCAT. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

Cultural Economy.

What then, is the cultural economy? Cultural industries, for the purposes of this report, are a subsection of the creative industries. It includes cultural tourism & heritage, museums & libraries, sports & outdoor activities and “way of life” activities that deliver value in cultural and social wealth, rather than primarily providing monetary value.

Examples include: Historic culturally significant sites , Historic building preservation , Culinary arts, Museums & galleries, Sports & rec facilities

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Creative & Cultural Economies Area A.

Between the two maps shown above, Area A highlights a variety of creative & cultural sites. Performing arts businesses scattered throughout the site, including event businesses, entertainment groups and dance troupes. At Jefferson & Utica there are a cluster of publishing businesses, including the Challenger and The Criterion, leading news publishers for Buffalo's African-American community. Here between Jefferson and Main Street, and E. Utica and Ferry, we see a cluster of cultural activities and sites forming. The Buffalo Black Achievers Museum, the African American Cultural Center (AACC), and Paul Robeson Theater are located within this series of blocks. The Buffalo Black Achievers Museum, a permanently standing exhibition, showcases public figures of Buffalo's past while inspiring plans for the future. The AACC was established in 1958, with a mission to enable spirits to soar and offered sanctuary, validation and celebration for the duality of being African and American²⁵. The Paul Robeson Theater, part of the AACC, was founded in 1968 to nurture and showcase the talents of African American playwrights, producers, directors, actors and stage technicians in the City of Buffalo and the surrounding Western New York region²⁶.

In addition to these cultural landmarks, we see a cluster of historic wood row houses, holding architectural history of the neighborhood. A grouping of culturally significant businesses border these blocks. Doris Records, a staple Black-owned music shop was established in 1962 during the boom of Jefferson Avenue. It has grown from one room on the corner of Jefferson and E. Ferry, and now encompasses the entire building. Doris Records is the store Rick James spent his childhood in, and is recognized as a major influence in his career²⁷. Here, we also find Zawadi Books, a bookstore that specializes in books and materials that are by and about people of African descent. The Oakk Room is an establishment in a historic building. What started as an automobile shop

was converted into a pub in the 1980's²⁸. Our engagements and discussion with community members led us to highlight this particular venue. We have heard the desire to boost the Oakk Room's history and the desire to preserve the building's historic assets. Lastly, we find the Frank E. Merriweather library anchored at the corner of Utica and Jefferson. Today, the library houses the William A. Miles Center for African and African-American Studies, the largest resource center in Western New York for information on African American history²⁹.

The northern end of Area A is home to the Hamlin Park Historic District, designated at all three levels: local, state and national. A variety of homes still hold their historic character, and many significant people lived in this neighborhood, both within and outside of the historic district boundary lines. Prominent political figures like Delmar Mitchell, the first African American councilman-at-large and council president lived in this neighborhood. John E. Brent, Buffalo's first African American architect lived in this neighborhood, alongside John Hargrave, founder of Buffalo's first African American law firm. Furthermore, notable cultural legends lived in this neighborhood, including Albert Riding, trumpet player with Count Basie, and Grover Washington, Jr., world famous saxophonist³⁰. The WNY Urban Arts Collective is also headquartered within the Hamlin Park Historic District.

In the southern end of Area A, we see a cluster of creative & cultural economy activity in and around the Buffalo Niagara Medical Center (BNMC). Various publishing & printing firms, architecture firms, design services and entrepreneurial maker spaces are clustered in this campus. A variety of historic landmarks lie in the Fruit Belt neighborhood behind the campus, including armories, churches, historic schools and buildings. The Bioxfel Museum is on campus as well. This is the National Science Foundation (NSF) Science & Technology Center, who has partnered with the Buffalo Science Museum to build a permanent installation on their venue on Ellicott Street.

25 [AACC Website](#)

26 [AACC Paul Robeson Theater](#)

27 [Buffalo Rising](#)

28 [Oakk Room](#)

29 [PBN](#)

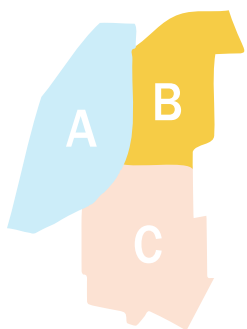
30 [buffaloah.com](#)



Doris Records by Julia Wald Art

J-W - 2021

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Behind the BNMC, residents of the Fruit Belt neighborhood are spearheading a High Street Historic District. The push for the district is part of a larger effort by residents to push back on demolition activity from the Medical Campus that threatens the historic character of the Fruit Belt. This historic district is located on a short block between Maple and Mulberry streets, a block from the BNMC. Included in the historic district are: the 1875 Civil War era High Street Deli, Promiseland Missionary Baptist Church on High and Mulberry, and a 5,400 sq ft building made up of two brick Italianate homes³¹. Also in the Fruit Belt is Locust Street Arts, an organization that offers free neighborhood art classes to resident youth. Another artisan/maker space exists for creative class adult and youth entrepreneurs at The Foundry. The Foundry is an active community space situated at Northampton and Jefferson Avenue. They offer entrepreneurship sessions & workforce development opportunities for youth and adults, and provide a maker space for businesses in their building.

South of the BNMC, and outside of our planning area sits the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor. A project within the scope of the Buffalo Billion and East Side Avenues, the heritage corridor is a rich and culturally significant place. The area is known for its many contributions to the Underground Railroad, anti-slavery movement, Jazz Age, and Civil Rights movements. With sponsorship from Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples Stokes, and her procurement of a legislative grant for \$75,000, the Michigan Street Heritage Corridor Commission was formed and appointed by the Governor, to oversee the preservation and development of this corridor. A 2011 report³² highlights many facets of this area's unique history and strategies for redevelopment. Though the southern end is not within our study areas, Michigan Street runs north through the BNMC campus, and runs north to Main Street. One block south of Main, at Michigan St and E. Ferry, sits the Freedom Wall, funded by the Albright Knox Museum, and painted by four local artists. The Freedom Wall

is an iconic mural highlighting historical African American figures through time. Michigan Street connects our planning area from the north to the African American Heritage Corridor, an area receiving state funding and support, to the south.

Creative & Cultural Economies Area B.

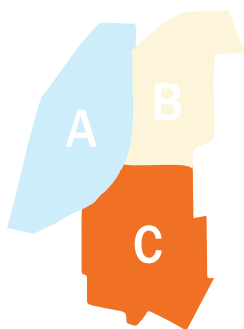
When shifting to Area B, we see a cluster of Entertainment businesses in the top right corner of the Delavan Grider neighborhood. Publishing firms are also scattered in a cluster in the top right of Area B. Three broadcasting A/V businesses are adjacent to, or within, the Northland Campus.

Also situated on the Northland Campus in the Delavan Grider neighborhood is the satellite site of the Albright Knox, a highly esteemed regional arts museum, undergoing a robust \$160mil expansion on their Elmwood site. They bring vast experience in public art development, art programming, and continuing education for artists and educators. Albright Knox is exploring how to best stay committed to the Delavan Grider neighborhood when their capital project is completed. The Buffalo Urban Development Corporation, managers of the Northland Campus, held a series of stakeholder meetings in 2019 when undergoing their Brownfield Opportunity Area Report. From these stakeholder meetings, resident voices outlined a great deal of interest in arts and culture projects. A series of locations were determined for artistic interventions: ECMC, Glenn Park, and the former Kensington Heights sites were long-standing sites for intervention. In addition, gateways into the campus were identified as potential placemaking sites. The Shantell Martin Mural site was also listed as a potential opportunity to build off of. NFTA bus shelters will be constructed at the bus stops at Grider, Fillmore and Northland, and E. Delavan and Schauf. These locations were suggested to have arts and culture elements built into their renovation. Lastly, the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation has a list of 16 sites designated for potential public

³¹ [The Buffalo News](#)

³² [Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor Draft Mgmt Plan](#)

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art development around the campus.

