

Together
with
LSC

EAST SIDE

Launch Report | 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.

Acknowledgements

AARP
 African American Cultural Center
 African Heritage Food Cooperative
 Albright Knox Northland
 Arts Services Initiatives of WNY
 ASA Janitorial Services
 Bank of America
 Beau Fleauve Music & Arts
 Belmont Housing Resources
 for WNY, Inc.
 Bethesda World Harvest
 International Church
 Bianca 'L Period' McGraw, Poet
 Black Chamber of Commerce WNY
 Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood
 Housing Services
 Broadway Sattler Theater
 Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology
 Buffalo Center for Health Equity
 Buffalo Commons Charter School
 Buffalo Federation of
 Neighborhood Centers
 Buffalo Food Equity Network
 Buffalo Freedom Gardens
 Buffalo Go Green
 Buffalo Moose Club
 Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
 Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
 Buffalo Public Schools
 Buffalo State College Small Business
 Development Center
 Buffalo Transit Riders United
 Buffalo United Front
 Buffalo Urban
 Development Corporation
 Buffalo Urban League
 Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency
 Canisius College
 Canisius Womens Business Center
 Catholic Charities
 Cedarland Development
 Corporation
 Centennial AME Zion Church

Center for Entrepreneurial
 Leadership
 Central Terminal
 Restoration Corporation
 Charles Rockwell, Mailbox Artist
 Chris Vaughn
 Cicatelli Associates Inc.
 Citizens Alliance, Inc.
 Citizen's Bank
 City of Buffalo
 City of Buffalo Division
 of Citizens Services
 Coalition for Economic Justice
 Colored Girls Bike Too
 Community Action
 Organization of WNY
 Cornell ILR Co-Lab Buffalo
 Cory Haqq
 D!g Innovation Center
 Daryl Reding, Mailbox Artist
 Deja Marie, Mailbox Artist
 Delavan Grider Community Center
 Dorothea Edwards, Mailbox Artist
 East Side Avenues
 East Side Bike Club
 Eat Off Art
 Entrepreneurship for All
 Erie County Industrial
 Development Agency
 Erie County Office for Health Equity
 Erie County Office
 of Economic Development
 Erie County Youth Bureau
 Feed Buffalo
 Fillmore Forward
 Five Star Bank
 Front Seat Life
 Frontline Arts
 Food for the Spirit
 Fruit Belt Community Land Trust
 George Winfield,
 Cold Springs Resident
 Get Amp'd Photography & More

Get Fokus'd Productions
 GOBike Buffalo
 Grassroots Gardens of WNY
 Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional
 Transportation Council
 Greater Eastside
 Field of Dreams Block Club
 Greater Jefferson Avenue
 Business Association
 Groundwork Buffalo
 Habitat for Humanity Buffalo
 Hallmark Planning & Development
 Hamlin Park Taxpayers Association
 Harmac
 Heart of the City Neighborhoods
 Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
 Housing Opportunities Made Equal
 Imani Williamson, Mailbox Artist
 J. Dough, Mailbox Artist
 Jacques Planning & Consulting
 Jericho Road Community
 Health Center
 Jerusalem Moses, Mailbox Artist
 Jes Breathe Block Club
 Jillian Daniels, Mailbox Artist
 Juneteenth of Buffalo
 Kathleen Murphy, Mailbox Artist
 Kelly Ann Swartz, Mailbox Artist
 LaShonda Davis, Mailbox Artist
 Lauren A. Hood
 Lincoln Memorial United
 Methodist Church
 Locust Street Art
 Los Artistas del Barrio Buffalo
 Lt. Col. Matt Urban Center
 M&T Bank
 MarQes Enterprises
 Marquis "Ten Thousand" Burton
 Masten Block Club Coalition
 Medaille College
 Metro Community
 Development Corporation
 Mission Ignite

Mount Olive CDC
 MRBS Inc
 Muhammad Zaman, Mailbox Artist
 Mustard Seed World
 Consulting Group
 Naila Ansari
 Native American Community
 Services of WNY
 NeighborWorks America
 NeuWater Associates, LLC
 Niagara Frontier
 Transportation Authority
 Niagara University
 Northland Beltline
 Taxpayers Association
 Northland Workforce
 Training Center
 Oishei Foundation
 Olmsted Park Conservancy
 Open Buffalo
 Otis & Woodlawn
 Neighborhood Association
 Pappy Martin
 Legacy Jazz Collective
 Partnership for the Public Good
 Polish Community
 Center of Buffalo, Inc.
 Population Health Collaborative
 Preservation Buffalo Niagara
 Pride in Place Buffalo Planning
 Team & Contributors
 Prospect Hill Consulting
 Pursuit Lending
 PUSH Buffalo
 R Kyndall Development
 Renata Toney
 Restore Our Community Coalition
 Sattler Theater
 Shared Mobility Inc.
 Sinatra Development
 SUNY Buffalo State
 SUNY Buffalo State-Small Business
 Development Center

Tara Sasiadek, Mailbox Artist
 The Exchange at Beverly Gray
 The Foundry
 The Galactic Tribe
 / Wakanda Alliance
 TOP Enterprises, Inc.
 Torn Space Theater
 Trust for Public Land
 Ujima Theater
 Univera Healthcare
 University at Buffalo
 Center for Urban Studies
 University at Buffalo Food
 Systems Planning and
 Community Health Lab
 University at Buffalo
 Regional Institute
 University at Buffalo School
 of Architecture & Planning
 University District Community
 Development Association
 Urban Fruits and Veggies
 Urban Land Institute
 Urban Vantage
 vonetta t. rhodes, Poet
 Westminster Economic
 Development Initiative
 White Bicycle Design Studios
 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.

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HUMBOLDT PARKWAY 1953.
PHOTO: ROCC

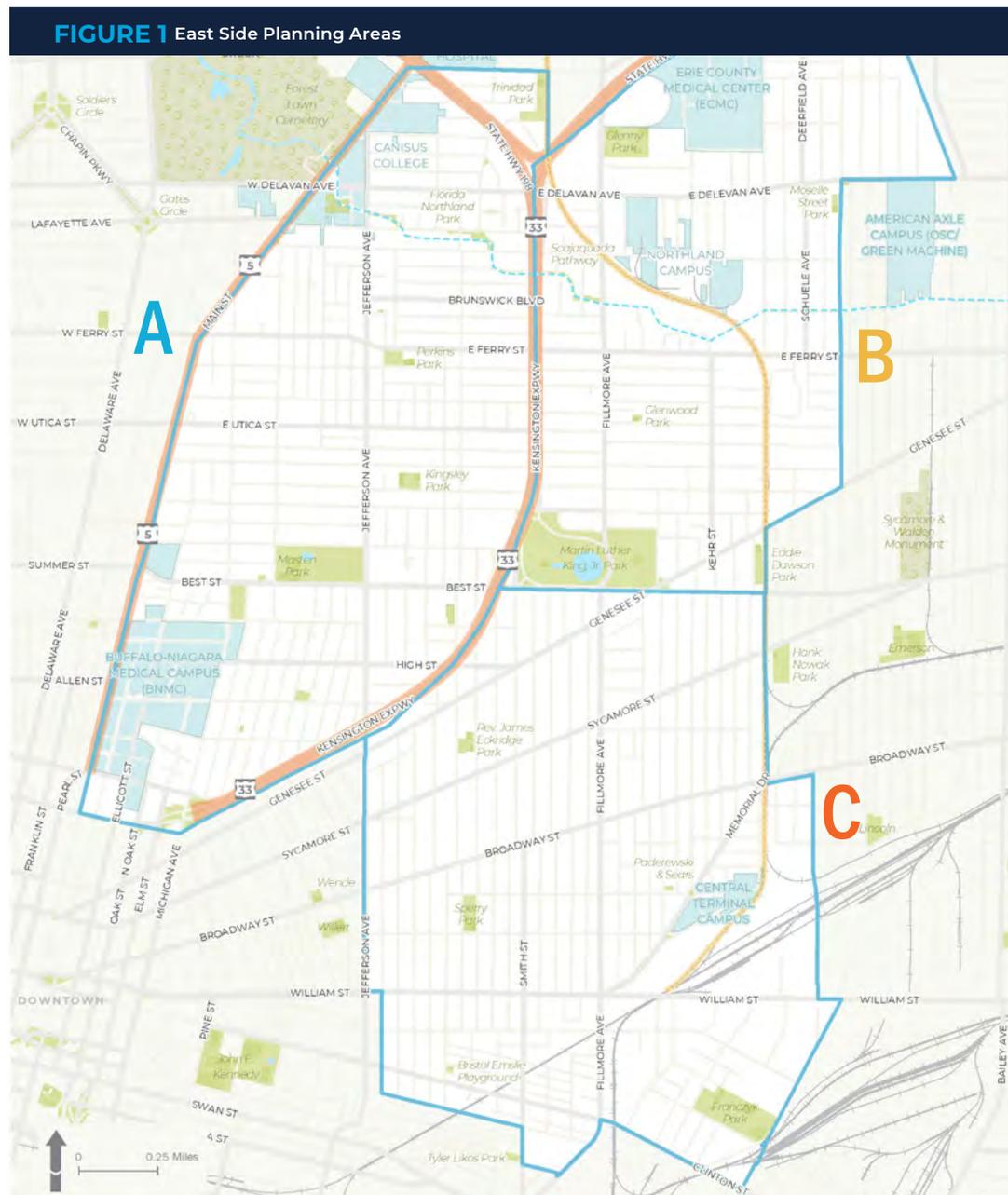


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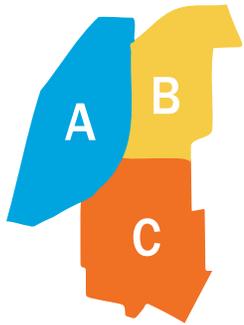
FIGURE 1 East Side Planning Areas



- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
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- Railroad

ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021, University at Buffalo 2021; Buffalo Art Commission 2020; Data Axle verified business data—Erie County Library 2021; Google Maps 2021, Buffalo Sewer Authority 2019; Open Data Buffalo 2020; University at Buffalo Regional Institute, State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning; Empire State Development. 2019; New York Power Authority 2015;

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Guiding Principles

Several values and themes guide the entire plan. First, and above all, is a shared commitment to **anti-displacement**. The goals of the action plan are intended to create beautiful healthy communities for the very residents who currently live in them. The strategies must be coupled with **wealth building** and **poverty eradicating** commitments that simultaneously build up these communities, **preserve historic treasures**, and tear down the racist and polluted policy and structures responsible for the current neighborhood conditions. Community **residents and leaders of all ages must have authority, ownership, and power** to influence development that occurs in their neighborhood. An equitable development rubric is a tool that will be created to hold development partners accountable to community values and priorities. **Intentional coordination** and collaboration to leverage and **maximize resources** across programs and services has been identified as a critical strategy to both meet the needs of and sustain ongoing support for community organizations. Residents expect that the design of community development coming into their neighborhoods will be **creative, beautiful, and equipped for a changing climate future**, while respecting an important **cultural history** and **inclusively designed** for a diverse population of all ages.

Planning Areas

Neighborhoods in **Area A** include Trinidad Park, Hamlin Park, Cold Springs, Masten Park, and the Fruit Belt. Located next to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, a fast-growing education and technology hub to the south, and Canisius College to the north, several historic and cultural assets reside in these neighborhoods, including Jefferson Ave, a once bustling commercial corridor, and historic heart of Buffalo's Black entrepreneurs. While jobs are being created and growth is evident, the surrounding neighborhoods are at risk of displacement.

Area B includes Delavan Grider and MLK Park neighborhoods. Home to the historic Northland Beltline, the northern part of Area B has served as an industrial center for several decades. Currently, a variety of large anchor institutions are located in or near this area -the Northland Campus, ECMC, American Axle's Campus, and Harmac. With a large amount of state-funded support coming to this neighborhood through the Buffalo Billion, ensuring connectivity between the long-term residents and their changing surroundings is critical to equitable development. Large-scale brownfield redevelopment projects provide tax incentives for redevelopment, and the workforce training center poses an opportunity for wealth building and job creation. MLK Park Neighborhood to the South houses Olmsted's historic MLK Park, and the Fillmore corridor, an active and growing commercial district, is ripe with opportunities for historic preservation

The primary neighborhood in **Area C** is Broadway Fillmore. This area has also been a large investment focus of the Buffalo Billion funding streams. The historic Broadway Market and Central Terminal sites are in the redevelopment phases, and the future of how they will interplay with the community is still in development. Once home to a large Polish and German population, and then to a large African American population, this part of the city is now booming with an influx of New Americans, and has quickly become one of the the most diverse neighborhoods in Buffalo with a burgeoning group of food-based entrepreneurs, reflecting the melting pot that now exists.

“ My family’s home has been owned for over 40 years. It was my grandmother’s house. Right across the street was my great grandmother’s house. And around the corner on Durham was my other grandmother’s house. My sister and I spent much of our time at either house.

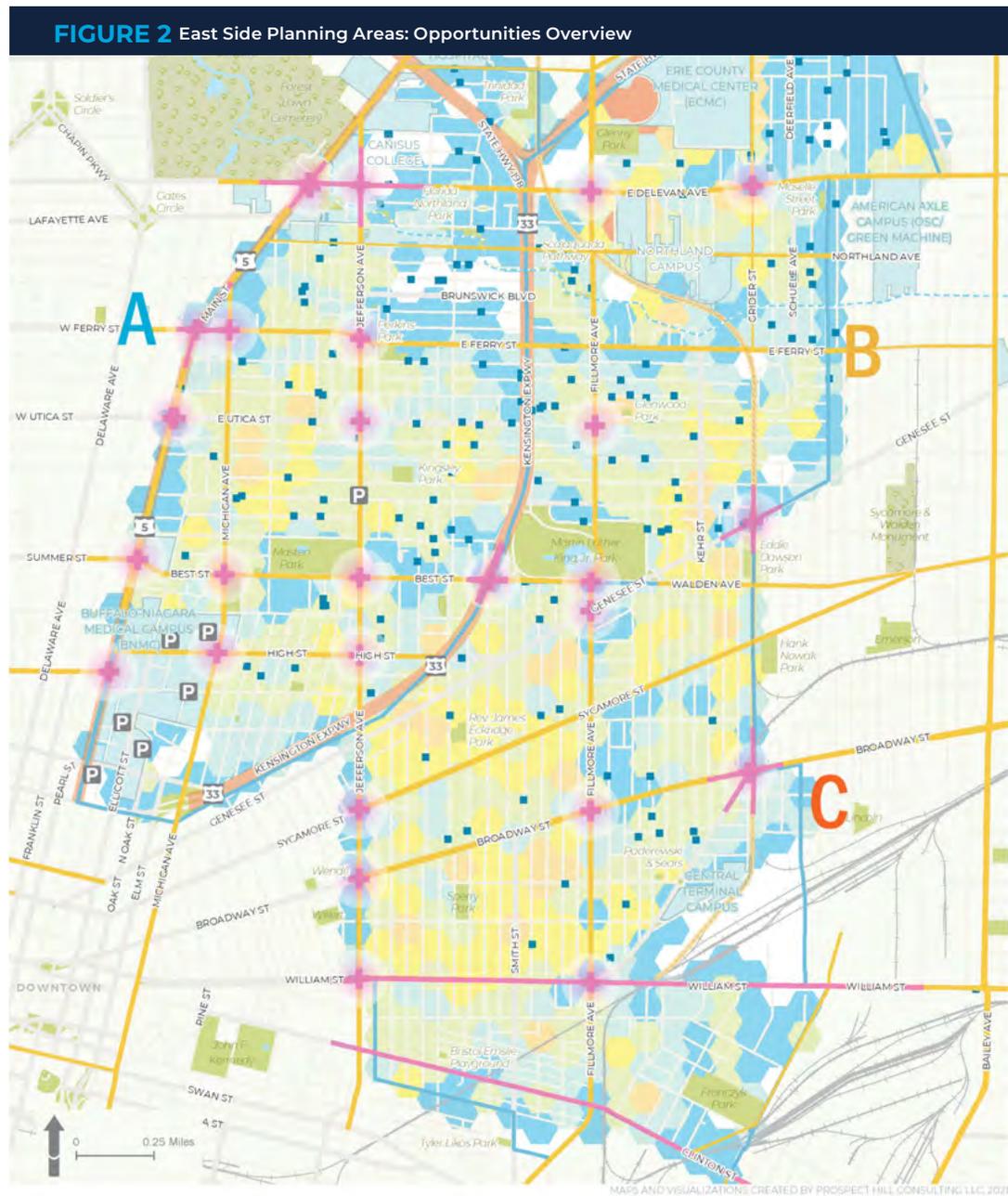
We played outside with the neighborhood kids or whoever else my grandparents babysat. Another neighbor exchanged plants with my grandmother, and to this day dropped off school supplies every year for us, well into high school. Now my parents own my late grandmothers’ houses, and my father is block club president. We’ve held neighborhood meetings to hear their concerns and wishes. We’ve reach out to adjacent block clubs to exchange information and stay updated on whatever news misses the newspapers, and quell rumors and misunderstandings. My mother planted flowers on each corner of Deerfield and Litchfield. They both have recruited young men from the street for their landscaping business.

I have patrolled the area a few times, only going as far as whiting out graffiti on one of the street signs, and showing whoever tagged it that this block does not belong to them. It belongs to the people who own their own houses. Who plant flowers and cut their lawns. Who throw late barbeques that never end in violence. Who sweep glass and garbage from the street. Who check on their neighbors, exchange supplies, and share useful information. It belongs to the people who make one block of Buffalo an example for the entire city. That’s where I live. ”

Anthony Pierce

Delavan Grider Resident

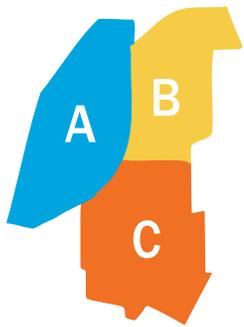
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 - Local Road
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 - Railroad
 - + Key Intersection
 - Gateway
 - Investment / Commercial Corridors
 - Basement Flooding Location
 - P Parking Garage Lots
- Vacant Land Density* (%)
- <10
 - 10-20
 - 20-30
 - 35-50
 - 50-75
 - 75-100
- *Vacant land use parcel density per 5.3-acre hexagon area.

ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021, University at Buffalo 2021; Buffalo Art Commission 2020; Data Axle verified business data—Erie County Library 2021; Google Maps 2021, Buffalo Sewer Authority 2019; Open Data Buffalo 2020; University at Buffalo Regional Institute, State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning; Empire State Development. 2019; New York Power Authority 2015;

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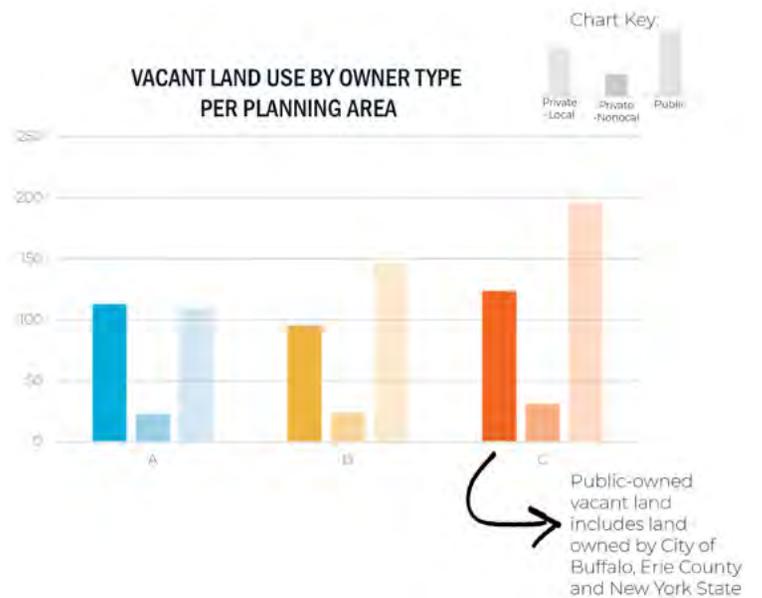


Key Terms (for map on previous page)

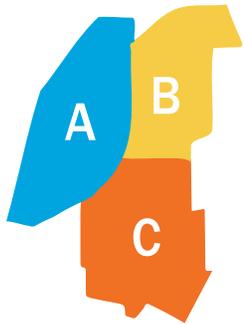
- ◆ **Key Intersections:** These are important connectors at the Main St transit corridor, between major north/south and east/west corridors, and center commercial districts and gateways ripe for infrastructure and place-based investment.
- **Gateways:** These areas are located at primary entry points to neighborhoods from the surrounding neighborhoods and suburbs. Gateways are an important focus for beautification and placemaking investment to highlight history, culture, and identity of the neighborhoods they connect.
- **Investment and Commercial Corridors:** The planning areas are surrounded by the Main St transit corridor to the west and the Beltline to the east. Michigan Ave, Jefferson Ave, Fillmore Ave, and Bailey are the State's East Side Avenues investment corridors running north and south. An increased focus on east to west corridors like Delavan Ave, Northland Ave, E Ferry St, Best St, High St, Sycamore St, Broadway St and William St, would strengthen connectivity of these neighborhoods and bolster economic development for business owners within them

Overview

In the COVID-19 era of changes in business and commerce, education and childcare, and heightened housing stressors, economic and commercial district development has shifted to a more concentrated, place-based focus at key intersections, activating the four corners and creating safer walkable communities. Where previous commercial corridor investments looked at miles long stretches, a block-by-block level of attention and support for small businesses and housing is necessary to strengthen and stabilize communities during this time. The planning areas also have large swaths of vacant land, particularly in area C, that require intentional, community-supported strategic planning for infill housing and economic development, community gathering spaces, and natural environments.



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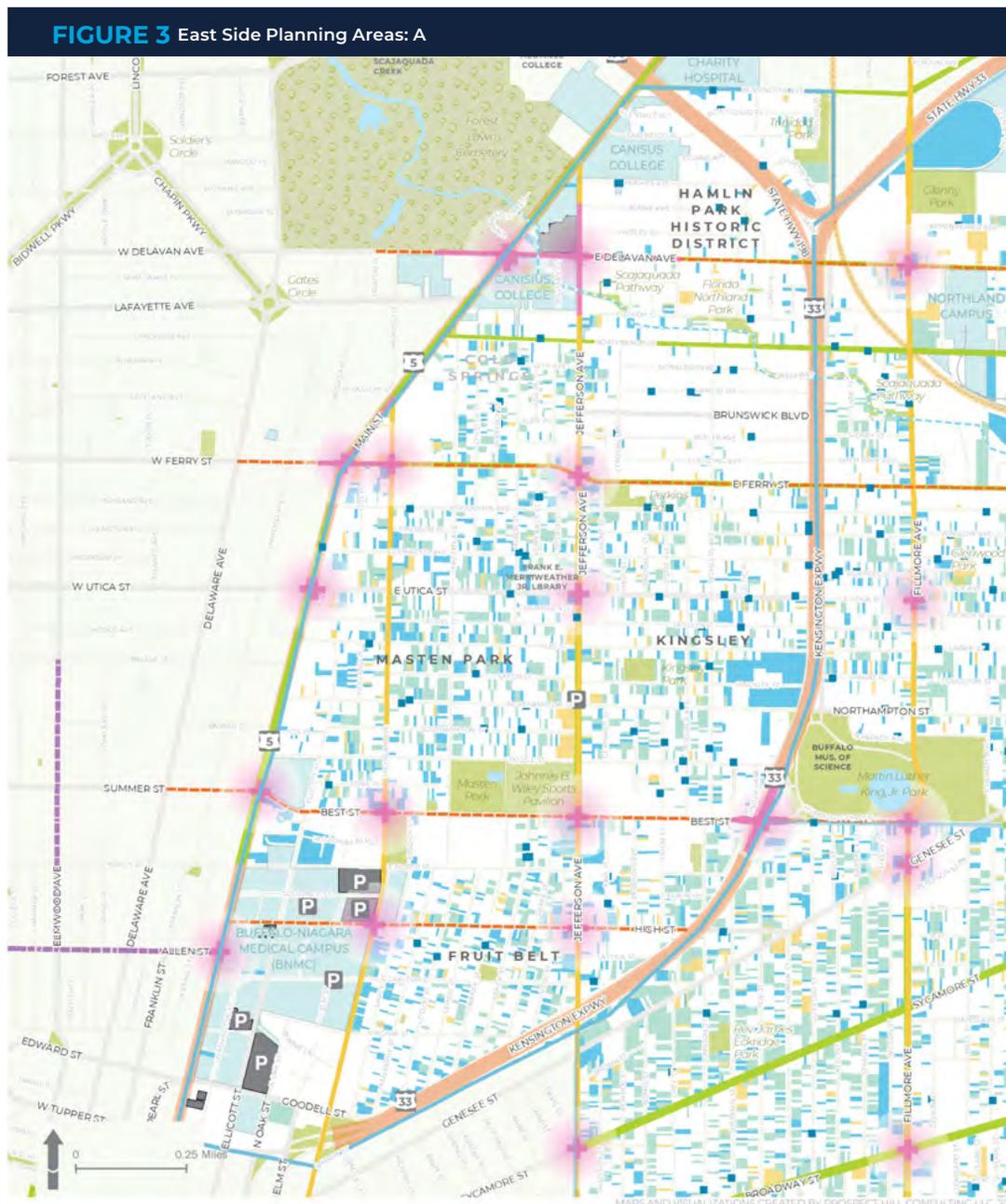
All Areas

Throughout this document you will see several maps with many data layers. These maps are intended to be helpful tools to depict alignment and/or gaps in how data supports lived experiences.

The maps, and the data they hold, are all available on an [interactive website](#) for public access and use. This website is coined the HUB site.

Prospect Hill Consulting, LLC, a local minority and women owned consulting firm has designed and generated all of the maps in this report and on the HUB site, including the data analyses and infographics seen throughout this report. Access to data from several community, government, academic and other partners have also made it possible to create a comprehensive and interactive resource that facilitates strategic planning that breaks down silos. Data layers and sources are all available for [public download](#). Data layer examples include: Existing Land Use, City of Buffalo Zoning, Future Land Use, Industry Focus Areas, Landmarks, Historic Districts, Cultural and Creative Economy Assets, Business Density, Residential Property Development Information, Residential Land Use Types, Residential Owner by Type, Demolitions, Assessed Land Values, Mobility and Transportation, Places of Worship, Community Centers, Services for Youth and Older Adults, Food Access, Walkability, Environmental Remediation Sites, Parking, Vacant Land, Basement Flooding, Priority Investment Corridors, and Clean Energy data layers.

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 - Gateway
 - Parking Lot
 - BSA Priority CSO Corridor
 - LISC Identified East West Corridor
 - Buffalo Main Street Initiative (BMSI) Corridor
 - East Side Avenues Commercial Corridor
- Vacant Land Owner Type
- Private-Local
 - Private-Nonlocal
 - Public

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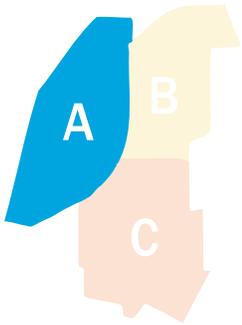
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Prioritized Opportunities: Area A

The Main St transit corridor has historically divided the heart of the City of Buffalo into dramatically different racial and socioeconomic environments. Equitable transit-oriented development (eETOD) along the metro rail line is a critical opportunity to build affordable housing, support small businesses, enhance the mobility landscape, and connect East Side neighborhoods. This development strategy must begin with intentional anti-displacement efforts and be led by existing residents and the community partners who support them so that East Side residents are able to afford to choose to stay in their neighborhoods and benefit (build wealth) from eTOD development.

Michigan Ave and Jefferson Avenue are the primary north/south corridors in planning area A. The Michigan Ave African American Heritage Corridor to the south leads north to an important gateway at the Main St, E Ferry St, Michigan Ave triangle, Freedom Wall, and NFTA garage, which the community prioritizes as an important space for beautification and investment. Jefferson Ave has historically been and is currently an important commercial business corridor connecting important neighborhood assets such as Masten Park and Johnnie B. Wiley Sports Pavilion, the Frank E Merriweather Jr. Library, and Forest Lawn. Highway 198 and the Kensington Expressway run through this area, further dividing the neighborhoods and creating negative health impacts for residents from vehicle pollution.

East to West, major corridors of E Delavan, E Ferry, Best St, and High St connect the eastern suburbs to these neighborhoods and eventually the western waterfront. These routes are also important transportation connectors and in need of more robust mobility infrastructure to support multi-modal mobility and pedestrian safety.

The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) and Canisius College are the two major anchor institutions located at the southernmost and northernmost parts of planning area A. These institutions must work with residents and organizations in the planning area and coordinate strategic planning that will first prioritize anti-displacement and contribute to wealth building and neighborhood improvements through efforts like procurement strategies, locally contracted construction, employment opportunities, neighborhood infrastructure investment, and community benefit agreements for future development.



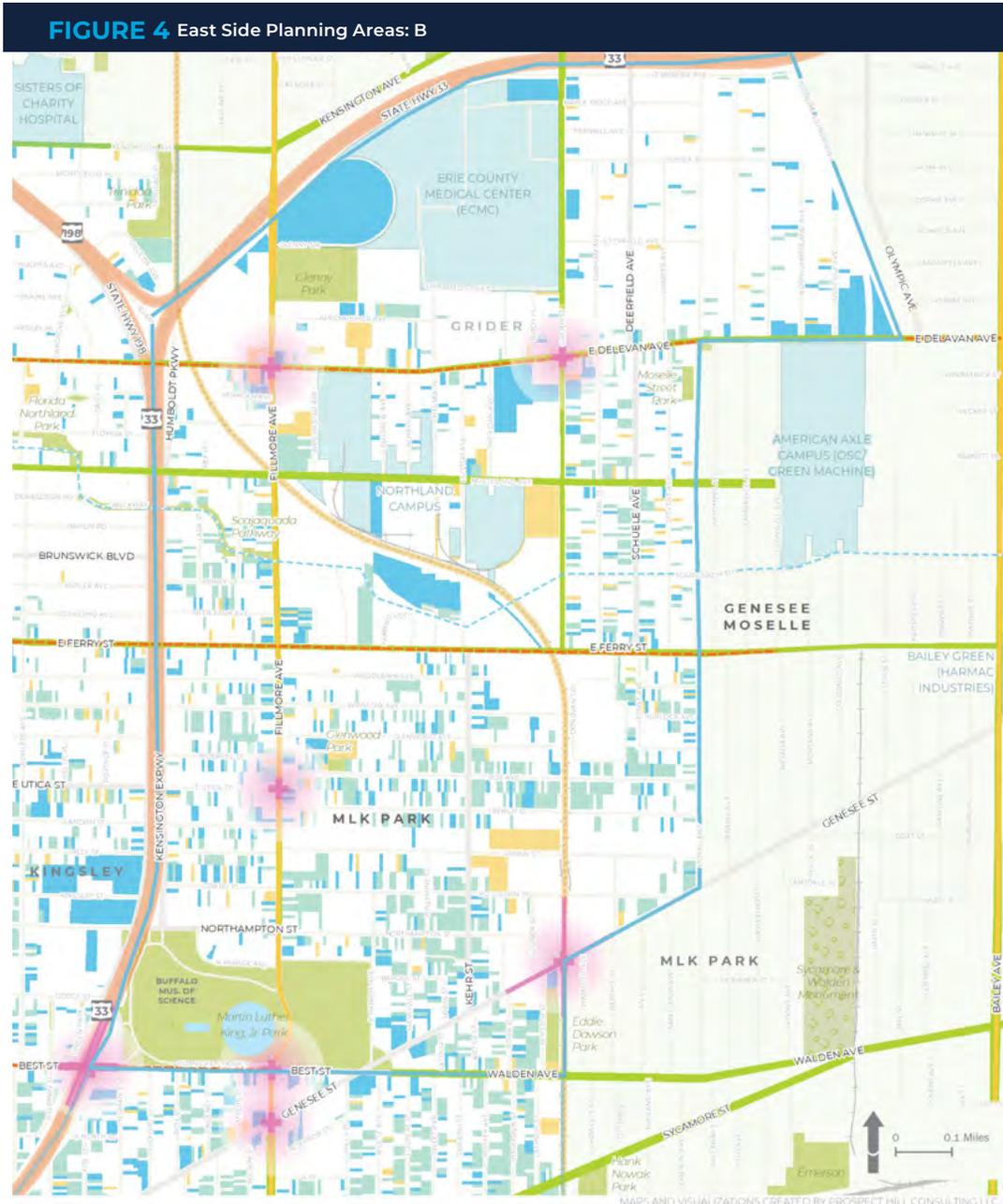
Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Photo: BNMC



Main Food Mart located
in Planning Area A
Main Food Mart by Julia Wald Art

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FIGURE 4 East Side Planning Areas: B



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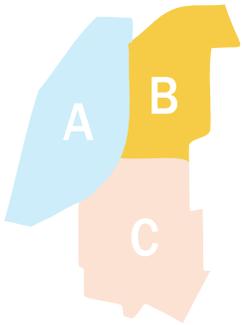
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The Northland Workforce Training Center is one of the many anchor institutions in Area B. Photo: Northland Workforce Training Center (NWTTC)

Prioritized Opportunities: Area B

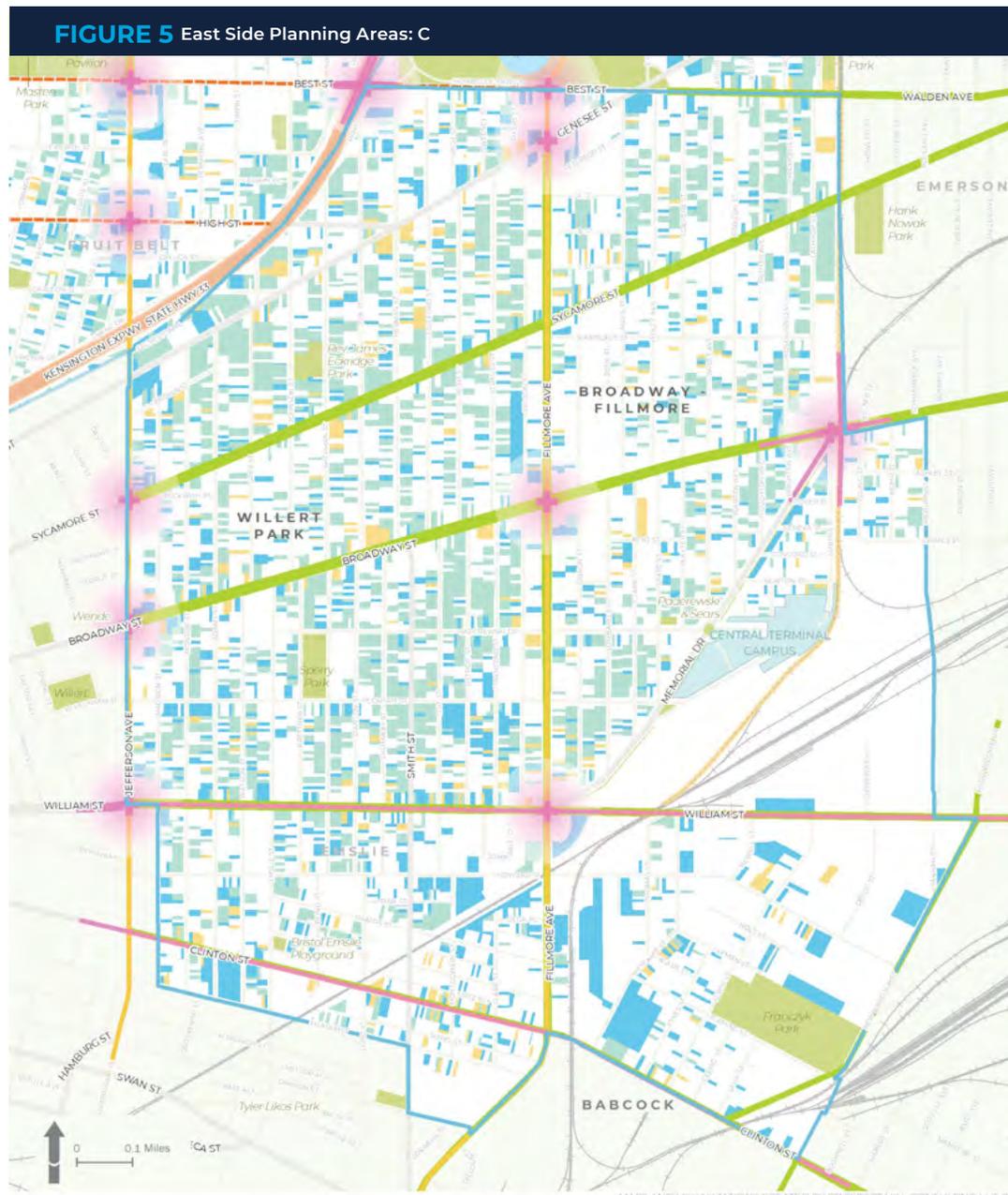
The major anchor institutions that occupy much of the northernmost region of this planning area include Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), the Northland Campus, and American Axle and Bailey Green (Harmac Industries) nearby. This area also requires significant Brownfield clean-up efforts in order to further healthy, safe neighborhood development. These anchors must coordinate together with residents and neighborhood organizations to create an investment plan that addresses this clean-up, food systems access, and connectivity of these campuses to each other and surrounding neighborhoods.

The southern portion of planning area B is home to MLK Jr. Park and the Buffalo Museum of Science, both important cultural, social, and natural assets of the East Side. Fillmore Ave is the primary north-south commercial corridor that connects these assets to the broader neighborhood area and anchors. While Fillmore Ave is an investment corridor of the East Side Avenues program, additional investment for multi-modal mobility and placemaking to more easily connect these areas is necessary.