On the border of Area B and running south along the historic Olmsted MLK Jr. Park, is the route for Buffalo's Juneteenth festival, a strength of Buffalo's East Side. The creative and cultural economy focus group also elevated the desire to see a development around MLK Park as an artistic endeavor for the community. In interviews with Jes Breathe Block Club, there is a vision to bring a representation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to MLK Park. The aim is to put the statue across from Cavalry Baptist Church. The original name of MLK Park was 'The Parade' in the 1800s. The last remaining building from The Parade is the Vaux Barn. The Jes Breathe Block Club Association would like the Vaux Barn relocated across from Family Dollar, and would like to restore the barn into a museum with the history of the park and Dr. King's life. Architectural renderings have already been developed and the Vaux Barn would entail a \$550,000 restoration project. The building itself, as the last remaining piece of The Parade era, could be a draw itself for historians.

Creative & Cultural Economies Area C.

Area C is host to a series of publishing companies, primarily located south of the Central Terminal around William Street. There are additional publishing firms scattered in Area C near the Kensington Expressway and the Broadway Market. A few design and performing arts businesses are located in Area C, along with a retail arts gallery at the Tu Hieu Buddhist Cultural Center. Torn Space Theater brings innovative theater programming to the district, with participatory performances that incorporate the neighborhood's churches, walking tours of the neighborhood embedded in performances, and highlight the neighborhood's history and culture.

Within Area C, there lie three cultural centers: Tu Hieu Buddhist Cultural Center, The Polish Community Center of Buffalo, and Dnipro Ukrainian Cultural Center. Also nestled in close proximity,

are several Islamic masjids. The Buffalo Islamic Cultural Center is located at Walden and Bailey, a short distance outside the Area C boundary lines. This exemplifies the diversity of this neighborhood. Supporting this sentiment, an asset the community has lifted up is food access and bolstering the neighborhood as an international food hub. We have heard that with all the diverse languages and people in this neighborhood, food is a shared cultural value that all people can bond over.



Chua Tu Hieu. Photo: Buffalo Rising

Through our engagements, we have heard that 'people don't know where to go for what,' in regards to restaurant offers and hours of operation. We have also heard that 'people don't know what's open for food access,' in regards to healthy food options. Yet, garden initiatives are active in this neighborhood. Beyond the Square Community Garden, the Grassroots Garden organization has gardens throughout the East side of Buffalo. The Wilson Street Urban Farm is just North of the Broadway Market, with Common Roots Urban Farm to the South. There is also a neighborhood level push to activate Clark and Kent streets as a 'super block,' full of programming

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16 community-identified potential public art sites were identified for the Northland Campus:

Northland & Fillmore

Two concrete underpasses with wraparound corners

Fillmore & Northland

Greenspace adjacent to Site #1

577 Northland

Triangular shaped park space

Winchester at E. Delavan

Large corner lot next to Project Rainfall building space

Shantell Martin Mural Site

Large greenspace directly fronting Shantell Martin mural

Project Rainfall Side Parcel

Large space directly behind Project Rainfall building site

Houdaille Chimney

Preserved chimney directly behind Site 6

644 Northland at Longview

Small corner lot across from Workforce Training Center (WTC)

West Parcel

next to WTC Greenspace next to West entrance

Northland & Schauf

Large sections of parking lots converted to greenspace

East Parcel

next to WTC Greenspace east of WTC main entrance way

Northland at Dutton Parcel

Large corner greenspace with adjoining east and south sections

777 Northland | Otis Elevator

Foundation and walls in redevelopment site

Dutton water tower

Small water tower located on north side of train tracks at end of Dutton Avenue

777 Northland Chimney

Otis Elevator chimney located in the back section of Site 13

Northland at Grider Monument

Two concrete underpasses with wraparound corners

and arts and culture activities, and our engagements highlighted the desire for something like a West Side Bazaar food incubator in this neighborhood, merging and lifting the cultural identities seen in this footprint. These various activities and initiatives beg the question of how to best support the melting pot of cultures and ethnicities to foster connection through food and healthy food access?

Supporting this theme, the Broadway Market, one of the largest and oldest City-owned public markets in the US, is a historic landmark and a staple at the Corner of Broadway and Fillmore Ave. Through the Buffalo Billion initiative, \$4 million of state funds is slated towards the revitalization of the market. This renovation includes a market study, interior and exterior design plans, and capital funding to modernize the facility, enticing visitors to come to the space.

Upon initial release of market designs, a suggestion was made to reflect more ethnicities in the market, such as the African-American, South Asian, and Muslim communities³³. When looking at the cluster of business activities in the Broadway Fillmore district, it becomes clear that there is a distinct Islamic cluster of sorts. Here, there are halal stores, mosques, Islamic book stores among others. This identifies the potential need for business support agencies to provide culturally relevant services that align with Islamic values and culture. South Asian and Arabic languages may be a necessary skill to engage with the cluster of Islamic businesses arising in this neighborhood.

Additionally, in 2019, a \$5 million investment for the historic Central Terminal was announced with the release of the Buffalo Billion East Side initiative, with the aim of creating a year-round event space in the concourse and full capacity for catering and events. The Central Terminal is expanding diverse events and activities for diverse audiences. Recent events include Play/Ground and Beau Fleuve Music & Arts

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Festival. This landmark, with its art deco design and distinct history, has the opportunity to attract more creative arts/artisan markets and businesses to its footprint through events and business incubation.



St. Stanislaus, Mother Church of Polonia. Photo: BFNHS

When looking at the cultural economy map, we see several historic churches and buildings surrounding this neighborhood. In 2018, the Broadway Fillmore core became the City of Buffalo's newest historic district. It took over two years of community partnership and organization, and was spearheaded by the Historic East Side Neighborhood Initiative (HESNI), hundreds of residents who sent letters of support to the Preservation Board and Common Council, and Preservation Buffalo Niagara. PBN is now working on getting the district certified through the National Park Service so property owners can access historic tax

credits, similar to Hamlin Park and Allentown Historic Districts. Arts & Culture themes that arise through all the footprints in the form of cultural activities and physical improvements. In our Creative & Cultural Economy focus group, we were told that murals "have a unique chance to attract people and create our own narrative." The rich history and importance of place was a theme that arose through the Pride in Place Buffalo initiative, spearheaded by the Buffalo Center for Health Equity & LISC. The Pride in Place project worked to celebrate and reinvigorate Black and Brown culture, community, and pride throughout these three target areas. The effort highlighted and promoted hope and exploration during COVID-19 recovery, while planting seeds for neighborhood-owned community development visions. A was collected and promoted, a 'build your own walking tour' with historic and cultural sites was developed, and 20 idea boxes³⁴, designed by local artists, gather community input for often overlooked spaces including Black- and Brown-owned businesses and organizations, as well as abandoned buildings and lots. The idea boxes acted as a way for community members to provide their thoughts to this overall process. Overall, there are many potential ingredients in these spaces to bridge arts and culture in ways that lift up history, culture, and economic well-being for residents. Opportunities brought up in our focus groups include more funding to high importance events and organizations, like Juneteenth and the African American Cultural Center. There is an opportunity to define goals of the cultural and creative economies in shared spaces. Opportunities exist for more networking, defining value of self within the mainstream cultural and creative economies, and lifting Black and Brown artist work to state and national levels.



Arts & Culture Spotlight: The Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collective

is an organization committed to keeping the tradition of jazz alive as it reinforces confidence that Western New York is a place to develop talent, grow as a performance artist and expand the jazz audience.

Buffalo is a city with deep roots in the jazz tradition. It has been home to many jazz greats and provided teachers, mentors and audiences for developing and veteran musicians. The Collective serves as outreach to the entire community as it offers jazz, an original American art form, in its highest form. Their mission includes creating accessible opportunities for the entire community to engage in and benefit from the education, honor and celebration of the historical, cultural and artistic significance of jazz. They focus on varied initiatives to enhance audience development with a focus on jazz appreciation, knowledge and understanding via live performances, community forums and other related activities. The Collective recognizes and addresses the multi-pronged aspects of continuing the legacy of James “Pappy” Martin to execute a cohesive and comprehensive impact by including the following entities under one umbrella organization:

Ron Carter. Photo: Pappy Martin Jazz Legacy Collective



Pappy Martin Legacy–Masten Jazz Festival:

Started in 1996, it is a free festival that continues to grow as a highly anticipated summer mainstay attracting approximately 3000 attendees on the last two Sundays in July on the grounds of the Buffalo Museum of Science. By presenting the best of international, national and local musicians, it executes its mission to create opportunities for diverse community engagement in educating, honoring and celebrating the historical, cultural and artistic significance of jazz. By keeping this festival free and centrally located, it removes financial and physical barriers so that this cultural event is accessible to all members of the community.

Love Supreme School of Music

Beginning in 2003, it has provided instrumental music lessons as students study of the science of music with numerous opportunities for overall musical development including performance experience. It is our belief that a student does not have a complete education without the study and discipline of music lessons. By grooming the next generation of musicians and music appreciators, we help to ensure the longevity of this art form. The school is located at Lincoln Memorial United Methodist Church 641 Masten Avenue Buffalo, NY 14209 and offers instruction, free of charge with major funding from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Fund administered by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

Love Supreme School of Music.
Photo: Pappy Martin Jazz Legacy Collective



Celestial Jazz Series

In 2017, this series was begun to present world-class jazz musicians in the sacred atmosphere of the church. It celebrates and exemplifies the spiritual nature of jazz while broadening its exposure and opportunity for audience development.

John Coltrane Birthday Celebration

Since the 1980s, Pappy Martin honored the massive contributions and lasting impact of influential jazz saxophonist, John Coltrane, with an annual celebration on his birthday, September 23rd. This tradition continues and has expanded to a three day mini-festival co-sponsored by and held at the Burchfield-Penney Art Center. This event features world renowned musicians, along with the best of local musicians including youth performers.

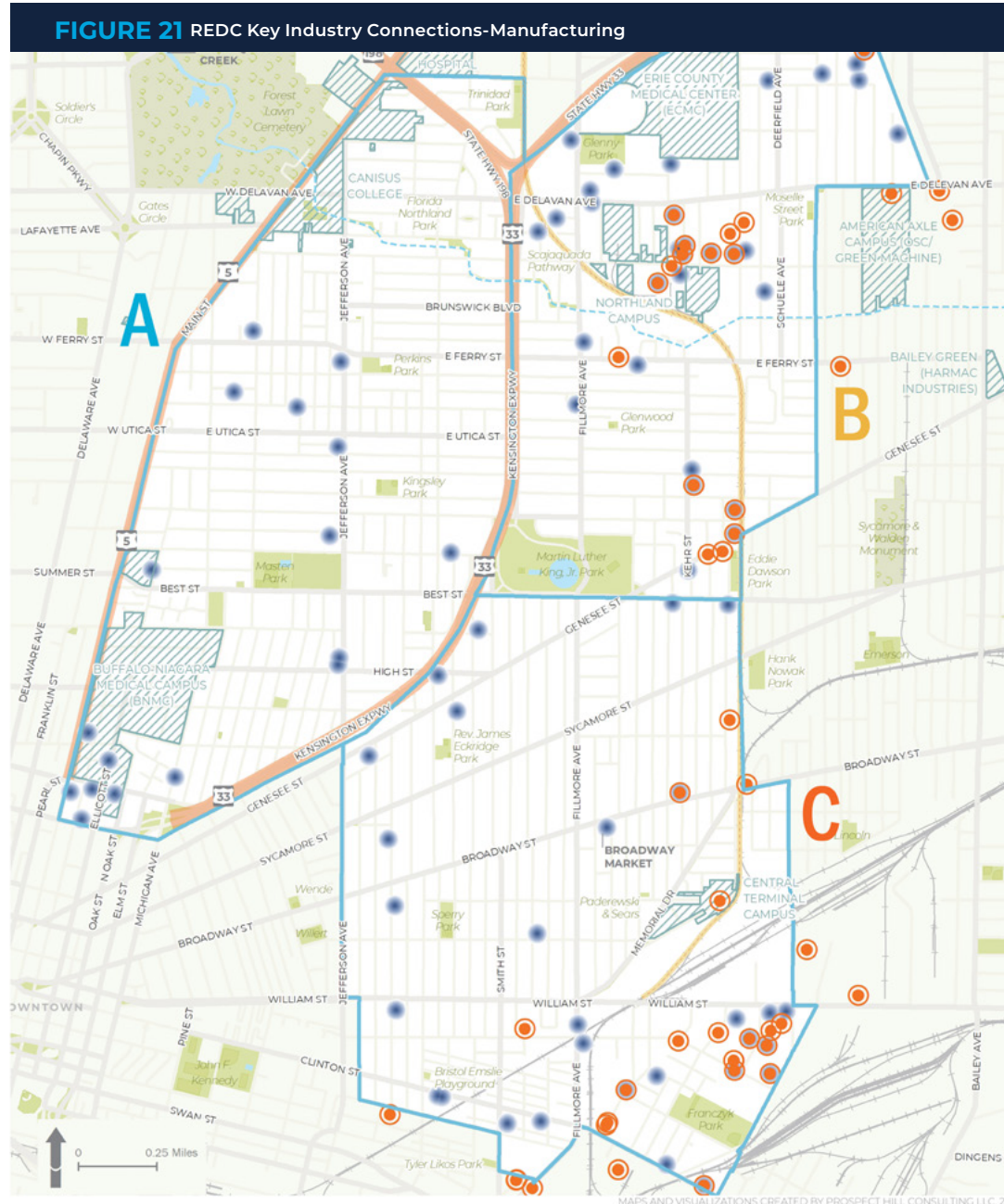
Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Society

Founded in 2011 to support the jazz festival and its commitment to keep it free and accessible to everyone in the community, it currently supports all aspects of the Collective. Its commitment includes fundraising and activities to expand the community, knowledge and appreciation of jazz. It offers events which educate, elevate and celebrate with respect to jazz as an internationally recognized art form with a rich and unique culture, worthy of honor and preservation.