This planning area is also directly impacted by the vehicle pollution and neighborhood division caused by the 198 highway and Kensington Expressway. Efforts such as, Region Central, are working to reimagine the Humboldt Parkway and Scajaquada Creek Pathway and mitigate the negative health impacts expressway in these communities.

East to west, Delavan Ave, Ferry St, and Best St continue from planning area A to connect to the essential transportation corridor of Bailey Ave. Multi-modal mobility and safe pedestrian infrastructure are priorities for these corridors.

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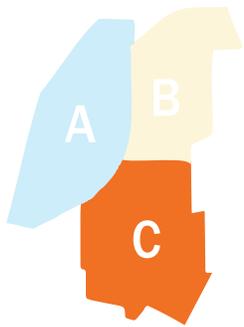


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MAPS AND VISUALIZATIONS CREATED BY PROSPECT HILL CONSULTING, LLC. 2021

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1950s Broadway Market. Photo: BFNHS

Prioritized Opportunities: Area C

This planning area has the largest amount of vacant land that will require thoughtful and intentional strategic planning for infill housing and community spaces that best meet the needs of the residents in this community. This strategy needs to begin with anti-displacement measures for current residents especially surrounding major redevelopments in the neighborhood and the Broadway business corridor, and requires oversight by the community to ensure equitable outcomes.

The Central Terminal and the Broadway Market are two anchor locations in the southern portion of this planning area, and are currently undergoing revitalization efforts with State funding support. The potential for these anchors to have significant economic impacts on the neighborhood is high, and concerted efforts to ensure neighborhood residents and businesses will directly benefit from their revitalization is critical. In addition, mobility and walkable streetscape infrastructure to connect these locations to the great neighborhood is a significant focus for connectivity.

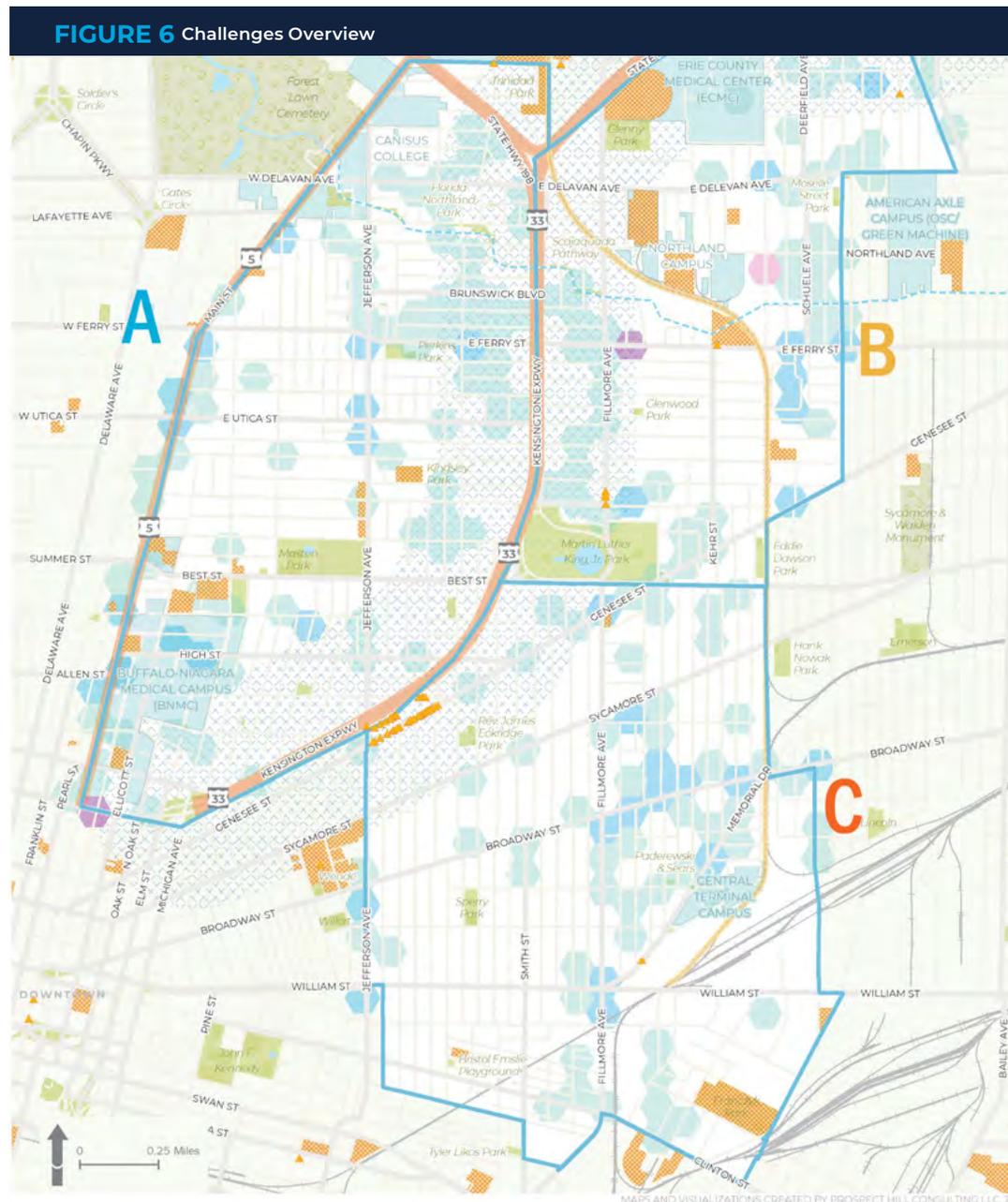


Present-day Broadway Market. Photo: BFNHS

The Jefferson Ave and Fillmore Ave commercial corridors extend into this planning area and connect the planning area to South Buffalo neighborhoods. Intersections at the Beltline and Broadway, Broadway and Fillmore, Broadway and Jefferson, and Jefferson and Sycamore are all-important investment opportunities as they act as gateways into this community or commercial district centers.

Sycamore St, Broadway St, William St, and Clinton St are east-west arteries in this planning area that are critical connectors to downtown and the eastern suburbs. The neighborhood area north of Broadway, south of Sycamore, and east of Fillmore is where a significant growth of Asians and Asian Americans are moving, making planning area C the most diverse planning area compared to A and B, where primarily Black residents live.

INTRODUCTION
OPPORTUNITIES
CHALLENGES



Source: ESRI 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021, University at Buffalo 2021; Buffalo Art Commission 2020; Data Axle verified business data—Erie County Library 2021; Google Maps 2021, Buffalo Sewer Authority 2019; Open Data Buffalo 2021; NYS Dept. Of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) 2021, EPA EJScreen 2020;

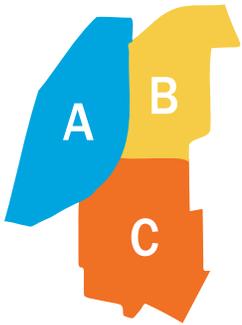
INTRODUCTION
OPPORTUNITIES
CHALLENGES

■ A ■ B ■ C (for map on previous page)

*The National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) is EPA's ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of air toxics in the United States. It is important to remember that NATA provides broad estimates of health risks over geographic areas of the country, not definitive risks to specific individuals or locations. More information on the NATA analysis can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxics-assessment>.

EJ index percentiles for proximity to hazardous waste is based on the number of significant industrial facilities and/or hazardous waste sites within 5KM, including:

- National Priorities List (NPL) sites.
- Risk Management Plan (RMP Facilities).
- Hazardous waste Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities (TSDFs).
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitted major direct dischargers to water.



Challenges

The East Side, like many parts of Western New York and the Great Lakes, was developed before the adoption of modern environmental laws. Legacy pollutants such as lead paint, industrial site contamination, and air pollution from the Scajaquada Expressway corridor, heavily impacts both the health of local residents and their ability to participate in education and employment opportunities. While many of these pollution sources were created decades ago, it is essential to clean up these sources to protect community health. In addition, some neighborhoods in the East Side have moderate to high crime density. This plan does not address the work of many community partners who are focused on safety and justice, however, it does suggest that addressing neighborhood environmental issues, increased beautification efforts, and supporting health and wealth generation and stability for residents will contribute to safety efforts.

A big thank you to Prospect Hill Consulting and the many partners who contributed data sources, including and not limited to:

UB Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab, GOBike Buffalo, the NFTA, GBNRTC, Shared Mobility Inc, the Pride in Place Buffalo initiative, and others who have contributed data. If you would like to contribute additional data layers, email WNYinfo@lisc.org to have data added to the HUB site.

The Open

Ed Roberson

Their buildings razed / They ghosts
Their color that haze of plaster dust
Their blocks of bulldozed air opened to light take your breath as much
By this kind of blinding choke as by the loss felt in the openness
Suddenly able to see as if across a drained lake from below...
People lived where it weren't open,
A people whose any beginning is disbursed by a vagrant progress,
Whose any settlement is overturned for the better
Of a highway through to someone else's possibility.

TRUE BETHEL RIBBON CUTTING. PHOTO: LISC WNY



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East Side Investment Plan

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Welcome Wall in Broadway-Fillmore. Photo: BFNHS

East Side Partners’ Role

East Side Organizations will take part in a shared leadership team that oversees the action strategies as they come to completion over time.

East Side partners are the decision makers and implementers of this plan. These partners make up the East Side Implementation Council.

LISC’s Role

LISC WNY is committed to seeing neighborhood partners succeed in their pursuit to accomplish this mission-aligned plan.

LISC is a resource provider and technical assistant, investing our staff time, programs, and funding towards the plan’s implementation.

Supporters’ Role

Supporters are committed to seeing neighborhood partners succeed in their pursuit to accomplish this mission-aligned plan.

Supporting institutions advise the Implementation Council of efforts and resources coming down the pike and commitment assistance and implementation when possible and strategically aligned.

Together, these partnerships will create pathways for these neighborhoods to attain their fullest potential.

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Implementation Council

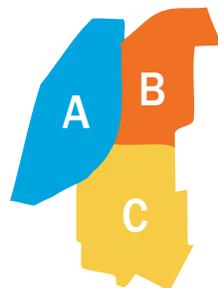
The following pages and goals refer to an ‘Implementation Council.’ The East Side-based organizations you see listed in the following eight goals of the investment plan, together, form the Implementation Council. The Implementation Council meets regularly and provides goal updates to one another. Together, the Implementation Council governs, owns, and implements this plan. Organizations aligned and committed to the goals may be added at anytime and join the Council.

The Equitable Development Scorecard

The Equitable Development Scorecard is also mentioned throughout the following goals. The Equitable Development Scorecard is a tool that will be developed by the Implementation Council, and provides a transparent way to evaluate development projects in areas like housing affordability, jobs and wages, and community input. It is used to negotiate the best return for the community when new developments are proposed within the planning areas.

Plan Area

The Plan Areas (A, B, and C) refer to the three planning areas referred to throughout this report. Please see Fig 1 for the map of these three planning areas.



Project Start

All initiatives in the following goals are anticipated to start between 2022–2023, if not already started. The date listed refers to anticipated start date of planning, funding, or implementation.

A yellow check mark means the project has already begun, whether in funding applications, project planning, or implementation.



Glossary of Partner Organizations

For brevity in the following tables, most partner organizations are named by acronyms. The implementation partner glossary can be found in the Appendices & Contributions section on page 185.

Metrics

Metrics and a data collection plan will be determined by the implementation team (1.1.e). Potential outcome metrics to consider are listed for each goal throughout the plan.

Tracking outcomes over the course of the implementation of the strategies will help determine what impacts investment in this work has had within the community. We believe, over the course of the long-term, with continued investment, capacity, and support, we can contribute to positively influencing neighborhood health indicators.

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Goal 1

East Side residents and businesses lead the revitalization, collaborating with partners to get projects done with an equitable development framework.

Summary

- Strong resident and business organizations managed by and for the people who live or operate a business on the East Side
- Strong block clubs, housing agencies, community centers, business support organizations, and financial opportunity centers that work together
- An active intergenerational resident, business and community-based leadership & implementation council
- A broad base of documented support for the plan and annual implementation priorities
- The use of the Community's Equitable Development Scorecard fosters high quality development
- A high level of transparency with information readily available to the community
- Individual efforts and projects allow multiple pathways and opportunities to provide input through training, tools and time to review projects
- Shared communications platforms that foster collaboration

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 1

Establish a shared leadership model WITHIN the East Side neighborhood investment areas.

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
1.1a	Establish an action-oriented implementation team & governance structure	Implementation Council with logistic support from LISC	A, B, C	2022
1.1b	Create communications framework for the team (i.e. community platform, website, calendar, etc.)	Implementation Council with logistic support from LISC	A, B, C	2022
1.1c	Schedule regular implementation team meetings and trainings	Implementation Council with logistic support from LISC	A, B, C	2022
1.1d	Use interactive HUB site to inform and advocate for neighborhood development efforts	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2022
1.1e	Collect & report regularly on metrics and progress on investment priorities. Revisit priority list relevance biannually.	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2022–2023

Strategy 2

Design & develop consensus around an Equitable Development Scorecard to assess neighborhood development, inclusive of commercial developments and large-scale housing projects.

1.2a	Convene implementation team to review and refine scorecard drafts	LISC	A, B, C	2022
1.2b	Utilize the rubric to score East Side efforts such as the following: 1) Region Central, 2) Main St. Transit Oriented Development, 3) East Side Avenues	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2022–2023
1.2c	Communicate outcomes of rubric with government partners and project implementers	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2023

Potential Measurements

- Number of cross-sector East Side neighborhood partners co-creating and collaborating on the implementation plan
- Amount of money raised or invested from public, private, and philanthropic resources for the WITHIN Investment plan

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 2

Build an equitable, predominantly Black, inclusive community of diverse residents

Summary

- Prevent the displacement of existing residents
- Preserve, rehab or build safe, healthy, quality housing
- Provide housing for a mixture of income levels
- Provide housing types that meet the needs of all consumers
- Ensure that 40% of housing is permanently affordable to lower income and middle class residents.

Strategy 1

Prevent displacement of existing residents

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
2.1a	Provide door to door outreach & technical assistance to help existing residents stay in the neighborhood. The effort should connect residents to: : ERAP, home re-financing, property tax exemption assistance, energy audits, referrals to HOME, tax relief, life estates with nonprofits, Section 8 enrollment supports for landlords, etc.	Live Well Erie, LISC WNY, Belmont Housing, CAO, BUL, HOME, BFNC, Matt Urban, HOCN	A, B, C	2022
2.1b	Work with BCHE, LISC, and anchor institutions to connect employees with housing options in the neighborhood and residents with employment options.	BNMC, Canisius College, Catholic Health, ECMC, Central Terminal, Northland, American Axle	A, B, C	

According to census data, the population in the planning area is over 75% Black. We use the term “predominantly Black” to acknowledge and center the Black community, with the understanding that some neighborhoods, particularly in Area C, are undergoing racial and ethnic shifts. Using BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) only can inadvertently be harmful to the community we are intending to serve, by not addressing the specific needs of the Black population.

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 2

Preserve, rehab, or build safe, healthy, quality housing

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
2.2a	Support mixed-income, eTOD, single family housing infill projects 1. Masten Park/Fruit Belt 2. Fillmore Corridor King Urban Life Center A, B, C Streets Northland Neighborhood Memorial Drive Triangle	BFNHS, HOCN, CAO, Citizen's Alliance, Neighborhood CDCs, GJABA	A, B, C	
2.2b	Support mixed-income, multi family housing projects along Main Street eTOD corridor, Jefferson Ave, Broadway Fillmore node	Belmont Housing, Lincoln Memorial, Cedarland, Canisius, Salvation Army, GJABA	A, C	

Potential Measurements

- Number and percent of residents served that were able to access/directly benefit from ERAP, refinancing, property tax assistance, energy audits, referrals to HOME, life estates, Section 8, etc.
- Ratio of affordable and available housing units to households with low and very low income levels
- Change in number of homes owned and occupied by owner
- Number of mixed-income, single-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of mixed-income, multi-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of affordable housing rental units built/occupied
- Occupant demographics

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 3

Connect residents to family sustaining jobs, and reduce the racial income gap for East Side residents

Summary

- Along the Main Street Knowledge TOD corridor
- With Anchor Institutions in the neighborhood: Northland, ECMC, American Axel, Harmac, Canisius College, Sisters Hospital, BNMC, and Central Terminal
- With East Side and Black owned businesses
- In regional growth sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Tech, Health Care, Tourism, Arts & Entertainment, Climate & Electrification
- In development/construction efforts for Central Terminal, Northland, Broadway Market, Main Street, Humboldt Parkway/Route 33, COVID-19 recovery, transportation, housing, or green economy,
- And/or remotely through improved broadband and remote work supports

Strategy 1

Establish anchor-community partnerships to advance shared value while driving dollars into local businesses

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
3.1a	Involve residents, business owners, and key stakeholders in planning, goal creation and assessments	Anchors, block clubs, business associations	A, B, C	2022
3.1b	Provide transparent MWBE procurement goals and actual spend to the community	ECIDA, Anchors	A, B, C	2022
3.1c	Initiate a local spend goal for surrounding neighborhood businesses	Anchors	A, B, C	2022
3.1d	Co-design with local businesses opportunities that meet the needs for goods and services	Anchors, business associations, business owners, Buffalo Go Green	A, B, C	2022
3.1e	Establish goals for local resident jobs (construction related and permanent)	ECIDA, Anchors, Buffalo Go Green	A, B, C	2023
3.1f	Ensure local businesses, organizations, residents are involved in, and contracted by, the redevelopment opportunities of Broadway Market & Central Terminal	Government, CTCR	C	
3.1g	Conduct external evaluations of program outcomes, procure consulting services from local service provider and/or business association	Anchors	A, B, C	2023

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 2

Contract with local BIPOC-owned businesses and/or employ east side residents for all major ARPA rebuilding efforts such as construction, materials and procurement, consulting

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
3.2a	Develop forecasting of upcoming opportunities and educate local vendors and contractors about the funds to be distributed through independent entities, including but not limited to schools, city agencies, and public authorities	LISC, Government, BUL, BCCWNY	A, B, C	2022
3.2b	Convene and work with infrastructure agencies to promote more equitable procurement practices, including but limited to goals for local resident jobs	The Exchange at Beverly Gray, WBC, SBDC, Erie County, City of Buffalo	A, B, C	2022
3.2c	Develop a geographically focused cohort program offering industry-specific trainings and mentorship to business owners, in addition to growing a consortium of businesses to potentially partner and bid on projects	Business Service Organizations	A, B, C	2023
3.2d	Develop a low-interest loan program to address the impact that payment delays from general contractors have on subcontractors	ECIDA, CDFIs, Banks	A, B, C	2023
3.2e	Provide grants to contractors and vendors to reduce barriers to securing contracts and increase business resiliency	CDFIs, LISC	A, B, C	2022
3.2f	Provide technical assistance for local vendors and contractors to acquire various certifications and compliances, specifically the disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) certification to participate in federal infrastructure projects	City of Buffalo, Erie County, DOT, NYPA	A, B, C	2023
3.2g	Direct job readiness funds to bolster training in the construction trades, to give more residents the opportunity to gain skills, certifications and a pathway to employment.	Government & Workforce Organizations	A, B, C	2022