Tina Fuller. Photo: Pappy Martin Jazz Legacy Collective

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FIGURE 21 REDC Key Industry Connections-Manufacturing

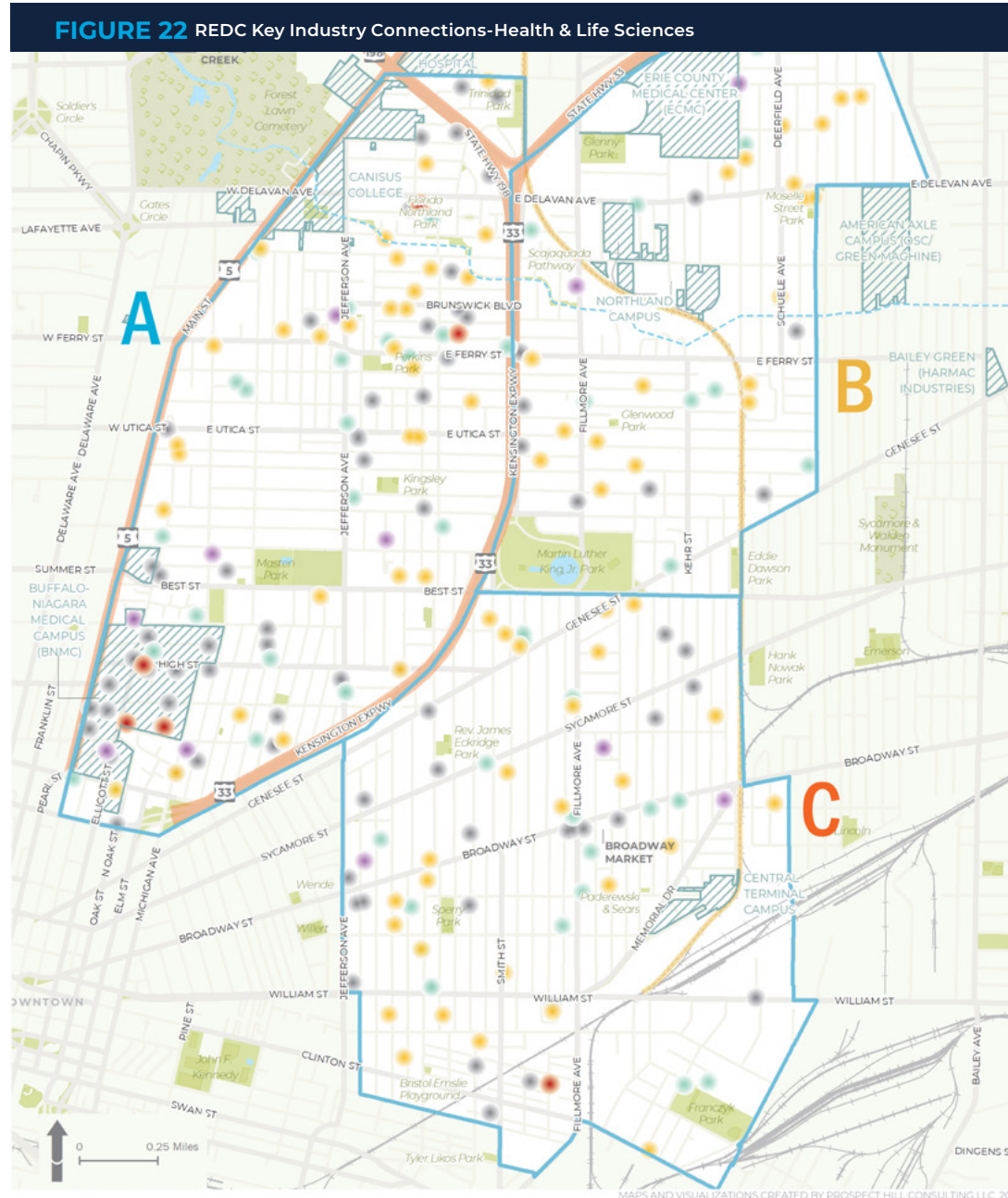


- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- Manufacturing
- Second Stage Manufacturers

Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, Data Axle-Erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015–2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S. census OntheMap 2018; Invest Buffalo Niagara 2021

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FIGURE 22 REDC Key Industry Connections-Health & Life Sciences



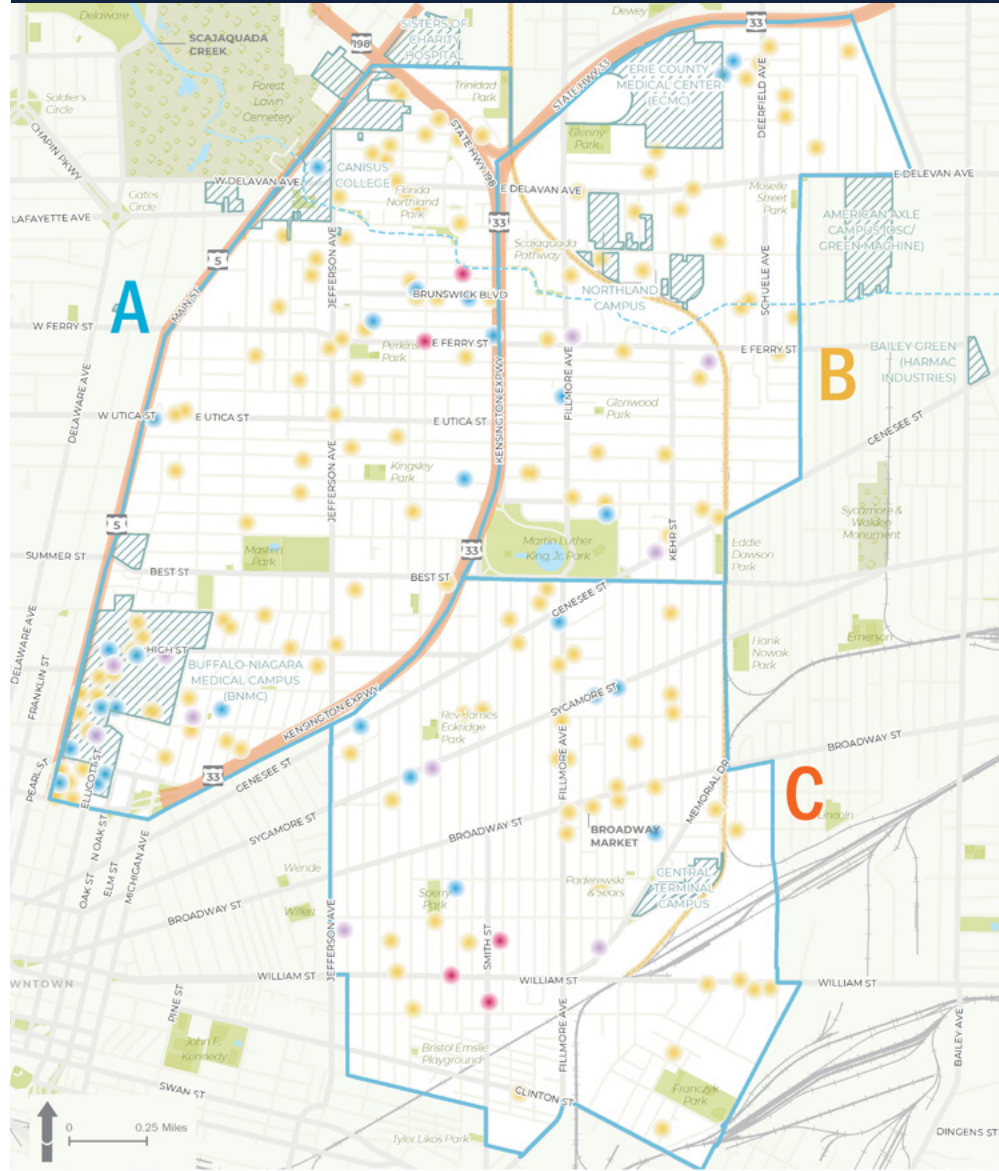
- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- Healthcare Services
- Child & Youth Services
- Behavioral Health Services
- Continuing, Retirement, and Home Health Care Services
- Other Individual and Family Services

Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, Data Axle-Erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015–2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S census OntheMap 2018; Invest Buffalo Niagara 2021

MAPS AND VISUALIZATIONS CREATED BY PROSPECT HILL CONSULTING LLC, 2021

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FIGURE 23 REDC Key Industry Connections-Professional Services, Tourism, Higher Education & Agriculture



- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- Professional Services
- Higher Education
- Tourism
- Agriculture

Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, Data Axle-Erie County Public Library 2021, U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates 2015–2019; Citizens for Regional Transit 2013; Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency 2021; BLS 2021; U.S census OntheMap 2018; Invest Buffalo Niagara 2021

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REDC Industries in the Planning Area.

The existing regional economic climate is largely spearheaded by efforts of New York State’s economic development arm, Empire State Development. The overarching statewide organization developed 10 Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC), with the key purpose of creating long-term strategic plans for regional economic growth. The Western New York (WNY) REDC prioritizes the following key industry sectors:

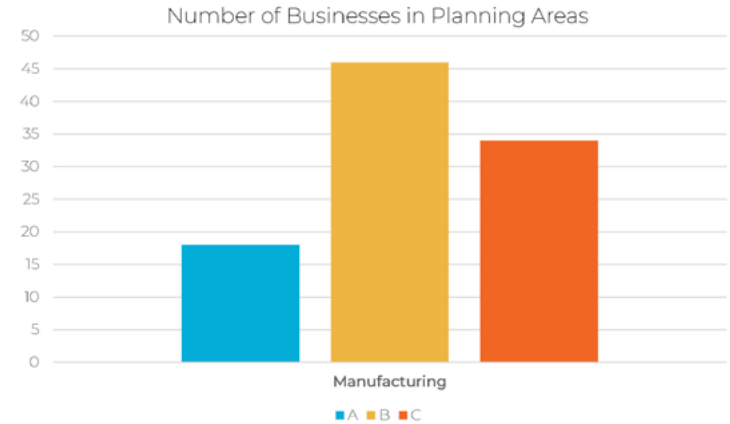
- 1. advanced manufacturing
- 2. agriculture
- 3. bi-national logistics
- 4. energy
- 5. health & life sciences
- 6. higher education
- 7. professional services
- 8. tourism.

In order to better understand the alignment between regional priorities and the planning zones, we chose to map these eight key industries within the overarching geography of zones A, B & C. Of the eight industries, we found that bi-national logistics and energy businesses were absent from the planning zones. Though activity within these industries may be occurring, there aren’t industries headquartered or permanently located within the planning area.

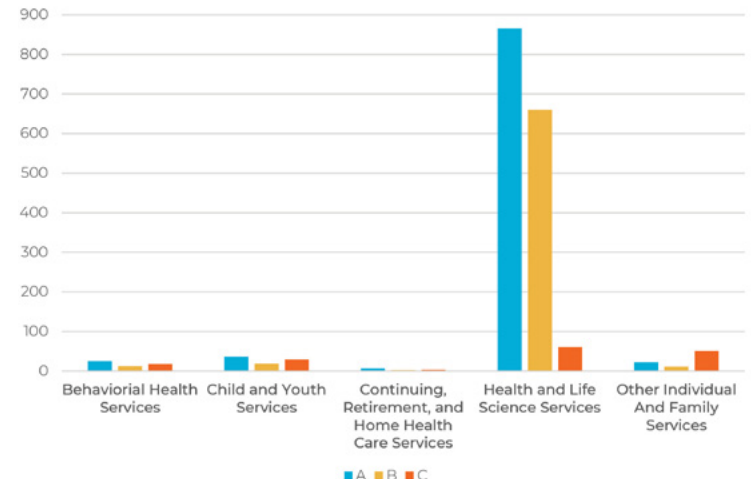
Of the remaining six industries, we found that manufacturing and health and life sciences each had a higher density than the remaining four. Therefore, we created one map outlining manufacturing businesses, one map for health and life science businesses, and a final map that encompasses the four remaining REDC target industries: Professional Services, Tourism, Higher Education & Agriculture.

Overall, 9% of businesses in the planning area fall within the REDC key industries. The total number of jobs employed by these 9% of businesses make up 60% of the total jobs within the planning area. The lack of businesses within the Planning Area that align with regional key industries sheds light on a

**A TOTAL OF 98 MANUFACTURING
BUSINESSES PROVIDE APPROX.
1,120 JOBS.**



**A TOTAL OF 1,171 HEALTH & LIFE
BUSINESS SERVICES PROVIDE
APPROX. 13,360 JOBS.**



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few elements, including a misalignment between regional goals and the realities for workers of color. According to the [Wilson SME Ecosystem Analysis](#) (2018), the highest share of people of color business owners resides in the accommodation and food, retail trade, and transportation/warehousing industries. These three industries are largely omitted from the priority industries within the WNY Regional Economic Development Council’s goals. There could be potential to elevate these industries on the regional scale, knowing there is such a high concentration of POC owned businesses in these industries.

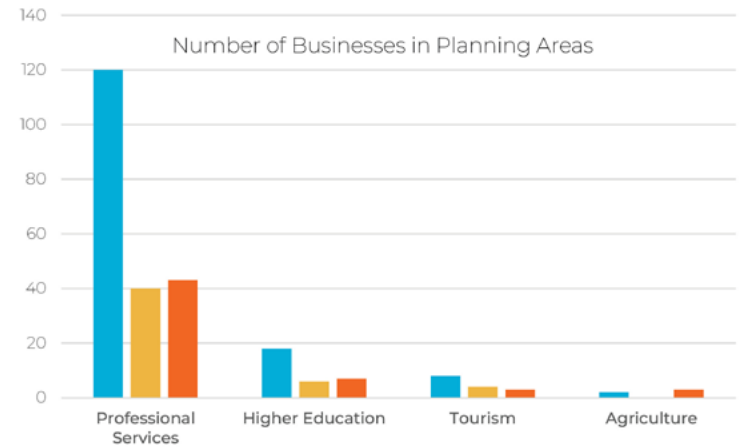
Manufacturing.

The region retains significant strength in manufacturing, with industries that produce high technology goods or use advanced technologies to produce goods. In light of Covid-19, investment in manufacturing may be able to close the supply chain gap the region experienced, with future reliance on local supply and demand.

Data from Invest Buffalo-Niagara show that 36 businesses in the planning area are considered ‘second-stage’ companies, defined as having 10–99 employees and \$1–50 million in revenue. These businesses are poised for future growth. There are particularly large clusters of second-stage companies within zones B and C of the planning areas, both to the South of William Street, and to the North around Genesee Street, the Northland Campus and a few located near the American Axle Campus.

Though anchors like Northland Campus are focused on advanced manufacturing, in alignment with regional goals, there was not a way to identify solely advanced manufacturers throughout our entire planning area. Some manufacturers may be using a highly specialized technique for a certain product, but could be producing a number of other products. Therefore, the following map identifies all mass production manufacturing companies within the planning area.