Potential Measurements

- Number of anchor institutions that develop MWBE spend goals
- Number of BIPOC-owned businesses employed through ARPA rebuilding efforts
- Number of infrastructure agencies promoting equitable procurement practices
- Low-interest loan programs developed
- Number of grants administered to contractors
- Number of mixed-income, single-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of mixed-income, multi-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of affordable housing rental units built/occupied
- Occupant demographics

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Goal 4

Build Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Wealth and close the racial wealth gap

Summary

- BIPOC equity building residential options including single family home ownership, doubles, condos, cooperative ownership and community land trust models
- Real estate development & strong BIPOC land ownership
- Closing the racial appraisal gap for Black homeowners and neighborhoods
- BIPOC owned business growth – with focused support for existing businesses and/or capitalizing on succession opportunities to increase BIPOC and/or employee ownership

Strategy 1

Strengthen business supports and opportunities for capital, ensuring inclusive outreach and navigation for entrepreneurs

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
4.1a	Launch a digital entrepreneurial resource portal as a consolidated point of entry to promote small business services and opportunities for capital.	Erie County, Open4	A, B, C	2023
4.1b	Provide capacity building to BIPOC-led business associations	LISC, Business Service Organizations	A, B, C	
4.1c	Develop a geographically focused program for professional provider services at little to no cost, to assist businesses in navigating processes (marketing, financial insurance, legal)	Business Service Organizations, BCCWNY	A, B, C	2023
4.1d	Get neighborhood businesses loan-ready with educational seminars through existing business support services and educational campaigns, in addition to educating business owners about financing options and how to identify the best lender and loan type	The Exchange at Beverly Gray, WBC, SBDC, CEL, EforAll, CDFIs, Banks	A, B, C	2023
4.1e	Develop a revolving loan fund for MWBE contractors	ECIDA	A, B, C	

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Strategy 2

Continue engagement and education of East Side residents in the real estate development process

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
4.2a	Continue to administer Community Based Real Estate Development Training	LISC, East Side Avenues	A, B, C	
4.2b	Empower emerging developers by creating ongoing educational training opportunities.	LISC, City of Buffalo, Urban Land Institute, Urban Plan 4All, Incremental Development Alliance	A, B, C	2022
4.2c	Connect emerging developers with mentorship and joint venture opportunities	LISC	A, B, C	
4.2d	Explore opportunities to support Black led and/or community based financial institutions such as the St. Johns Credit Union	LISC, St. Johns Credit Union	C	2023

Potential Measurements

- Number of BIPOC-owned small businesses connected to a digital resource portal
- Number of BSOs connected to a digital resource portal
- Number of BIPOC-owned business referrals between BSOs
- Number of BIPOC-owned businesses that become loan ready
- Number of community-based developers completing training programs
- Low-interest loan programs developed
- Number of grants administered to contractors
- Number of mixed-income, single-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of mixed-income, multi-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of affordable housing rental units built/occupied
- Occupant demographics

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Goal 5

Support place keeping projects to amplify economic vitality and celebrate culture, neighborhood identity, history and wellness

Summary

- Vibrant commercial hubs and key intersections
- Intergenerational activities and spaces
- Active cultural and historic assets
- Walkable residential neighborhoods
- Gardens, parks, greenways & waterways

Strategy 1

Build capacity for the redevelopment of the Jefferson Ave business district, Fillmore Business District, E. Delavan Business District, E. Ferry Street, and Broadway Fillmore node

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
5.1a	Develop & administer a commercial corridor training program based in historic preservation, district promotion, beautification, and business support for East Side organizations	LISC, East Side Avenues	A, B, C	2023
5.1b	Develop a shared resources model for public space improvements (ie. snow removal, flowers and watering)	Commercial District Groups, LISC	A, B, C	
5.1c	Develop shared communications tools for district managers	Commercial District Groups, LISC	A, B, C	2023
5.1d	Develop shared metrics for district managers	Commercial District Groups, LISC	A, B, C	2023
5.1e	Develop tools to strengthen communication between district managers and a) business owners, b) property owners, c) residents	Commercial District Groups, LISC	A, B, C	

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Strategy 2

Use the equitable development model to fund and build community-supported arts and culture development priorities

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
5.2a	Provide real estate development technical assistance and coordinate financing for community facility development that will provide important health, wealth, and cultural contributions to the neighborhood, specifically: 1. Broadway Theater, 2. Torn Space Theater, 3. African American Cultural Center, 4. Temple of Prayer Arts & Cultural Center, 5. Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collective	LISC	A, B, C	

Strategy 3

Provide focused support on events unique to the area

5.3a	Identify existing events in main East Side commercial districts (ie. Juneteenth, Kuleta Pamoja, other special events, community events, and retail events)	Commercial District Groups, Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collective	A, B, C	2023
5.3b	Develop a shared marketing platform for all large-scale East Side events	Commercial District Groups, Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collective, Buffalo Go Green	A, B, C	2023
5.3c	Build connectivity between existing community events and existing businesses via retail promotions	Commercial District Groups, Beau Fleuve, Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Collective	A, B, C	2023

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Strategy 4

Elevate the importance of the creative and cultural industries as a generator of jobs and wealth

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
5.4a	Convene creative and cultural industry leaders to identify shared industry goals and strategies (ie. African American Cultural Center, Apollo Media Center, other facilities and/or creatives)	Beau Fleuve, The Foundry, Wakanda Alliance, Pappy Martin Jazz Collective, LISC WNY	A, B, C	2022
5.4b	Strengthen connective tissue between creative and cultural organizations and makers with shared communication platforms	Arts Services Initiative of WNY, LISC WNY, Beau Fleuve, The Foundry, Wakanda Alliance, Pappy Martin Jazz Collective	A, B, C	2023
5.4c	Identify real estate matching strategies to connect creative businesses and makers with physical spaces and growth opportunities (ie. filling commercial corridor vacancies, connecting makers to space at Central Terminal, etc.)	Beau Fleuve, The Foundry, Commercial District Groups, Pappy Martin Jazz Collective	A, B, C	2023

Strategy 5

Increase public access to a variety of healthy, natural outdoor spaces

5.5a	Support the implementation of the East Side park improvement priorities in the City/Trust for Public Land Master Park Plan	Implementation Council, City of Buffalo, Trust for Public Land	A, B, C	2023
5.5b	Identify at least two opportunities in each planning area for inclusive, creative play space, including opportunities for families with very young children, school aged children, older youth/young adults, and older adults (ie. traditional playgrounds, natural play spaces, public performance space, space design for quiet and mindfulness, sports and recreation, and/or community "pop-up"/multi-use space, etc.)	Implementation Council, GOBike Buffalo, CTRC, Freedom Gardens	A, B, C	2023
5.5c	Work with The Foundry to build amenities with community members in the planning areas to support the identified creative play space.	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2023
5.5d	Co-design a neighborhood native plant landscaping plan with experts and community residents	Buffalo Go Green, Buffalo Freedom Gardens, Master Gardeners, Grassroots Gardens	A, B, C	2023
5.5e	Develop a strategy for tree planting	Neighborhood Associations, Commercial District Groups, Re-Tree WNY & Government	A, B, C	2023

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Potential Measurements

- Narrative: Ratio of positive to negative stories about East Side (ie Google search), ratio of historic of significant properties restored to at risk or abandoned, frequency of East Side assets in regional marketing
- Belonging: An example of a tool for measuring belonging is the Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale
- Social capital: Selected questions from the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey
- Number of vacant and/or underutilized commercial spaces activated
- Shared public space improvements program established and funded (snow, flowers, maintenance, etc)
- Number of shared communication tools for commercial district leaders
- Shared metrics for district managers created
- Number of TA, trainings, promotional tools for food entrepreneurs
- Number of intersection redevelopment projects completed
- All existing events identified and shared event marketing platform created
- Shared communication tools for cultural/creative industries created
- Cultural/creative industry goals/agenda established
- Number of real estate opportunities identified/secured for creative/cultural industry
- Dollars invested in public improvements (and source of funds public v. private)
- Number of jobs created/preserved through public improvements
- Number of net new businesses in WITHIN geography
- Number of net new jobs in WITHIN geography corridors
- Number of BIPOC-owned businesses that become loan ready
- Number of community-based developers completing training programs
- Low-interest loan programs developed
- Number of grants administered to contractors
- Number of mixed-income, single-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of mixed-income, multi-family, infill homes built/occupied
- Number of affordable housing rental units built/occupied
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Goal 6

Food access, infrastructure, and business support that increases healthy food options, creates neighborhood economic opportunity, and contributes to a shared vision of food sovereignty

Summary

- BIPOC-owned real estate development
- BIPOC-owned and managed food and food-related small businesses
- Land acquisition in service of green space, gardens, and farming
- Commercial district coordination and promotion of food ecosystems

Strategy 1

Support regional strategies and recommendations developed through Food Futures Western New York that pertain to East Side communities

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
6.1a	Identify how specific East Side strategies and recommendations are supported in this neighborhood investment plan and fill gaps where needed	Implementation Council, City of Buffalo, Trust for Public Land	A, B, C	2023
6.1b	Work with Food for the Spirit to identify the capacity needs of the Buffalo Food Equity Network and its members	Implementation Council, GOBike Buffalo, CTRC, Freedom Gardens	A, B, C	2023
6.1c	Support Buffalo Food Equity Network and its members to develop strategic plan in areas where food resources are scarce such as Delavan Grider, the Fruit Belt, and Masten Park with the closure of Tops	Implementation Council	A, B, C	2023

ROLES

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 2

Support community-centered food-related real estate development opportunities with BIPOC leadership and ownership. Provide business support to existing and burgeoning culinary arts businesses and food-based markets for promotion, growth and expansion.

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
6.2a	Provide Real estate development technical assistance and coordinate financing for community facilities that will provide important health, wealth, and cultural contributions to the neighborhood, specifically: 1) African Heritage Food Co-op, 2) Project Rainfall, 3) Buffalo Go Green Holistic Wellness & Agricultural Education Campus, 4) Kanaka Development Projects, 5) Groundwork Market Gardens, 6) Community Gardens & Urban Farming Initiatives	LISC, African Heritage Food Coop, Project Rainfall, Buffalo Go Green, Buffalo Freedom Gardens, Grassroots Gardens, Buffalo Food Equity Network, Food Futures WNY	A, B, C	
6.2b	Explore growth and incubator opportunities for food-based entrepreneurs, including infrastructure (ie. Commercial/commissary kitchen models) and cooking school support	Broadway Market, BFNHS, Fillmore Forward, Buffalo Go Green, MOM Market	C	2022
6.2c	Expand existing small business development programs to support food entrepreneurs at any level in the food system and ensure equitable access to these programs. Support cultural competency of these programs.	Buffalo Go Green, Project Rainfall, UFV, Eat Off Art, Community First	A, B, C	2023
6.2d	Increase participation and capacity of Healthy Corner Store Initiative (HCSI) work to support and grow healthy food businesses.	Healthy Corner Stores Initiative	A, B, C	2022
6.2e	Develop and enhance training programs fro new farmers and farmers of color	UFV, Freedom Gardens	A, B, C	2023

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 3

Promote and highlight the East Side's existing restauranteurs and food-based businesses

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
6.3a	Develop and promote a map of existing food-based business and restaurants	Jericho Road, BFNHS, Fillmore Forward, Buffalo Go Green	C	2022
6.3b	Develop marketing tools to promote & brand East Side neighborhoods as a culinary food destination and experience	Commercial District Groups	A, B, C	2023

Potential Measurements

- Number of BIPOC-owned food-related businesses supported
- Number of BIPOC-owned developments funded and built
- Food Access plan developed in Delavan Grider and Fruit Belt Neighborhoods
- Shared food-related mapping and marketing tools created

ROLES

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 7

Public infrastructure supports community health and sustainable economic revitalization.

Summary

- Public transportation infrastructure supports safe, affordable, multi-modal travel, including universal design, active mobility, and the eventual deployment of electric and/or autonomous vehicles.
- Broadband infrastructure is sufficient to 1) allow multiple family members within a household to fully participate and engage with work and/education; 2) actively supports small business operation and innovation; 3) facilitate high quality public services
- Energy & electrification efforts prioritize “behind the meter” and other measures that minimize costs and maximize benefits to end users – including keeping energy costs to 6% of income and ensuring all residents are able to participate in the transition to beneficial electrification
- All people have access to safe, reliable, and affordable water
- Wastewater systems prepare for changing rain and snow patterns – working to minimize basement and disruptive neighborhood flooding

Strategy 1

Advocate for the redevelopment of key intersections that connect residents to public space and job centers

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
7.1a	Connect the Northland Campus to the surrounding neighborhood at the following 6 key intersections: 1) E. Delavan & Northland, 2) E. Delavan & Grider, 3) E. Delavan & Schauf, 4) E. Schauf & Northland, 5) Fillmore & Northland, 6) Fillmore & E. Delavan	BUDC, LISC WNY, Albright Knox, GOBike Buffalo, City of Buffalo	B	2022
7.1b	Plan intersection safety improvements (crosswalk painting, traffic calming, curb cuts, snow maintenance, etc.)	GOBike Buffalo	A, B, C	2022

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 2

Advocate for the investment of streetscape and public infrastructure surrounding Broadway Market & Central Terminal Sites (lighting, curb appeal, etc)

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
7.2a	Develop community consensus on streetscape and public infrastructure strategies	Government, CTRC, Fillmore Forward, BFNHS, GOBike Buffalo	C	2022
7.2b	Identify all possible funding opportunities and dates for applications	Government, CTRC, Fillmore Forward, BFNHS, LISC WNY, GOBike Buffalo	C	2022
7.2c	Apply for streetscape and public infrastructure funding	Government, CTRC, Fillmore Forward, BFNHS, GOBike Buffalo, The Foundry	C	2023
7.2d	Work with The Foundry to build streetscape amenities with students and community groups	Government, CTRC, Fillmore Forward, BFNHS, GOBike Buffalo, The Foundry	C	2022

Strategy 3

Advocate to improve safe, multi-modal mobility within, and connecting to, the neighborhood areas

7.3a	Identify bus stops / shelters at high ridership locations for climate smart improvements	CEJ, BTRU, GOBike Buffalo, NFTA, GBNRTC, Government, LISC	A, B, C	2022
7.3b	Support development of next phase bicycle paths – Greenway Trail Connectors from Delavan and LaSalle Stations to Bailey Ave., Best St., Fillmore Ave.	GOBike Buffalo, HOCN	A, B, C	
7.3c	Work with The Foundry to build amenities in support of strategies 7.3.a and 7.3.b.	CEJ, BTRU, GOBike, HOCN, The Foundry	A, B, C	2023
7.3d	Identify specific community-based and managed locations for added walkability, micro-mobility and electric mobility hubs (e.g. bike shares, charging stations, etc.)	HOCN, Shared Mobility Inc., GOBike Buffalo, East Side Bike Club	A, B, C	2023
7.3e	Audit and identify priority plan for sidewalk repair and curb cuts	Implementation Team, GOBike Buffalo, LISC	A, B, C	2023

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 4

Advocate for digital equity in the East Side through expanded broadband options, access to technology, training, and nonprofit support

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
7.4a	Connect Community Foundation broadband project to Broadway Market and Central Terminal sites	Mission Ignite, WNY COVID-19 Response Team, BURA, STAND UP Buffalo, Broadband Providers, Buffalo Go Green, FBCLT, HOCN	C	2022
7.4b	Identify specific public gathering, education, and residential sites for broadband improvements, with particular focus on access for older adults and educational and workforce opportunities		A, B, C	2023

Potential Measurements

- Evidence of coordinated broadband strategy linked to anchor and neighborhood redevelopment projects
- Number of new public access to high speed connections locations
- Nonprofit support: Number of organizations with added capacity (type) or investment (amount)
- Number of sidewalk repairs and/or intersection improvements completed
- Number/miles of new bicycle infrastructure
- Number of, and dollars invested, in public streetscape amenities (ie. benches, lighting, etc)
- Number of creative play spaces built for intergenerational play

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 8

Legacy contamination and environmental pollution no longer impact East Side resident health outcomes

Summary

- Residents and landlords have access to the tools and resources they need to quickly address lead paint and pipes, asbestos, mold and other contaminants
- Regional arterials like the Scajaquada Expressway, Route 33, and Main Street do not create air pollution issues
- Brownfield and superfund industrial pollution sites are cleaned up to standards that protect residents and in a way that supports community revitalization goals.

Strategy 1

Develop a rehabilitation fund for existing homeowners & small landlords for repairs, rehab, and elimination of hazards/toxins (in conjunction with displacement strategies listed in Goal 2, Strategy 1 and modeled after and/or in partnership with PUSH Buffalo and other local programs/funds)

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
8.1a	Identify properties in need of repair (roof, basement flooding, lead exposure, asbestos, etc)	GJABA, Taxpayer's Associations, Block Clubs	A, B, C	2023
8.1b	Provide training to homeowners and small landlords on accessing fund and construction needs	Cedarland Development, Home Headquarters, Banking & CDFI Partners	A, B, C	2023

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ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 2

Utilize urban farms for environmental remediation of neighborhoods

Project	Strategies	Lead Partners	Plan Area	Project Start
8.2a	Identify locations for remediation	Buffalo Go Green	B, C	2023
8.2b	Secure funding and implementation strategy for urban farms	Buffalo Go Green	B, C	2023

Strategy 3

Support efforts to restore and reconnect communities dissected by traffic infrastructure

8.3a	Support neighborhood participation and leadership in local and state efforts to reconstruct the Kensington Expressway (Route 33)	Restore Our Community Coalition, Olmsted Parks Conservancy, New York State government partners	A, B, C	
8.3b	Support neighborhood participation and leadership in local and state efforts to strengthen community assets and reconnect neighborhoods impacted by the Scajaquada Expressway (Route 198)	GBNRTC, Region Central, One Region Forward	A,B	
8.3c	Support neighborhood participation and leadership in equitable transit oriented development along the Main St. corridor	NFTA, eTOD Coordinating Committee, City of Buffalo, Developing Our Transit Future participants, GOBike Buffalo	A	

Potential Measurements

- Rehab fund developed
- Numbers of homes repaired/rehabbed
- Number of repairs made with fund
- Urban Farm remediation strategy developed
- Number and type of neighborhood leadership roles, engagements, decision making in infrastructure redevelopment processes

“When people want to move,” Threat asked, “what do they look for? They look for businesses. They look for schools. They look for transportation, shops, parks and restaurants their families can enjoy. We also need a quality supermarket.

“There’s going to be some kind of movement in this area,” she predicted. “It probably never will be the way it was, but it would be something to get caught up with the rest of city. We’ve got Canalside. We’ve got Larkinville right around the corner from us. Why can’t we be like that?”

Marva Threat,

East Side Fields of Dreams Block Club President,
as quoted from The Buffalo News

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Background

Although these items do not have funds or an execution team and plan, they are still important opportunities for the East Side.

NOTE: In addition to the priorities outlined in the previous section, these neighborhood strategies are also significant investment opportunities that attain neighborhood goals. The opportunities in *italic* are public and private fund development options.