**A TOTAL OF 148 OF THESE KEY
INDUSTRY BUSINESSES PROVIDE
APPROX. 8,800 JOBS.**



**KEY INDUSTRY BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT
AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL BUSINESSES IN PLANNING AREAS**

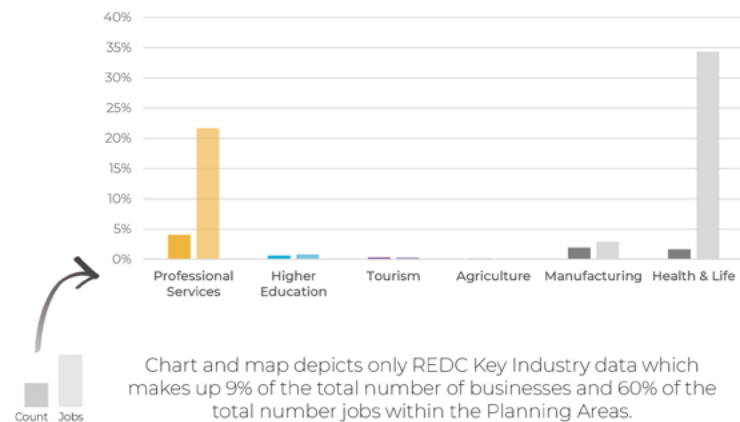


Chart and map depicts only REDC Key Industry data which makes up 9% of the total number of businesses and 60% of the total number jobs within the Planning Areas.

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Mass Production Manufacturing businesses are scattered throughout the study area, with densities occurring around the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus in Zone A, south of William Street in Zone C, and around ECMC and the Northland Campus in Zone B.

Within the entire planning area, 98 manufacturing businesses provide approximately 1,120 jobs, as of March 2021.

Health & Life Sciences.

The region has experienced significant investment in health care services, especially with the growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC), which has become an area of critical mass for health sciences, health care services, research and commercialization within the planning area. The corresponding map showcases five areas of health:

1. General healthcare services, inclusive of physicians, medical labs, dentists, chiropractors and other specialty physician offices;
2. Mental & Behavioral Health;
3. Child and Youth Services, including daycare centers and youth organizations;
4. Continuing care, retirement and home health care services including services for older adults and people with disabilities;
5. Other Services, including temporary shelters, vocational rehab services, etc.

Across the entire planning area, we have minimal mental and behavioral health businesses present. Only five businesses appear, with the majority of them situated around the BNMC. Zone B does not have any mental or behavioral health-related businesses. Child and youth services are abundant throughout the zones, while continuing care, retirement and home health care are fairly sparse.

As indicated in an earlier section, 9% of businesses within the planning area fall within the REDC key industry sectors, and make up 60% of the jobs in the planning area. Of this 60%, Health & Life Sciences jobs cover 35% of these jobs, making it the largest employment sector that aligns with the region's eight key industries.

Within the entire planning area, 1,171 health & life sciences businesses provide approximately 13,360 jobs, as of March 2021.

Professional Services, Tourism, Higher Education & Agriculture.

One industry that closely follows up employment numbers seen in the Health & Life Sciences is Professional Services, making up over 20% of employees hired within one of the REDC key industries. Though Professional Service businesses are scattered fairly evenly throughout the area, there are nodes where there seem to be higher density than others: in and around BNMC, in and around Canisius College, near the Broadway and Fillmore intersection, and in the northern section of Delavan-Grider, near Northland's campus.

Higher Education is also densely located in and around the BNMC. There are higher education indicators in other sites around the Planning Area as well, though not in any concentrated clusters. Beyond being a regional economic driver, higher education institutions are a) a supplier of skilled labor and b) a powerful economic stimulator through contracts and spending with small businesses.

The tourism industry, consisting of attractions, venues, and visitor infrastructure accounts for more than \$32 billion to the region annually. Of all NYS regions, WNY is the second highest region for visitor spending. Though tourism is a large economic driver at the regional level, within the planning area, we can account for 10 tourism-based businesses. We

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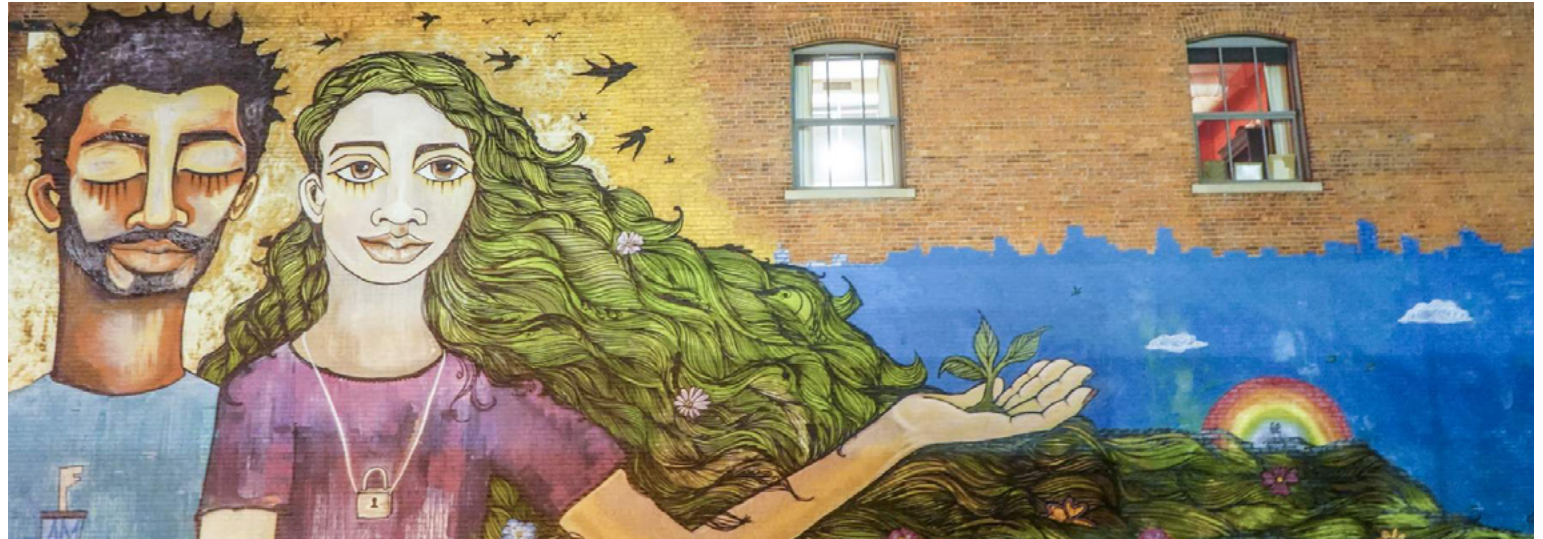
cannot forget that tourism did take a toll during the Covid-19 pandemic. Even with that, it seems there are opportunities to highlight and showcase the culture of the East Side neighborhoods in a way that benefits neighborhoods and links tourism-based businesses to regional opportunities. For example, Michigan Avenue Heritage Corridor is supported through the Buffalo Billion project, and has large cultural significance via Underground Railroad sites, the Jazz Age Hotspots, Civil Rights movement, and historical buildings of merit. [The Michigan Street Heritage Corridor Report](#) (2011), highlights the people and buildings that make this place unique. One of their goals is to promote sustainable tourism, creating linkages with regional opportunities. The Planning Area has many cultural amenities to offer for both regional and local tourism, including the Central Terminal Historic Complex, Local and Nationally recognized historic districts, and other creative and cultural draws.

Lastly, agriculture makes up the last highlighted industry that correlates with the region's industry goals. On the following map, we see five agricultural businesses, making up two key agricultural clusters: one in the northern region of Area A, and one in the southern region of Area C. Local food systems provide a new burgeoning opportunity to support his leading industry of the region. REDC has plans to spur innovation through programs and policies that reform processes for more effective food system regulations.