1. East Side residents and businesses lead the revitalization, collaborating with partners to get projects done with an equitable development framework

- Build and invest in a climate infrastructure and sustainability plan for the East Side Equitable Development Team
- Create a youth participation model for the activities of the East Side Equitable Development Team coordinating with municipal and nonprofit youth leadership programs to engage youth in development issues such as:
 - Strategic planning and design for green spaces and public gathering spaces
 - Business and entrepreneurship
 - Safety and justice through community design
 - Policy, advocacy, and organizing leadership

2. Build an equitable, predominantly Black, inclusive community of diverse residents

- Explore innovative housing strategies targeting the following groups:
 - East Side youth ages 18-24
 - Women-headed households
 - Working artists
 - Live/work space for entrepreneurs
- Develop an anchor institution housing strategy
 - Work with employers to provide housing placement support for employees, minimizing transportation barriers
 - Work with schools and housing agencies to increase connection for housing placement support for students and staff in proximity to schools

ROLES**HOW TO USE THIS PLAN****COMMUNITY GOALS****ADDITIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES****3. Connect residents to family sustaining jobs, and reduce the racial income gap for East Side residents**

- Build the job pipeline between residents within planning areas and all surrounding anchor institutions
- Design job opportunities for career advancement, provide career coaching and provide tuition assistance
- Increase the youth job pipeline
 - Develop youth bridge programs and/or job corps (health, manufacturing, tech, creative arts)
- Foster businesses development through increased capacity and access to capital
- Increase business connectivity to access banks and mission-driven lenders (CDFIs)
- Work with lenders to identify ways to create more flexible criteria, for example loosening requirements of credit score and collateral
- Develop and promote crowdfunding and micro-lending products (i.e. KIVA program)
- *Explore the creation of geographically focused angel investment group*

4. Build Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Wealth and close the racial wealth gap through

- Grow contract opportunities for building and infrastructure redevelopment projects for BIPOC businesses
- Identify methods to launch and accelerate creative businesses (workshops and keynotes)
- Determine ways to bring business development tools to the creative community.
- Find pathways to enable small scale producers to aggregate products for large-scale institutional purchases
- Explore opportunities for an East Side place-based business chamber
- Offer supports for small contractors to qualify for higher levels of insurance and/or explore changing requirements for bonding and insurance on publicly funded projects.

ROLES**HOW TO USE THIS PLAN****COMMUNITY GOALS****ADDITIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES****5. Placekeeping to amplify economic vitality, and celebrate culture, neighborhood identity, history and wellness**

- *Fund a 311 community education campaign to increase neighborhood improvement participation of all residents*
- *Connect arts and culture-based infrastructure projects with grant assistance, financing and capital*
- Elevate the importance of the creative and cultural industries as a generator of jobs and wealth
 - Connect creative & cultural industry leaders with
 - regional marketing and tourism groups to promote
 - existing arts and cultural activity on regional scale
 - Use 1% for Arts program to directly connect local BIPOC artists with community development efforts, embedding arts and culture in new East Side developments
 - Train Business Support Organizations on tools and resources needed to elevate artist and maker business growth
- *Pool permanent stabilization dollars available for historic preservation, particularly on the East Side, designed for both larger and smaller historic preservation projects.*
- Support the growth of the proposed Broadway Fillmore Historic District & existing MLK Park Historic Districts
 - Increase public space amenities like lighting, garbage cans, street furniture, street signage, public art, banners, etc.
 - Invest in, and increase ratio of, historic building renovations
- Support the redevelopment of Main/Michigan/Ferry triangle
 - Enlist beautification strategies for garbage management, green space enhancement, and arts and culture
 - Explore business recruitment opportunities for grocery and retail
- Build upon self-guided asset map tool created by Pride in Place Buffalo to connect neighborhood historic, cultural, arts, food, recreation, and small business and anchor fabrics

ROLES**HOW TO USE THIS PLAN****COMMUNITY GOALS****ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES****6. Public Infrastructure Supports Community Health and Sustainable Economic Revitalization**

- Establish corridor priorities for a municipal snow maintenance plan for sidewalks, contracting with local BIPOC contractor.
- Identify primary multi-modal mobility corridors to fund and install street furniture, lighting, and shading solutions
- Co-design bus stop templates with community residents for various types of bus stops (e.g. non-shelter stops, lower use shelters, high use shelters/transfer hubs).
- Support increased resident participation in re-assessment of neighborhood bus services and NFTA's bus rapid transit (BRT) exploration on Bailey Ave.
 - Participation in BNMC Community Shuttle project that addresses first/last mile challenges and explores vehicle diversification, accessibility, and technology advancements
- Invest in physical infrastructure projects at the following locations:
 - Northland Beltline Parkway
 - Main Street bridging E. and W. Ferry
- *Create an equitable Transit Oriented Development (eTOD) Fund to support traditional density AND supporting amenities/priorities for neighborhoods*
- Develop flexible retail space for production/manufacturing with retail storefronts
- Anchor development strategy that benefits neighborhood growth
 - Anchors invest in transportation system improvements and mobility infrastructure from homes to work, including public transportation incentives
 - Implement anti-displacement strategies for residents and small businesses; deploy a policy commitment to mixed-income neighborhoods
 - Expand existing intergenerational technology training programs for older adults at residential and community center sites

7. Legacy contamination and environmental pollution no longer impact East Side resident health outcomes

- Develop a greening strategy for increased green space and green energy opportunities in the Delavan Grider neighborhood.
- Prepare workforce for transition to the electrification of mobility, transportation, and other green infrastructure improvements.
 - Ensure a just transition of existing workforce through training programs
 - Support labor union collaboration
- Find pathways for newer workforce pipeline to emerging green job opportunities

FRUIT BELT NEIGHBORHOOD.
PHOTO: BUFFALO COMMONS PHOTOBANK



East Side History

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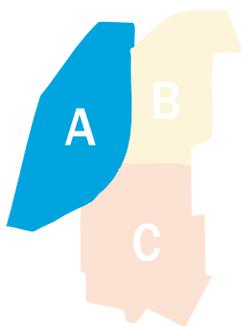
HISTORY OF AREA A
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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad

MAPS AND VISUALIZATIONS CREATED BY PROSPECT HILL CONSULTING LLC, 2021

HISTORY OF AREA A
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Area A encompasses a grouping of six neighborhoods with Main Street running along the western border, and the I-33 Kensington Expressway on the eastern border. Trinidad Park and Hamlin Park are to the north, Cold Springs and Masten Park to the west, Kingsley on the eastern border, split by the I-33 Kensington Expressway, and finally the Fruit Belt neighborhood is the southernmost neighborhood, adjacent to Buffalo’s downtown business district.

Hamlin Park & Trinidad Park

Hamlin Park and Trinidad Park sit at the most northern edge of the Area A boundary. The neighborhood was first home to German and Jewish-American residents. With the flight of migration to the suburbs and an influx in the African American population post-WWII, Hamlin Park became the first African American middle-class community in Western New York. The ‘Hamlin Park Historic District’ was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2013, and continues to be an iconic neighborhood in the city.

Trinidad Park, sitting adjacent to Hamlin Park, is a small neighborhood nestled between Sisters Hospital and the I-33 Expressway. The CSX Belt Line also borders this neighborhood. The geography of Trinidad Park was severely altered in the 1960s due to the construction of Routes 198 and 33. Dozens of homes were relocated from Humboldt Parkway to this nine-street section, now isolated from historic Hamlin Park. Though physically separated, the neighborhood shares much of the architectural identity of historic Hamlin Park. In 1971, Trinidad Park was established as a new respite for residents devastated by the loss of the Humboldt Parkway².

60 Hedley Place, a stone farmhouse built around 1850, was recently restored and is home to the Hamlin Park Community Taxpayer’s Association (HPCTA), which has been meeting regularly since 1965. In addition to a strong Taxpayer’s

Association, the Restore Our Community Coalition (ROCC) is a group whose vision is to restore the historic Humboldt Parkway as a green boulevard and promenade. Before the Kensington Expressway was introduced in the early 1960s, the tree lined Olmsted Parkway framed this neighborhood and there are community-led efforts to bring the tree lined streets back, making way for a more pedestrian friendly lifestyle.



COLD SPRING HOTEL, SOUTHEAST CORNER MAIN AND FERRY STREETS.
 BUILT IN THE EARLY '20'S, TORN DOWN ABOUT 1890.

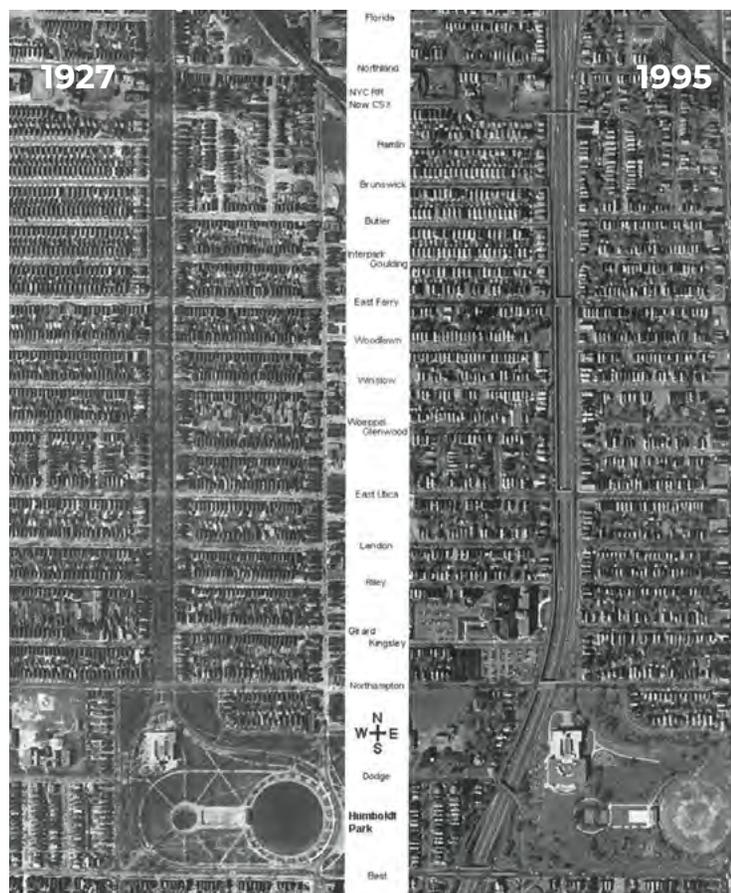
Photo: PBN (Preservation Buffalo Niagara)

Cold Springs & Masten Park

The Cold Spring neighborhood derives its name from a historic spring that formerly stood in the current day intersection of Main and East Ferry Streets. Other springs, which had been frequented by Native Americans for generations, were also present at one point in time. This is attributed to the reason that the neighborhood became known in the plural as “Cold Springs.”

Cold Spring developed into an urban residential neighborhood after the Civil War and was mostly occupied by Germans with

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1927 Humboldt Parkway is Transformed into the Kensington Expressway 1995

Photo: Google

a small enclave of African American residents. By 1900, most of the German community dispersed, and the neighborhood became home to Polish immigrants. Jefferson Avenue, an important route, was originally planned by Frederick Law Olmsted to be upgraded into a 200-foot parkway, connecting an East Side park on High Street with Delaware Park to the North. The ‘East Side park’ ended up further east at Genesee and Best Streets, now known as Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

Connecting this park to the north with a new street, Humboldt Parkway, Jefferson Avenue evolved into an important commercial center ([Preservation Buffalo Niagara](#)). After 1940, in a Post WWII society, the ethnic makeup of the Cold Springs neighborhood shifted to predominantly African American. This was viewed as the peak period in the Second Great Migration of African Americans from the American South. From this time on, Jefferson Avenue became known as the major thoroughfare of the Black community in Buffalo³.

Masten Park, just south of Cold Springs, is a 28-block neighborhood, bordered by Main St, Best St, East Ferry St, and Jefferson Ave. The neighborhood began developing in the 1870s with the creation of the Buffalo Parks and Parkway system. The New York Central Railroad built the Belt Line Railroad in 1883, opening new areas for industrial and residential development. In the mid 1880s, a building boom began in the Masten neighborhood.

The Masten Neighborhood Rows are a unique architectural asset showcasing urban architecture in Buffalo that is not present in other neighborhoods. These historic row houses provided an answer to demand for inexpensive housing on little available land, and were built for working class tenants by land associations and developers⁴.



Woodlawn Avenue Historic Row Houses. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

³ [Preservation Buffalo Niagara](#)
⁴ [Living Places](#)

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Photo: Google

The Fruit Belt

The Fruit Belt is a 150-year-old predominantly Black neighborhood in Buffalo that has faced a series of systemic hurdles through the years. The neighborhood was named for its bountiful fruit trees. Residents were treated to a bountiful harvest every autumn⁵. After WWII, the segregation of this neighborhood took place with redlining policies dating back to the 1930s, leading the foundation for the expressways that drove through the neighborhood in the 1950s and 60s. The Fruit Belt orchards faded when Route 33 was constructed along Cherry Street. This new construction erased a piece of Buffalo when it arrived: a neighborhood called Brewers Hill.

Starting in the 1960s, large parts of the neighborhood were razed and cleared for the creation of a university-affiliated medical park. For decades following, investments were placed in this medical park. Some maps call the neighborhood 'Medical Park,' rather than the longstanding 'Fruit Belt,' amplifying the risk of erasure surrounding this neighborhood's

'identity and history. Behind the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, the Fruit Belt neighborhood still stands, and a resurgence of energy arrives with it. In 2017, an initiative through [Endless Orchard](#) organized for volunteers to replant the fruit trees that were lost, with the intention of a new orchard growing for the next wave of residents. The [Fruit Belt Community Land Trust](#) is active in this space, incubating permanently affordable housing, garden space, and commercial space.



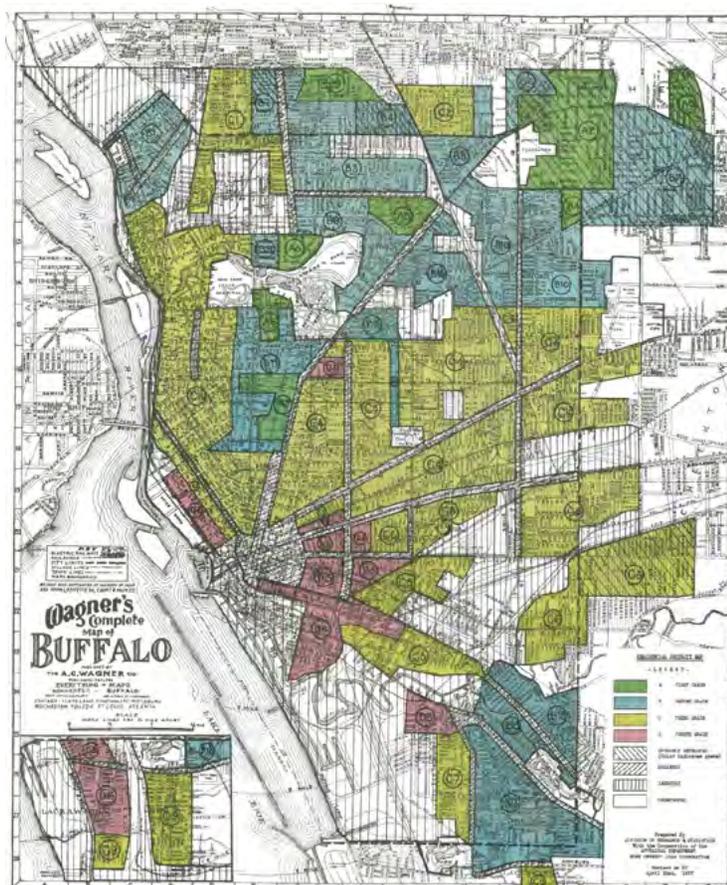
High Street Deli—a historic building
in the Fruit Belt Neighborhood
High Street Deli by Julia Wald Art

“ Main Street is as old as Buffalo...It was this street, that for so many years, like a racial Maginot Lie, has served to divide the East Side from the West Side. ”

Mark Goldman

"City on the Lake"

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Redlining map of Buffalo. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

Main Street: The Great Divide

In the early 1800s, when Buffalo was first being planned, Joseph Ellicott's street design did not cross Main Street, and people generally lived on the Western side of what is now Main Street⁶.

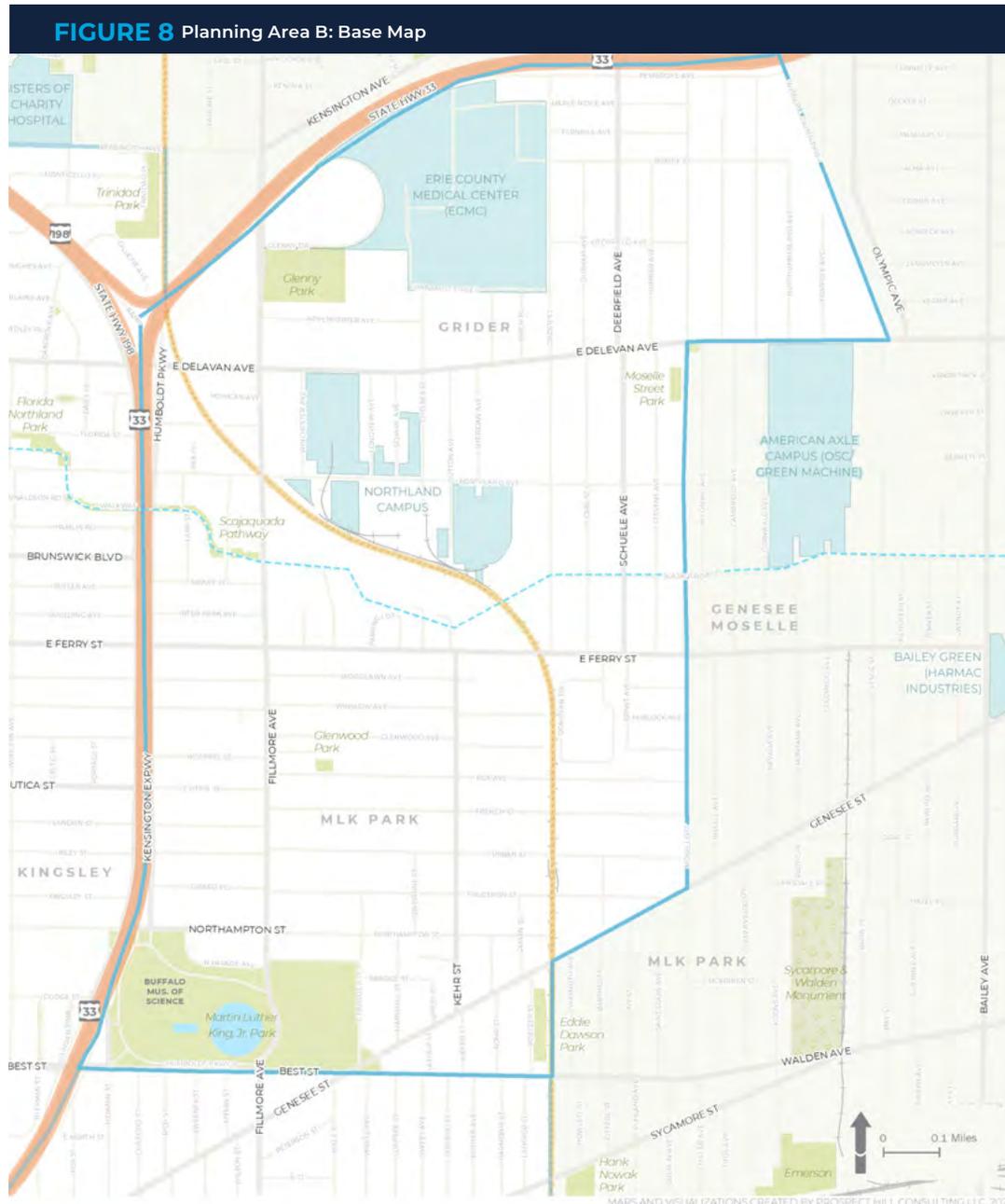
Buffalo saw an influx of immigrant groups starting with the Irish and Germans in the early 1800s, followed by Southern and Eastern Europeans between 1880–1920. Throughout the Great Migration from the early 1900s until 1970, African Americans from the South moved North in search of opportunity.