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Voyage by Chuck Tingley. Photo: Google

The WITHIN WNY quality of life planning process, developed with neighborhood partners, uses a comprehensive approach to create a neighborhood action plan that addresses neighborhood priorities across [LISC program areas](#) including Affordable Housing, Community Leadership, Creative Placemaking, Economic Development, Education, Financial Stability, Health, Safety & Justice, and Sports & Recreation. It embodies the LISC model of grounding the pooled public and private resources LISC has access to in local communities by working with place-based neighborhood partners.

The three neighborhood areas located just east of Main Street were selected to launch the new livability planning program based on identified historic disinvestment patterns and the greatest gaps in health and wealth equity compared to the rest of the region. Simultaneously, in late 2019, early 2020, LISC Western New York was building a team to carry out the livability planning program in coordination with the economic inclusion, housing, and capacity building program areas.

COVID-19

Just after hiring the first WITHIN WNY Program Officer, and as we planned for the launch of this process, our community was significantly impacted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. LISC operations quickly moved to a virtual, work-at-home model and the new team strategized pathways to move forward in the context of the pandemic and lived realities of the communities and partners engaged in the process. The pandemic only exacerbated the health and wealth equity issues within Buffalo. We saw initial, large scale spread of the virus in Black and Brown communities, areas already more significantly impacted by underinvestment in the social determinants of health. Deaths rates resulting from the virus were also disproportionately impacting people of color. Concerted and focused efforts by community leaders like the African American Health Equity Task Force, places of worship, community centers like Delavan Grider, food providers, health

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providers like Jericho Road and GBU-AHN, and mutual aid efforts were among the most critical community responders who advocated for an intentional County and City focus on the communities of color. Testing centers, and eventually vaccine distribution hubs, were set up in Black and Brown neighborhoods, including the three planning areas, in the first wave of interventions. This intentionality helped to level out the disproportionate impact of the pandemic in these communities, though health data still shows inequities according to race and zip code.

The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic has also had a tremendous impact on the neighborhoods in all of the planning areas. First, a transition to physical isolation meant people lost their jobs and/or had to choose to continue to work in frontline or service industry jobs in the height of the risks from the virus. Children were sent home from school and/or childcare, which also meant parents made difficult decisions to balance work and childcare/schooling. Small businesses were pressed to make rapid transitions to virtual platforms or socially distant services in order to survive, otherwise many closed their doors. The neighborhood environment was brought to the forefront as families looked for safe outdoor places to go, exercise, and access resources. Walkability, food access, the quality of green space, bicycling, and transportation have been critical factors for navigating the pandemic. Affordable, safe housing, an important issue even prior to the pandemic, rose to one of the most significant concerns of families during this time. Spending more time at home meant the need for stable housing with broadband access and adequate utilities. While the renewed focus on these inequities by multi-sector partners is promising, communities continue to be challenged by circumstances related to under investment in their environments and social and economic systems that support their families.

Racial Justice

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the obvious and known race-related health and economic inequities locally and nationally. This was compounded by the renewed racial justice movement that followed the unjust murder of George Floyd by police, also in early 2020. George Floyd’s murder was one among many cases of police brutality and murder in the media in 2020. Black Lives Matter brought communities together, amid the pandemic, to demand justice and equity. Locally, Buffalo experienced both the raised community awareness and action and the effects of police brutality.

Organizations and government entities demonstrated a renewed commitment to racial justice and a new wave of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice advocacy continues to be a priority. In this moment, organizations also are beginning to understand the need to center race in order to more effectively close wealth and health equity gaps throughout communities.

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Pre 2020

2004

Masten Park Cold Springs Housing Competition

2017–2018 LISC

City of Buffalo hire Urban Design Associates to conduct neighborhood outreach around Masten Park/Cold Spring Housing Goals

2019

East Side Avenues Starts

HUD Section 4 funding administered to BUDC for a Northland Planning Grant

LISC Staff Hired for Economic Inclusion Work

2020

March

COVID-19 Work from Home Begins

April

LISC Staff Hired to manage WITHIN WNY Neighborhood Planning Work

Ongoing Economic Development Report Review-Staff collected and compiled past data to inform Economic Inclusion portion of investment plan

Outcomes: Staff gathers community’s previous feedback on Buffalo Billion, REDC Key Industries, Northland Brownfield Opportunity Area, City-released Reports, Neighborhood level reports (like 2017 Fillmore Streetscape Plan, 2004 Masten Neighborhoods Plan, ROCC Studies, etc)

May

AARP Funding Received for Pride in Place. In partnership with the Buffalo Center for Health Equity

August

6 Livability Meetings Summer 2020 - Goals: Learn about each organization’s top 3 goals and opportunities for collaboration

September

Attorney General’s Affordable Housing 101 Training Released. 8 entities receive pre-dev funding and expected to produce 382 units of affordable housing

October

First Equitable Neighborhood Development Summit kicks off with 116+ virtual attendees



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2021

January

Prospect Hill Consulting is hired by LISC team for data mapping and HUB Site development

February–June

Outcomes: Staff gathers data relative to Buffalo Green Code, Main Street e-TOD, Buffalo Sewer Green Infrastructure

Intensive Multi-Sector Data Collection

LISC National Resources available for Economic Inclusion. LISC partners with Buffalo Urban League (BUL)

July

HUD Section 4 funding to Buffalo Urban League assists in hiring Jacques Consulting for outreach assistance.

Economic Inclusion Steering Team Formed

Eight Economic Inclusion Focus Groups: Commercial Districts, Creative & Cultural Economy, Workforce Development, Real Estate, Main Street Businesses (x2), Childcare Economy, New American Business Owners

Regional Housing Report Released in partnership with Partnership for the Public Good

August

Moving Forward Together funding received with several housing partners for East Side modular housing developments

Four public engagement sessions occur at Kuleta Pamoja, Funk Fest, Manna @ Northland, SuperStreet

Individual Interviews ongoing with Economic Inclusion & Livability Partners-Summer 2021

September

Virtual Scenario Planning Event - Sept 2021

Interactive Digital HUB Site available to the public

October

Presentation of Shifting the Narrative: ROI on Healthy Communities

All data and engagement materials get compiled in WITHIN East Side Report draft



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2021–2022

November–January 2022

6-part Commercial District Management 101 Training Released. Administered by LISC in partnership with ESA. Nov 2021–Jan 2022

Weeks of partner interviews on WITHIN Report for public feedback and investment plan endorsement through Q1 2022

February

Finalist for NYSERDA Clean Neighborhoods Challenge with HOCN, GOBike, SMI, East Side Bike Club, BNMC, CEJ

April

Implementation Council Convenings Kick Off April 2022

May–December

Finalized WITHIN Report is launched

Ongoing fundraising for Investment Plan Implementation

Continue Implementation Council convenings as funding allows.



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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

means that a household’s housing costs, including energy, does not exceed 30% of its gross monthly (family) income.

ARPA

American Rescue Plan Act

BIPOC

Black and/or Indigenous People of Color

CDFI

Community Development Financial Institution

CDBG

Community Development Block Grant

DIVERSITY

The terms that most often come to mind are race, ethnicity, and gender - though the term “diversity” is also used in relation to age, national origin, religion, difference of ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives and values.

EQUITABLE / EQUITY

is dealing fairly and equally with all concerned.