Restrictive covenants, prohibiting white people to sell their homes to non-white people, along with redlining, dictated where the influx of African Americans would live. The Federal Housing Agency (FHA) ranked neighborhoods from 'A' to 'D,' signifying financial stability, and telling the lenders who to lend to. This redlining⁷ restricted the flow of capital in and out of minority neighborhoods, leading to less homeownership, declining property values, and divestment in these particular neighborhoods.

Today, Main Street acts as a physical boundary, but systems of the past create an invisible boundary psychologically and racially. It's the only street where cross streets change name (ie. West Ferry to East Ferry). It's the only street where the tree-line stops from one side to the next. Several transportation and infrastructure projects are currently occurring on Main Street, but the question that still remains, is how our community makes strides in connecting one side to the other, fluidly and equitably.

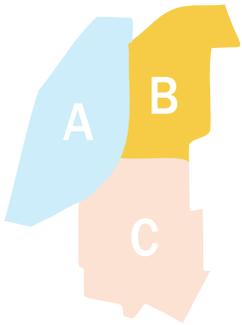
6 [Buffalo News Article](#)
 7 [Partnership for the Public Good](#)

HISTORY OF AREA A
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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
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- Railroad

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Former Wonderbread Factory. Photo: Google

Area B, slightly smaller in square footage than Area A, encompasses two neighborhoods, each with a larger footprint: Delavan Grider and MLK Park. Delavan Grider is to the North, and also is bordered along the northern edge by the I-33 Kensington Expressway. MLK Park neighborhood encompasses Martin Luther King Jr. Park along the southern border.

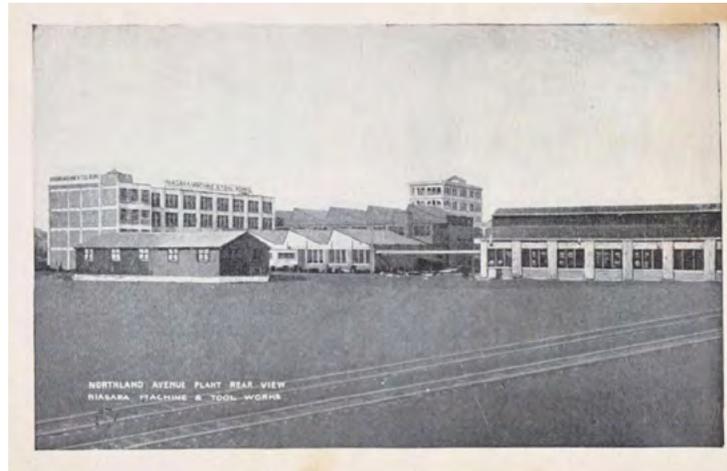
Delavan Grider

Once farm land, the Delavan Grider Neighborhood grew to be an industrial corridor with a neighborhood built around it. Due to the proximity of the neighborhood to the Belt Line, several industrial structures were erected along East Delavan Avenue in the late 1800s. The NYC Belt Line loop was

completed in 1882, and provided both local passenger service, commercial transportation, and connected to America’s countrywide railroad infrastructure. Industrial companies expanded in operations and attracted complimentary commercial activity, leading to a hub of manufacturing and raw materials processing facilities. This influence still remains today, with the Northland Corridor being one of the most extensive industrial areas on Buffalo’s East Side, and has had a large influence over the neighborhood’s development ([Northland Neighborhood Strategy, 2016](#)).

In modern day, the Northland Campus is one of many anchors in and around the Delavan Grider neighborhood. The campus houses the Northland Workforce Training Center,

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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.

Other anchors include the Erie County Medical Center on the northern end of the neighborhood, and the old American Axle site (Green Machine) campus to the East. Other amenities in the neighborhood include Mt. Olive Baptist Church, and several public schools, including the new \$3.2 million advanced manufacturing initiative at Burgard High School.



Top: THEN Northland Exterior. Photo: Google
Middle: NOW Northland Workforce Training Center. Photo: NWTC
Bottom: Burgard High School Students. Photo: NWTC



Broadway Market 1950s, Broadway Market TODAY. Photos: BFNHS

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Humboldt Basin THEN. Photo: Olmsted Parks Conservancy



Humboldt Basin NOW. Photo: Olmsted Parks Conservancy

MLK Park

MLK Park is a neighborhood that developed around the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. The 50-acre park, originally called The Parade (and from 1896 to 1977 known as Humboldt Park), was located near the center of the city’s East Side, near the German population. The iconic park was designed in 1868–1870 by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. Fillmore Avenue once ran through the entirety of the park, when it was bordered by Northampton, Best, N. Parade, E. Parade and W. Parade Streets. In the early days, MLK Jr. Park was intentionally designed for military drills and sporting events, as well as a large children’s playground. The Parade House, a magnificent restaurant, beer hall, and dance hall designed by Vaux, opened here in 1876 and immediately became a popular attraction for all of Buffalo’s diverse population, in an age when immigrants were arriving daily. The Vaux barn, named after one of the original designers of the park, is the last remaining structure of The Parade. There are significant efforts under way to relocate and restore the barn.

In 1895, the Olmsted firm redesigned the park, replacing the Parade grounds with a nearly five acre reflecting pool, a basin for water plants and the large fountain, which remains in the part to this day. The revised park also became known for its floral displays. In 1977, the park was renamed in memory of the life and legacy of Dr. King. In the 1980s, the Buffalo Arts Commission began an artist search to install a bust of Martin Luther King Jr. in the park as a commemoration. Artist John Wilson was selected to develop this sculpture that currently exists. The park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982⁸.

Today, the park is home to the Buffalo Museum of Science building, the brick shelter house from 1904, a greenhouse from 1907, and the Humboldt Park Casino from 1926. It sits at the southern end of the MLK Park neighborhood, whose main commercial thoroughfare is Fillmore Avenue.

8 [Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy](#)

HISTORY OF AREA A
 HISTORY OF AREA B
 HISTORY OF AREA C



-  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

- HISTORY OF AREA A
- HISTORY OF AREA B
- HISTORY OF AREA C

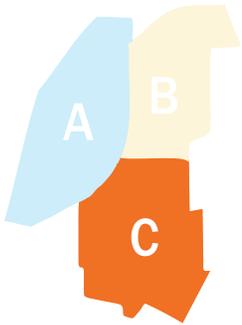
Area C houses one neighborhood with a slightly larger footprint than the rest: Broadway Fillmore. The geography selected by the LISC team encroaches into the Willert Park neighborhood to the West and Emslie to the south, with the thinking that we wanted to ensure connection with Area A. The planning area is bordered to the West by Jefferson Avenue, and is bordered to the East by the existing rail line.

Broadway Fillmore

The Broadway Fillmore neighborhood of Buffalo follows a similar trajectory of development in the industrial Northeast and Midwest. Though the heart of the neighborhood, at the corners of Broadway and Fillmore, was one of the earliest radials planned for Buffalo, connecting Buffalo to the City of Batavia and beyond, the neighborhood was negatively impacted by urban renewal efforts of the 1960s and sprawl. The district is part of the area known as Polonia, representing the significant history tied with its development and the early Polish immigration on Buffalo's East Side. Polonia was one of the largest Polish communities in the US⁹. The neighborhood is now home to an influx of New Americans, and is considered a melting pot of cultures.

Though the neighborhood has experienced several decades of disinvestment, the remaining buildings retain much of their historic character, forming a tie to a significant era of Buffalo's history. The Central Terminal, built in 1929 is an iconic art deco masterpiece, signifying one of the country's busiest train stations for 50 years. A merger of the Pennsylvania and New York Central Railroads in the 1960s led to a change in ownership. When Amtrak took over the majority of intercity train services in the 1970s, the company moved the location of its hub transit centers to the currently existing Dick Road and Downtown Exchange St stations, with the last train leaving the Central Terminal on October 28, 1979¹⁰.

The late 1990s brought on a new era for the Terminal, with the start of the Central Terminal Restoration Corporation. In 2003, the Preservation League of NYS deemed the Terminal one of seven most endangered properties. Since then, the historic concourse clock has returned permanently to the terminal, the Dyngus Day celebrations were brought back to the Terminal, and programming efforts have been underway, bringing new life and vitality to the building.



9 [Preservation Buffalo Niagara](#)
10 [Buffalo Central Terminal](#)



TEEN PERFORMANCE AT BUFFALO CENTER
FOR ARTS & TECHNOLOGY.

PHOTO: BUFFALO COMMONS PHOTOBANK



East Side Community

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BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHICS



Greater Eastside Field of Dreams Block Club. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

Buffalo's East Side is Grounded by Liberation

The fabric of neighborhoods and people who make up the east side of Buffalo are often blanketed by a negative rhetoric that fails to recognize the beauty, talent, pride, and culture that is vibrant and strong. Grider, Hamlin Park, Cold Springs, Genesee Moselle, Masten Park, Kingsley, MLK Park, the Fruit Belt, Johnson, Emerson, Willert, and Broadway-Fillmore are just some of the neighborhoods with unique histories and identities that make up the core of Buffalo's Black and African American community, that now has a growing population of new Americans and diverse ethnic groups. These neighborhoods hold important stories and histories of many cultures. Today, a lively culture of primarily Black and non-US native residents live among prominent, historic

structures like ornate churches and basilicas, a fractured Olmsted park system, wood-frame cottages, the prominent Central Terminal, abandoned industrial sites, the Broadway market, the Michigan Avenue African American Heritage Corridor and the Adam Mickiewicz Library to name a few. In fact, the Buffalo Bills used to play at War Memorial Auditorium, or the 'Rockpile' from 1960–1972 before it was replaced with the Johnnie B. Wiley Amateur Athletic Sports Pavilion. The WITHIN East Side process centers the residents who live in these neighborhoods now, the history that has impacted their lives, and the promising future ahead.

Much of the information summarized in this Background section is sourced from The Circle Association's [African American History of Western New York](#).

“ Intention created the racial wealth gap. It will take intention to close it. ”

Maurice Jones

Former LISC CEO

**BACKGROUND
DEMOGRAPHICS**

Population	2000	2010	2015–2019	% Change 2000–2019
Planning Areas	54,451	38,863	38,566	-29.17%
Erie County	950,265	919,040	919,355	-3.25%
State Of New York	18,976,457	19,378,102	19,572,319	3.14%

Source: Census 2000 Data Contains: 17 Census Tracts 2010 – 2015–2019 Data Contains: 14 Census Tracts

A Brief History.

For the Black community, Western New York, Buffalo, and specifically, the east side hold historic significance in the abolitionist movement and home to many who escaped from slavery and/or led anti-slavery movements. In the early 1900s, the convention for the National Association of Colored Women was held in Buffalo, and the Niagara movement began as a precursor to the NAACP. The Colored Musician’s Club, still open today in the Michigan Ave African American Heritage Corridor, was started in 1917 and attracted musicians like Count Basie, Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, and Ella Fitzgerald. And, in the 1920s a Black migration to Buffalo prompts a flurry of Black-owned businesses and enterprises such as a grocery cooperative, Negro lodges, cleaners, drug stores, the Michigan Ave YMCA (designed by African American architect John Brent), and the Big Brothers’ Association.

At this time, Buffalo was an important industrial hub as a major steel producer, railroad center, inland water port, and flour milling. Approximately, 500,000 people lived in the City and over 1.5 million in the metro area. The 1960s saw major White migration to the suburbs of Buffalo, while the Black population within the City was growing.

Disinvestment is Intentional.

As more African Americans became leading educators and political leaders in Buffalo, more racist policies and practices were uncovered and pursued. Jim crow public school practices, discrimination in public housing, real estate and banking segregation all contributed to the relegation of African Americans in inner city neighborhoods, where they long term impacts of these racist practices are evident today.

While more Black leaders took on roles in the arts and civic service, such as the late Lorna Hill and the founding of Ujima Theater Inc in 1978, Marian Bass of the Buffalo Police Department, Eva Doyle of Buffalo Public Schools, Ernestine R. Green of the NFTA, the 80s began with more violence on Buffalo’s Black community.

While the 21st century continues to raise up important Black leadership from Buffalo and the east side, we are faced with the realities and consequences that historic disinvestment, racism, segregation, poor infrastructure planning, and an abandoned and polluted industrial age left throughout history. The neighborhoods are now challenged by swaths of vacant land, neglected parks, streets and sidewalks in disrepair, old housing stock, significant health and wealth equity gaps

BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHICS

related to poverty, and inadequate services across the social determinants of health.

Resiliency Reigns.

Buffalo's east side and its Black residents have been the anchors that remained in Buffalo while many fled the City for other economic opportunity and suburban sprawl. It was the fortitude of these east side abolitionists of the past who protected freedom and created opportunity for Black Americans in and out of Buffalo, and it will be the creativity, entrepreneurship, and fraternity of the east side that will change the opportunities of the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the 2020 racial justice movement escalated the urgency to address poverty, racism, and health disparity across the nation. Locally, east side neighborhood residents experience the same injustices inflicted by systems of oppression that have gone unchecked for too long. The impacts of the pandemic on our Black and Brown communities were predictable and largely preventable. We witnessed first-hand the strength of our residents, community services, and community organizers who most effectively served the most vulnerable people in the neighborhood by providing essentials such as food, transportation, housing assistance, testing services, vaccinations, and social and mental health support.

Race/Ethnicity.

When looking at who lives in each of the planning areas, the census tracts show that as many as 92.24% of people are Black or African American in planning area A (ranging from 56.76% – 92.24% by census tract). Planning area B has the census tract with the highest percentage of Black or African Americans (94.54%). The census tracts in planning area C, are more diverse ranging from 23.97%–83.31% Black or African American. The

census tract just north of Broadway and east of Fillmore that has the lowest percent of Black or African Americans is categorized as “Asian,” according to the ACS, 2015–2019 data.

A recent 2021 study projects regional population trends. The study expresses that “the net population gain between the two time periods is driven entirely by growth in populations of color. The population of white (non-Hispanic) residents is projected to fall by 2.2% between now and 2050, decreasing the group's share of Buffalo-Niagara's population to 74.1%. At the same time, the population shares of all other groups are projected to increase. The largest population gains are expected to occur among persons who identify with “Other” or multiple racial groups (+47.3%) and persons who identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander (+36.3%).” The researchers conclude that in the next 30 years, Buffalo-Niagara's population will become slightly more urbanized and racially diverse, though it will remain essentially unchanged in overall magnitude.

The increase in diversity of the planning areas results partially from a growing population of people who were not born in the United States. Of those born outside of the US, in area A, the predominant countries of birth reported in ACS, 2014–2018 are Guyana, Ghana, Pakistan, Yemen, and China, and while English is the primary language spoken in the whole planning area, other languages popular in area A include: Chinese, Spanish, African Languages, Urdu, and French. In planning area B, the predominant countries of birth reported in ACS, 2014–2018 are Nigeria, Bangladesh, China, Other East Africa, and Belarus, and the other languages include: Spanish, Other Indo-European Language, and Arabic. In the census tracts of area C with the most people born outside of the US, the country of birth is reported as Bangladesh, and other tracts include Belize and Vietnam. The popular languages other than English in area C are: African Languages, Spanish, Other Indic Languages, and Chinese.

**BACKGROUND
DEMOGRAPHICS**

 Indicates a noticeable increase

 Indicates a noticeable decrease

Race / Ethnicity	IN PLANNING AREA			IN NYS
	2000	2015–2019	% Population 2015–2019	% Population 2015–2019
White	7,472	4,718	12.23%	63.66%
African American	45,320	28,927	75.01%	15.66%
Asian	434	2,733	7.09%	8.42%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	16	5	0.01%	0.05%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	214	115	0.3%	0.41%
Other Race	198	1,189	3.08%	8.66%
Two or More Races	797	879	2.28%	3.15%
Hispanic	891	2,156	5.59%	19.01%

Source: Census 2000 Data Contains: 17 Census Tracts 2015–2019 Data Contains: 14 Census Tracts

Age.

Taking a closer look at each of the census tracts in each planning area, the estimated median age of all people, between 2015–2019 according to the census are area A, 22–46 years old, area B, 35–43 years old, and C, 28–35 years old showing that the Broadway Fillmore median age range skews younger than the other areas though all areas have a relatively young median age range. The MLK Park neighborhood and Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood specifically have higher concentrations of youth under the age of 18. At the other end of the lifespan, older adults age 75+ are more concentrated

of the lifespan, older adults age 75+ are more concentrated neighborhoods. Projections analyzed in the recent Regional Housing Market Study¹¹ suggests that the Buffalo Niagara region overall is aging, and natural population decreases (i.e., deaths exceeding live births) are keeping population levels relatively flat, despite the levels of in-migration in Erie County. Lower birth rates are combining with a tendency to age in place. A plan that considers what younger people and families need in their neighborhood is critical, coupled with planning, preparation, and design for the larger older adult population of the next decades.

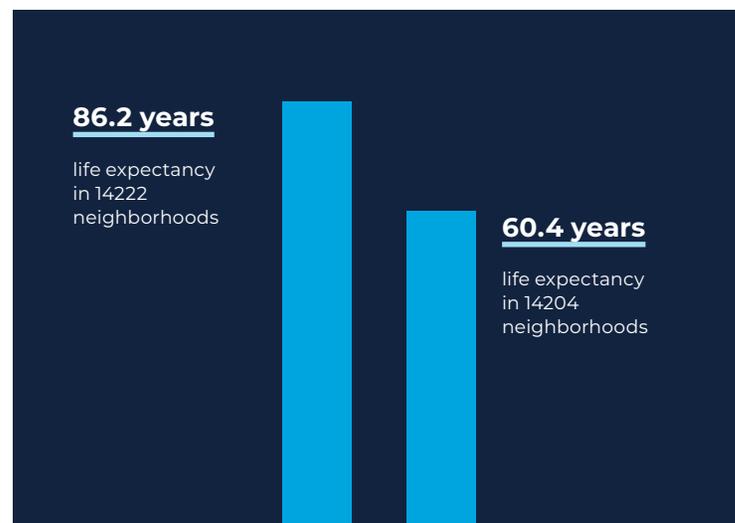
¹¹ [Engaging the Future of Housing in the Buffalo-Niagara Region: A Preliminary Exploration of Challenges that Lie Ahead, 2021](#)

**BACKGROUND
DEMOGRAPHICS**

Age	IN PLANNING AREA		IN NYS
	Number of People	% of People	% of People
Under 5	2,591	6.72%	5.9%
Under 18	9,494	24.62%	20.99%
Working Age 18-64	23,229	60.23%	62.93%
Aging 65+	5,843	15.15%	16.08%

Health.

One of the most significant indicators of health and wealth equity is life expectancy. For residents in the planning areas, the CDC (2010–2015) reports life expectancy at birth age estimates. The life expectancy for residents across census tracts in area A ranges from 60.4–76.6, in area B from 69.5– 71.3, and area C 68.1–72.7. Despite being located adjacent to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, the Fruit Belt neighborhood is the census tract with the lowest life expectancy age of 60.4. The life expectancy age at birth for the census tracts immediately adjacent to Main St. to the west are from 72.1–80.3. The healthy equity gap is evident across the Main St. racial dividing line, and also when compared to the Erie County average life expectancy age of 78.4. In fact, Buffalo ranks among the top cities with the highest life-expectancy gaps. For comparison, the average life expectancy of NY state is 80.5, and the US overall average life expectancy is 77.3



Disability.

In Erie County approximately 13.24% of the population report having a disability, which is higher than the State’s 11.51%. Across the neighborhood planning areas, the disability rate is closer to 20% in most census tracts.¹²

The 2021 Housing Market Study gives an analysis that shows the claim that persons of color are affected by disabilities at disparately high rates in Buffalo-Niagara. The key insight from this exercise is that, because (1) populations of color are growing faster than the white population, and (2) persons of color are disproportionately affected by disabilities, populations of persons with disabilities are likely to increase over time. If the patterns of disabilities in the current (2015–19) population were to play out in the projected 2050 population, then the populations of persons with certain difficulties in Buffalo-Niagara could grow by anywhere from 3.0% to 6.2% in the next 30 years. Those levels of growth are considerably higher than the 2% overall population growth.

BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHICS

Thus, it seems quite probable that Buffalo-Niagara's housing stock will need to be adjusted to accommodate growing numbers of persons with disabilities in the years ahead.

One area of concern that comes with these changes is that, as a result of inequitable systemic and institutional structures, persons of color are disproportionately affected by certain health conditions and disabilities relative to their white counterparts. Apart from simply planning to accommodate different housing preferences, decision-makers in Buffalo-Niagara need to plan for making serious investments into accessible housing and public amenities to accommodate growing populations of persons with disabilities.

Families & Households.

There is a fairly even split between the number of men and women living in the neighborhood planning areas, skewing slightly toward more women. While there are many different family types and structures who live across the neighborhoods, women are most often the head of the household in single family homes, and make up 1/3 of the families in the planning area.

Another interesting trend seen across census tracts in the planning areas is related to households that include grandparents living with grandchildren, or intergenerational households. In 2015–2019 ACS data, planning area A includes tracts with 2.38% – 7.38% intergenerational households, planning area B includes 2.88% – 10.84% (the highest of the areas), and planning area C has 1.35% – 6.03%. These numbers compare to a range of 0–1.35% intergenerational households in the census tracts immediately west and adjacent to Main Street to the planning area.



Households & Families

16,313 Households & **8,692** Families in the Planning Areas

Families are groups of related people who live together.
Households are made up of unrelated people who live together, or people who live alone.

**BACKGROUND
DEMOGRAPHICS**

Family Composition 2015-2019	In Planning Area		In Erie County	
	# Of Families	% Of Families	# Of Families	% Of Families
Families	8,692		229,105	
Married With Children	1,135	13.06%	58,421	25.5%
Single With Children	2,916	33.55%	34,771	15.18%
Single Female With Children	2,572	29.59%	27,518	12.01%
Other Families	4,641	53.39%	135,913	59.32%

Source: Census 2015–2019 Data Contains: 14 Census Tracts

Note: The category "Single with Children" includes all families that are "Single Female with Children", so all categories do not add up to 100 %.

CENTRAL TERMINAL. PHOTO: BFNHS

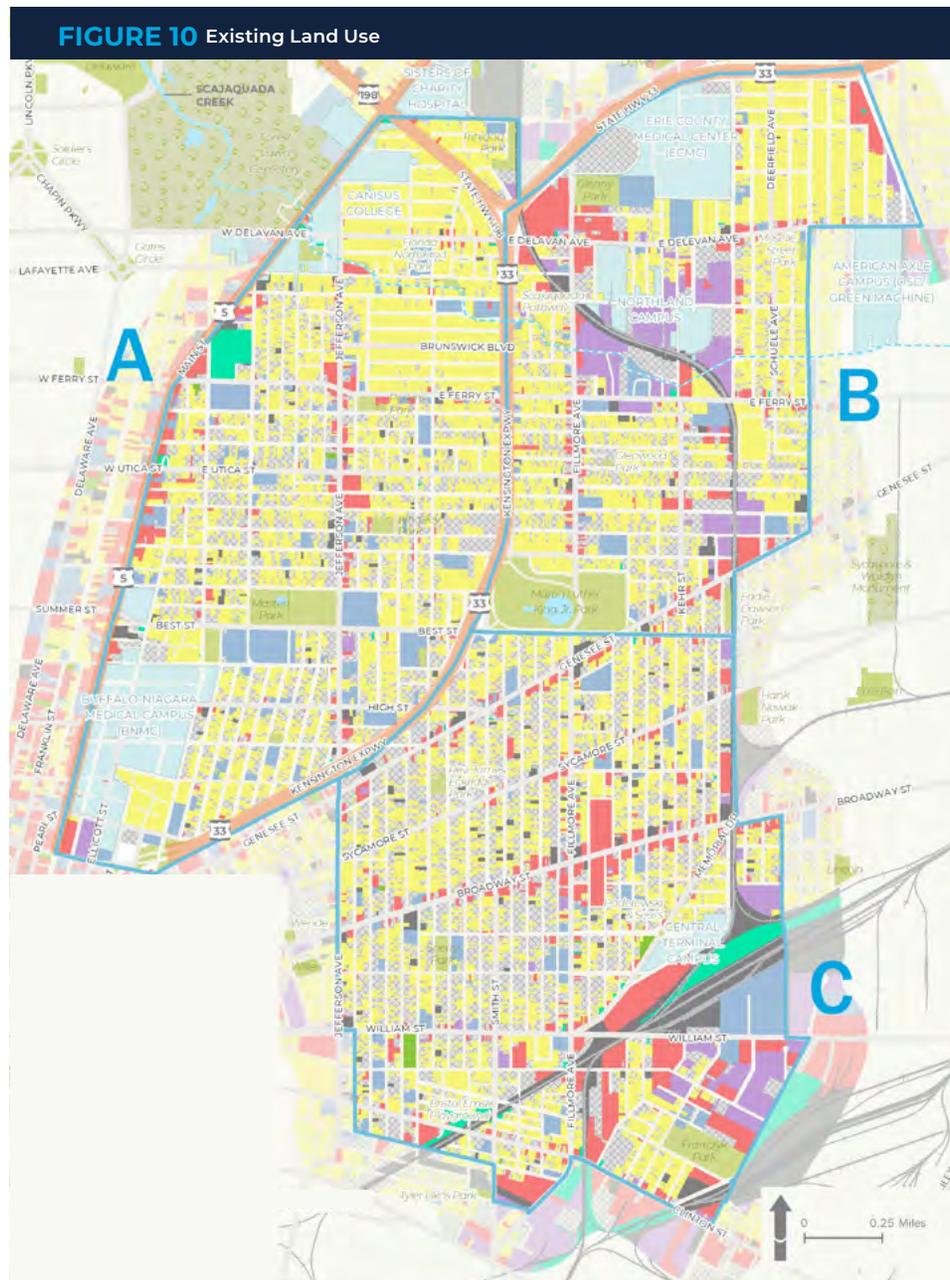


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Land Use & Zoning

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EXISTING LAND USE
THE GREEN CODE



- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

2020 Existing Land Use

- Commercial
- Community Services
- Industrial
- Public Services
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Wild, forested, conservation lands & public parks
- Residential
- Vacant Land
- Not Available

SOURCE: ESRI 2020 CITY OF BUFFALO 2020/OPEN STREET MAP 2018, NYDOT 2018, I-190/192, ERIE COUNTY DEPT. OF PLANNING 2020

EXISTING LAND USE
THE GREEN CODE

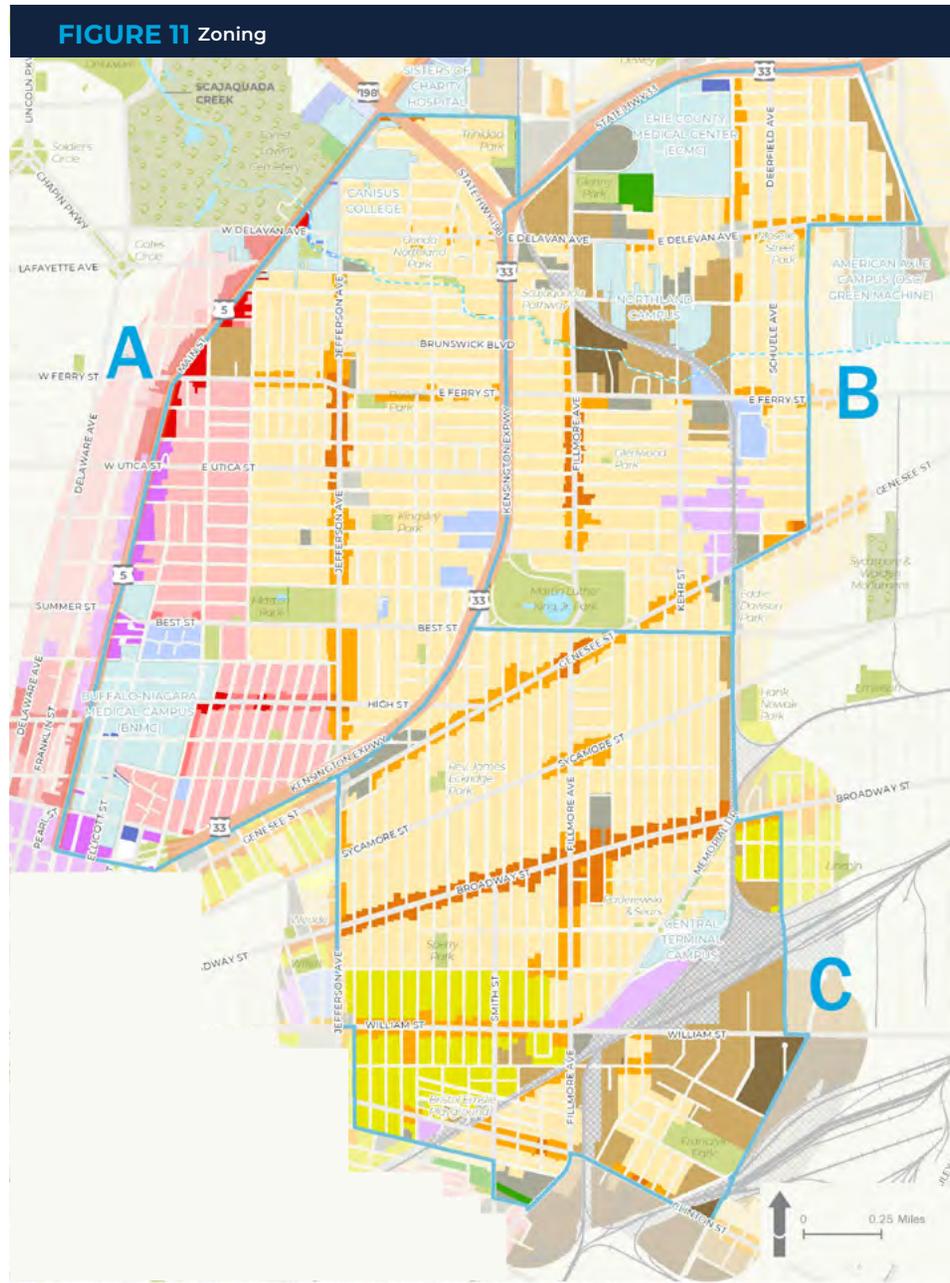
As a quick tour through the neighborhood quickly reveals, vacant land dominates land use within the combined planning areas ranging from 24% in Area A up to 32% in area C. The next largest classes of use are single and two family residential properties—that also range substantially—from 38% in Area A to 26% in Area C. Of note, community services are much higher in Planning Area A—possibly reflective of the access afforded by the Main Street Transit line. The Community Services category includes religious uses, which include 144 church properties throughout the combined planning areas, for a combined total of 68 acres. Commercial uses are highest in Planning Area C. Despite the strong impression created by industrial and brownfield sites on visitors, industrial uses comprise less than 5% of the combined planning areas. Public parkland is low at less than 3% of land use, except in Planning Area B due to Martin Luther King Park.

Existing Land Use (2020)	Area A		Area B		Area C		Total Within Area	
	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area
Not Available	26.6	2.6%	33.0	3.8%	104.5	9.5%	164.1	5.5%
Commercial	72.0	7.0%	72.3	8.4%	151.5	13.8%	295.9	9.9%
Community Services	157.5	15.3%	53.9	6.3%	76.3	7.0%	287.8	9.6%
Industrial	12.5	1.2%	78.9	9.1%	42.6	3.9%	134.0	4.5%
Public Services	16.6	1.6%	0.8	0.1%	20.0	1.8%	37.4	1.3%
Recreation & Entertainment	21.2	2.1%	0.4	0.0%	4.7	0.4%	26.4	0.9%
Residential	11.2	1.1%	6.4	0.7%	15.3	1.4%	32.9	1.1%
Residential - Apartment	47.9	4.7%	20.9	2.4%	13.1	1.2%	81.8	2.7%
Residential - Single Family	195.9	19.1%	148.5	17.2%	155.7	14.2%	500.1	16.8%
Residential - Two Family	8.1	0.8%	2.3	0.3%	11.8	1.1%	22.2	0.7%
Residential - Three Family	199.5	19.4%	125.2	14.5%	130.8	11.9%	455.5	15.3%
Vacant Land	245.1	23.9%	265.3	30.7%	349.7	31.9%	860.1	28.8%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Land & Public Parks	12.0	1.2%	54.9	6.4%	20.0	1.8%	87.0	2.9%
Total	1026.0	100%	862.9	100%	1096.1	100%	2985.1	100%

**EXISTING LAND USE
THE GREEN CODE**

City of Buffalo Zoning
(Green Code 2017)

- URBAN CORE (N-1)
 - N-1C: Mixed-Use Core
 - N-1S: Secondary Emp. Center
- URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD (N-3)
 - N-3C: Mixed-Use Center
 - N-3E: Mixed-Use Edge
 - N-3R: Residential
- URBAN CENTER (N-2)
 - N-2C: Mixed-Use Center
 - N-2E: Mixed-Use Edge
 - N-2R: Residential
- URBAN EDGE (N-4)
 - N-4-30: Single Family
 - N-4-50: Single Family
- CORRIDOR
 - C-R: Rail Corridor
- OPEN SPACE
 - D-OS: Square
 - D-OG: Green
- CAMPUS
 - D-R: Residential Campus
 - D-E: Educational Campus
 - D-M: Medical Campus
- EMPLOYMENT
 - D-S: Retail Shop
 - D-C: Flex Commercial
 - D-IL: Light Industrial
 - D-IH: Heavy Industrial



- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

SOURCE: ESRI 2016; CITY OF BUFFALO 2017; OPEN STREET MAP 2016; NAVTEQ 2015; LAC WNY 2017; ERIE COUNTY DEPT. OF PLANNING 2010

EXISTING LAND USE THE GREEN CODE

The Green Code.

The Green Code does not dictate one specific land use, but creates a series of allowable uses, guardrails, and conditions for development. In the green code, everything is assigned a use, even if currently vacant. Within the Green Code, the amount of development currently reflected on the East Side is reflective of a much larger market demand and density than currently exists, and is something to be explored further with neighborhood partners.

Under the Green Code, Urban Neighborhood Residential (N-3R) is the predominant zone at 44% of acreage, with another 6.3 % of land designated for Urban Center residential. Employment Focused Uses including flex commercial and light industrial uses, and are designated for 2.9% and 8.2% of parcels, respectively. Campus-style uses, including the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and ECMC comprise over 6% of uses in Areas A and B. Green Open Space has been designated at 8% in Areas A and B. Planning Area C does not include any campus uses and less than 2% of land is designated for open space.

Green Code Zones (2017)	Area A		Area B		Area C		Total Within Area	
	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area	Acres	% Of Planning Area
C-R (Rail Corridor)	4.6	0.4%	28.2	3.2%		15.2%	214.5	6.6%
Del-C-H (Other Corridor)	48.0	4.2%	24.0	2.7%		0.7%	80.4	2.5%
Del-C-T (Other Corridor)	0.6	0.1%		0.0%		0.0%	0.6	0.0%
Urban Core	N-1c (Mixed-Use Core)	45.4				0.0%	45.4	1.4%
	N-1s (Secondary Employment Center)		0.0%	23.8	2.7%	31.5	55.3	1.7%
Urban Center	N-2c (Mixed-Use Center)	14.5	1.3%		0.0%	0.0%	14.5	0.4%
	N-2e (Mixed-Use Edge)	10.4	0.9%		0.0%	0.0%	10.4	0.3%
	N-2r (Residential)	204.3	17.9%		0.0%	0.0%	204.3	6.3%
Urban Neighborhood	N-3c (Mixed-Use Center)	13.9	1.2%	9.0	1.0%	49.0	72.0	2.2%
	N-3e (Mixed-Use Edge)	40.8	3.6%	43.2	4.8%	78.6	162.6	5.0%
	N-3r (Residential)	500.7	44.0%	408.3	45.7%	522.0	1431.0	44.4%
Urban Edge	N-4-30 (Single Family)	2.8	0.2%		0.0%	125.6	128.4	4.0%
Open Space	D-0g (Green)	89.8	7.9%	75.4	8.4%	22.6	187.8	5.8%
	D-0s (Square)	0.1	0.0%		0.0%	2.2	2.3	0.1%
Employment	D-S (Retail Strip)	5.7	0.5%	4.6	0.5%	2.6	13.0	0.4%
	D-C (Flex Commercial)	8.6	0.8%	61.3	6.9%	24.5	94.4	2.9%
	D-1h (Heavy Industrial)		0.0%	16.6	1.9%	20.1	36.6	1.1%
	D-1l (Light Industrial)	13.0	1.1%	125.5	14.0%	125.7	264.2	8.2%
Campus	D-R	30.8	2.7%	15.5	1.7%		46.3	1.4%
	D-E	34.4	3.0%		0.0%		34.4	1.1%
	D-M	69.6	6.1%	58.4	6.5%		128.0	4.0%
Grand Total	1138.0	100%	893.6	100%	1194.6	100%	3226.3	100%

EMERSON PLACE ROWHOUSES.
PHOTO: MIKE SHRIVER



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Housing

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HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
TYPE & MIX
OWNERSHIP
DISPLACEMENT RISK

The following housing history is summarized from Dr. Henry Louis Taylor, Jr.'s academic paper, *The Historical Roots of the Crisis in Housing Affordability: The case of Buffalo, NY 1920–1950*

Housing on the East Side of Buffalo was designed to support the industrial growth that the City experienced in the late 1800s to early 1900s. By 1930, Buffalo was a leading industrial center, and was divided into three sectors: the West Side, East Side and South Buffalo, with Main Street already established as a firm dividing line. The pattern of industry and housing on the West Side differed from the East, because several elites associated with the Olmsted Parkway System, college and hospital campuses, and upscale neighborhoods, discouraged factories to be built outside of the industrial belt along the Black Rock Canal, Niagara River and Lake Erie. In South Buffalo, factories located in Lackawanna, a small industrial suburb.