ERAP

Emergency Rental Assistance Program

ESA

East Side Avenues

E-TOD

Equitable Transit Oriented Development

HOME

Housing Opportunities Made Equal

INCLUSION

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

MWBE

Minority and/or Women-Owned Business Enterprise

MOBILITY

is the ability to move or be moved freely and easily.

MULTI-MODAL

simply means involving several different forms of activities.

OPEN4

A private funding initiative focused on regional inclusive entrepreneurship

RACIAL WEALTH GAP

The rate at which white householders own their homes compared to African American householders. Further, the overarching housing values in African American predominant neighborhoods are just a third of values in the region’s predominantly white neighborhoods.

RACIAL INCOME GAP

This refers to the income gap between white residents in the region and Black and Latino residents. In Buffalo-Niagara, this gap is more than doubled for white residents compared to Black and Latino residents.

SECTION 8

The housing choice voucher program is the federal government’s major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.

TOD

Transit Oriented Development

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**AFRICAN HERITAGE
FOOD COOP**

ALBRIGHT KNOX

AMERICAN AXLE

BCCWNY

Black Chamber of Commerce
Western New York

**BEAU FLEUVE MUSIC &
ARTS**

**BELMONT HOUSING
RESOURCES FOR WNY,
INC.**

BFNC

Buffalo Federation of
Neighborhood Centers

BFNHS

Broadway Fillmore
Neighborhood
Housing Services

BNMC

Buffalo Niagara
Medical Campus

BTRU

Buffalo Transit Riders United

BUDC

Buffalo Urban
Development Corporation

**BUFFALO FOOD
EQUITY NETWORK**

**BUFFALO FREEDOM
GARDENS**

BUFFALO GO GREEN

BUL

Buffalo Urban League

BURA

Buffalo Urban
Renewal Agency

CANISIUS COLLEGE

CAO

Community Action
Organization

CATHOLIC HEALTH

CDC

Community Development
Corporation

CDFIS

Community Development
Financial Institutions

**CEDARLAND
DEVELOPMENT**

CEJ

Center for Economic Justice

CEL

Center for Entrepreneurial
Leadership

CITIZEN'S ALLIANCE

CITY OF BUFFALO

**COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
GROUPS**

COMMUNITY FIRST

CTRC

Central Terminal
Restoration Corporation

**DEVELOPING OUR
TRANSIT FUTURE
PARTICIPANTS**

DOT

NYS Department of
Transportation

EAST SIDE AVENUES

EAST SIDE BIKE CLUB

EAT OFF ART

ECIDA

Erie County Industrial
Development Agency

ECMC

Erie County Medical Center

EFORALL

Entrepreneurship
for All Erie County

ESA

East Side Avenues

**ETOD COORDINATING
COMMITTEE**

FBCLT

Fruit Belt Community
Land Trust

FILLMORE FORWARD

FOOD FOR THE SPIRIT

FOOD FUTURES WNY

GBNRTC

Greater Buffalo Niagara
Regional Transportation
Council

GJABA

Greater Jefferson Avenue
Business Association

GOBIKE BUFFALO

GRASSROOTS GARDENS

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HEALTHY CORNER STORES INITIATIVE

HOCN

Heart of the City Neighborhoods

HOME

Housing Opportunities Made Equal

HOME HEADQUARTERS

IDA

Incremental Development Alliance

INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

LINCOLN MEMORIAL CHURCH

LISC (WNY)

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (Western New York)

LIVE WELL ERIE

MASTER GARDENERS

MATT URBAN CENTER MISSION IGNITE

MOM MARKET

Market on Michigan A

NFTA

Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Northland Campus

NYPA

New York Power Authority

OLMSTED PARKS CONSERVANCY

ONE REGION FORWARD

OPEN4

A private funding initiative focused on regional inclusive entrepreneurship

PAPPY MARTIN LEGACY JAZZ COLLECTIVE

PROJECT RAINFALL

REGION CENTRAL

RE-TREE WNY

ROCC

Restore Our Community Coalition

SALVATION ARMY

SBDC

Small Business Development Center

SHARED MOBILITY INC.

ST. JOHN'S CREDIT UNION

STAND UP BUFFALO

THE EXCHANGE AT BEVERLY GRAY

THE FOUNDRY

TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

UFV

Urban Fruits & Veggies

ULI

Urban Land Institute

URBAN PLAN 4ALL

WAKANDA ALLIANCE

WBC

Canisius Women's Business Center

WNY COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM

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Team Support

LISC WNY, with the financial support of the John R. Oishei Foundation, provided capacity and technical support through staff and consultant teams throughout the WITHIN program.

Consultants

Prospect Hill Consulting LLC and JBK Consulting

Prospect Hill is a small, NYS Certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) LLC located in the Prospect Hill Historic District within the vibrant West Side community of Buffalo, NY. Prospect Hill has more than 60 years of combined nationwide experience in the environmental consulting industry and provided all of the GIS mapping data analyses, design, construction, and maintenance of the HUB site throughout the WITHIN program. JBK Consulting provided scenario planning analyses, education, and training support for LISC and community partners.

White Bicycle and Renata Toney

White Bicycle is a nationally recognized branding team based in Buffalo, New York. White Bicycle focuses on brand strategy, brand design, and brand content. Part studio, part agency, they are a group of creatives who integrate strategy, project management, and client collaboration into our process. White Bicycle contracted with Renata Toney, owner of On Message Communication and Public Relations Strategist at the Burchfield Penney Art Center, to design and develop the WITHIN WNY / East Side brand and messaging. This incredible report document design was also generated through White Bicycle.

Buffalo Urban League and Jacques Planning & Consulting

The Buffalo Urban League empowers African Americans, other minorities, and disadvantaged individuals to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights. The Buffalo Urban League partnered with Jaques Garcia of Jacques Planning & Consulting Services, LLC to provide support for WITHIN East Side community outreach and focus groups focused on topics in economic inclusion during the summer of 2021.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

LISC WNY

Julie Barrett O’Neill, LISC WNY Executive Director 2018-2022;

- Local Government Relations
- Housing processes, including the Regional Housing Market Study, Moving Forward Together Housing proposal and Mission Based Affordable Housing program.

Tyra Johnson Hux, LISC WNY Operations Director;

- Support for emerging Black developers through the Community Based Real Estate Development Training
- Built synergies and connections with regional economic development players
- Anchor institution & workforce development strategies
- Manages our local small business grant programs (ie. General Motors)
- Co-authored the Regional Inclusive Economic Development Agenda

Kate Rebhan, Nonprofit Coaching & Capacity Support

- Provided one on one assistance to nonprofit organizations
- Manages our LISC AmeriCorps & Section 4 grant programs
- Manages all general office grants and contract management

Saira Siddiqui, Neighborhood Business Support

- Manages neighborhood based economic development initiatives, including commercial corridor program management and placekeeping initiatives
- Co-authored the Regional Inclusive Economic Development Agenda
- Co-authored the WITHIN East Side Neighborhood Plan
- Assisted in AARP Pride in Place project & early win activities

Brittany Perez, Livability Program Support

- Secured AARP grant funding for the Pride in Place project & early win activities
- Secured Regional Plan Association funding
- Manages LISC’s health equity portfolio inclusive of transportation and food access work
- Co-authored the WITHIN East Side Neighborhood Plan

Maggie Hamilton Winship, Real Estate & Lending Support

- Support for emerging Black developers through the Community Based Real Estate Development Training
- Mission Based Affordable Housing & Affordable Housing 101 Trainings
- Provides direct financing & real estate assistance to partner organizations and businesses

Thank you.