On the East Side, the story differs. Factories could, and did, locate anywhere. Large manufacturing firms were scattered, with a heavy concentration below E. Delavan, where the Northland Campus and Beltline are now anchored. Homes were scattered between these industrial zones and railways. Most homes were small wooden single and two-family housing units, with an equal distribution between these two types of dwellings. Working class neighborhoods formed near commercial districts, offering goods and services to residents. Apartments were built above many business establishments, turning the commercial centers into live/work environments.

In the 1920s, the trends of the time showed that Buffalo's growth was gradually shifting to suburban locations. City planners shifted their goals to anchor homeownership and single-family dwelling units, modernize transportation to allow people access in and out of the central business district, segregate land use and concentrate Black populations and low-to-moderate income white workers in the central city, while pushing higher income



Historic Windows on home in Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood.

workers out to the suburbs. The new residential environment intended to segregate housing based on type and cost.

In the 1930s, the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority (BMHA) studied conditions and residential location of racial and ethnic groups in the City. The data showed the lower East Side to be the most diverse neighborhood in the city, with 16,000 African Americans sharing the neighborhood with 71,000 Polish, Italian, German and Russian workers, along with a handful of Canadians, British, Irish, Austrians, and Hungarians. These groups of people not only lived together in neighborhoods, but often in the same dwelling units.

Racial residential segregation did not occur in working class neighborhoods as it did in white affluent locations. The working-class neighborhood environment treated housing as a cultural artifact rather than a commodity, and the housing inventory was built to meet the needs of all workers, from unskilled to fully skilled workers.

HISTORY
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Furthermore, housing was not separated on the basis of type and cost, so cheap housing and boarding houses were next door to single family units. Though African Americans were typically in the cheaper quality housing, they were not separated from the White populations, since housing value was not related to residential homogeneity.

The Great Depression brought on a wave of foreclosures, creating an opportunity for federal and local leaders to embed their visions of homeownership and single-family dwelling units. Institutions were developed to revolutionize the money mortgage system, and housing began to shift to investment and commodity rather than the cultural artifacts that it once represented. This economic rationale led to the color-coded A through D grading system that categorized neighborhoods as highly desirable to non desirable. This survey categorized the highly diverse lower East Side industrial neighborhood as mostly red, indicating undesirability in multiracial neighborhoods near manufacturing facilities. This map was also the map used by banks, as they deemed which neighborhoods were appropriate to invest in, leading to racial redlining.

Between 1950 and 1970, Buffalo's population began to drop. Many white residents left the City for the suburbs. New highway construction wreaked havoc on entire neighborhoods. The Kensington Expressway divided neighborhoods and destroyed the once lively and connected Humboldt Park. The Kensington drove through Hamlin Park, the emerging Black middle-class community, splitting Trinidad Park and Humboldt Park into separate neighborhoods. This onslaught of highways demolished buildings, devalued property, and accelerated the decline of these once thriving neighborhoods

To this day, in year 2021, racial residential segregation is still one of the seven root problems facing Black Buffalo, along with underdevelopment of East Side neighborhoods,

structural joblessness, low wages, limited educational attainment, displacement, and poor health. As Dr. Taylor quotes in his 2021 report on Black Buffalo, along with underdevelopment of East Side neighborhoods, structural joblessness, low wages, limited educational attainment, displacement, and poor health¹³. As Dr. Taylor quotes in his 2021 report on Black Buffalo, “ racial residential segregation is the linchpin in the system of Black inequality,” and several systemic factors need to be addressed to achieve housing equity.

13 [The Harder We Run: The State of Black Buffalo in 1990 and the Present, 2021](#)

“ Racial residential segregation is the linchpin in the system of Black inequality. ”

Dr. Henry Louis Taylor, Jr.

Director of the Center for Urban Studies,
University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
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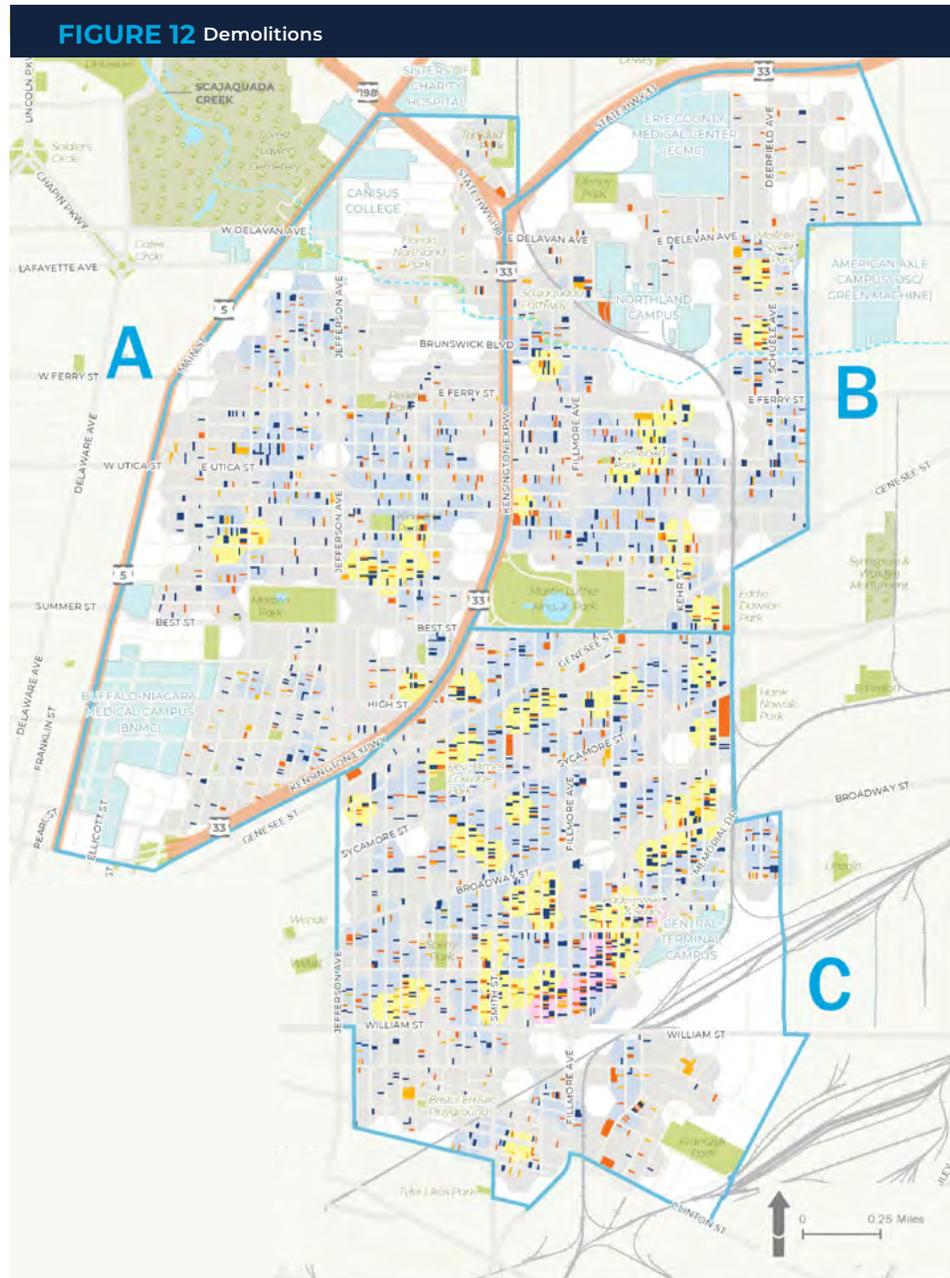


FIGURE 12 Demolitions

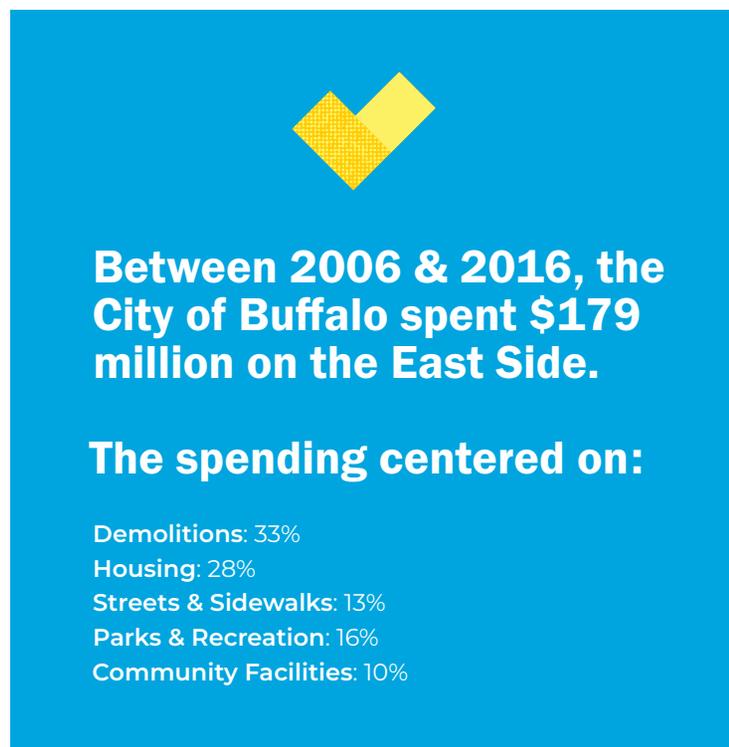
- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

Housing Demolitions (2006–2021)

- CLASSIFIED BY YEAR**
- 2006–2010
 - 2011–2015
 - 2016–2021
- DEMOLITION DENSITY**
- 1–5
 - 6–10
 - 11–20
 - 21–29

SOURCE: ESIP (2006); CITY OF BUFFALO (2009); COSEN STREET MAP 2016; AVI/DTI/IMX, LLC (WV) 2021; ERIE COUNTY DEPT. OF PLANNING 2021

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Once the factories and manufacturing boom ended, and these families left the City for the suburbs, many homes were abandoned and demolished, without follow-up neighborhood implementation plans, leaving the neighborhood full of abandoned properties and vacant lots. The City lost 60% of its population in the 80s and 90s as a result of industrial decline. The city continued to shrink between 1990 and 2019 by 22% with an outmigration of White families and a slower outmigration of Black families¹⁴. As the region continued to grow towards the suburbs, disinvestment continued. People had to walk away from properties when they couldn't pay property taxes, or due to violations, fires, and foreclosures. The City of Buffalo managed these properties through its large-scale, multi-year demolition program that targeted the most

dangerous properties in neighborhoods across Buffalo. The program removed all structures, including properties damaged by fire emergencies and those that have suffered from long-term vacancy and abandonment. Neighborhood collaboration and thoughtful planning of redevelopment is not incorporated in this demolition strategy.

The map on the previous page shows the most recent demolitions occurring between 2006 and 2021. Demolition occurred in response to the specific condition of a particular structure, rather than as a cohesive demolition effort in support of imminent re-development. Nevertheless, you can see from the maps of demolition by year that demolitions have been ongoing during this timeframe without much pause. The underlying honeycomb shapes beneath the parcels indicate the density of demolitions.

The yellow and pink honeycombs indicate highest density of demolitions, with yellow indicating 11–20 demolitions, a and pink indicating 21–29 demolitions. The dramatic absence of demolitions within the Hamlin Park Historic District serves as testament to the impact of historic preservation on housing maintenance. In areas like the Hamlin Park Historic District, these historic structures, erected with virgin timber by talented craftsmen and maintained by dedicated property owners, contribute to neighborhood character and pride.

The highest concentration of demolished properties is located in planning area C as a whole, with the highest cluster in the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood (shown in pink area on the map). While area C does show the most land demolished, areas B and A also have significant swaths of neighborhoods impacted by demolition. The City of Buffalo has kick started conversations in recent years with Masten Park neighborhood stakeholders for infill development. The [Housing Opportunity Strategy](#) (2017) and [Masten Park/Cold Spring Revitalization Plan](#) (2018) were looked at in considerable detail by the City a

14 [The Harder We Run: The State of Black Buffalo in 1990 and the Present, 2021](#)

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s part of their infill strategy for Masten Park in Area A. The most recent City administration invested approximately \$179 million on the East Side between 2006 and 2016. The spending centered on demolitions (33%), housing (28%), streets and sidewalks (13%), parks and recreation (16%), and community facilities. The opportunity now exists for residents to make intentional decisions about what happens in those spaces, at a large-scale level, presenting a chance to make meaningful and positive decisions about the future of the neighborhood's development.



Cigar Factory Apartments, 595 Fillmore. Photo: BFNHS

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
TYPE & MIX
OWNERSHIP
DISPLACEMENT RISK

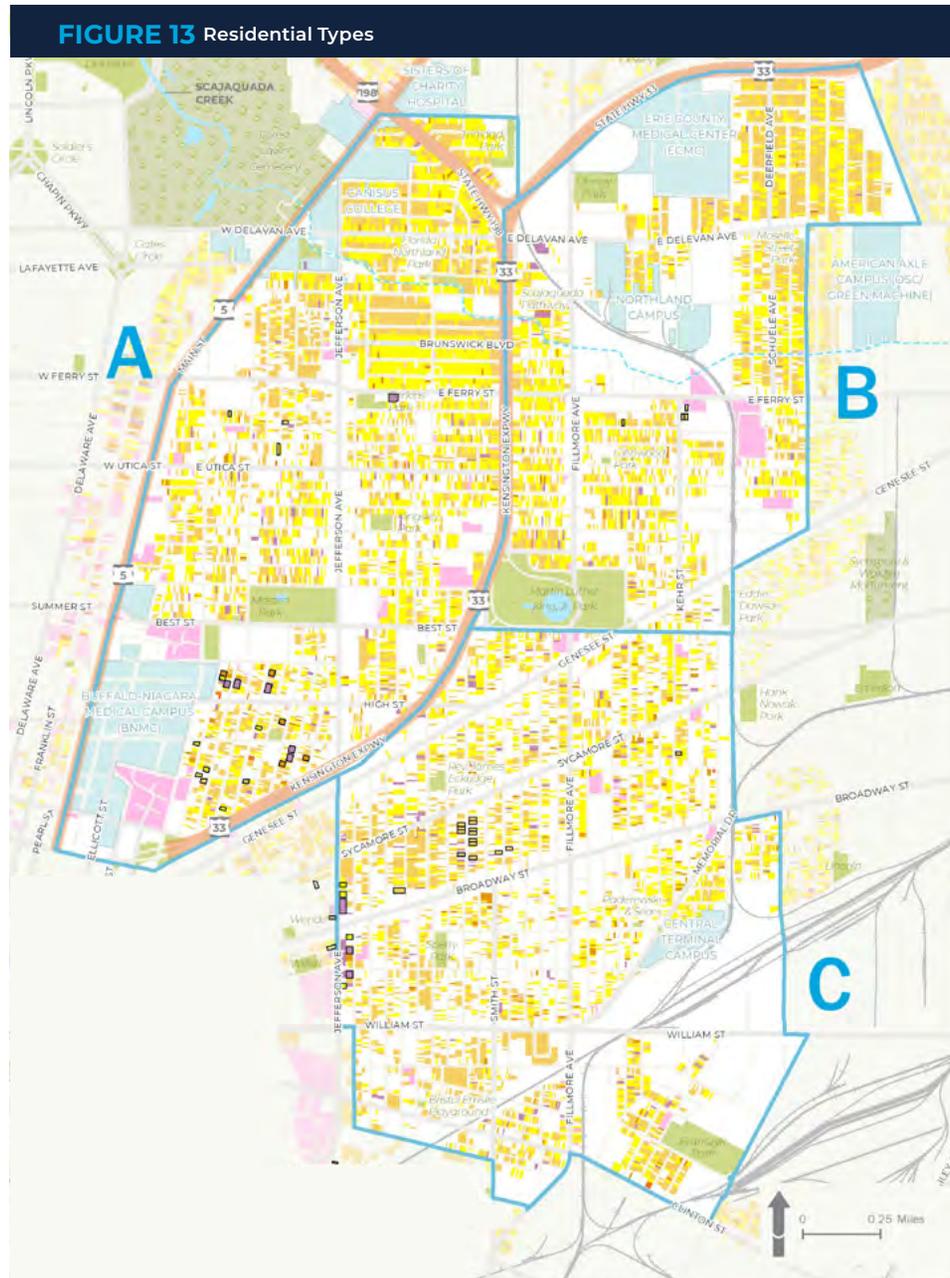


FIGURE 13 Residential Types

- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

Residential Land Use Types Built Since 2010

- Single Family Residence
- Two Family Residence
- Three Family Residence
- Multiple Residence (more than one residential dwelling on one parcel of land)
- Apartment
- Residence with Incidental Commercial Use
- Property Developed in 2010 or Later

50-018 850-2000 CITY OF BUFFALO 2021 0289 STREET MAP 2018 6:00P 3M US W/ 2021 Erie County Dept. of Planning 2021

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Now that we understand the cause and effect of demolitions in Buffalo's East Side, let's take a moment to explore the existing housing type and construction of new homes in the last 10 years. Beginning with definitions, single family homes include all one-unit structures, both attached and detached. Townhouses or duplexes include one-unit attached homes, as well as housing units with two units. Units in small apartment building are buildings with 3 to 49 units; large apartment buildings include buildings with 50 units or more. Other types of housing include vans, boats, recreational vehicles, or other units.

Formally, the City of Buffalo's unified development code (UDC) does not include provisions for mobile homes or manufactured housing. Mobile home/manufactured unit types are self reported by respondents. Interestingly, the Regional Housing Market Study¹⁵ recognizes that mobile home occupants within these areas have a substantially lower (28.8%) housing costs compared to similar households in other unit types.

Currently, there are 15,920 occupied housing units within the East Side focus area, and approximately 4,777 vacant housing units, equaling about 22% vacancy. This is substantially higher than the City's 15.8% vacancy rate. In fact, Buffalo is merely treading water as its vacancy rate in 2000 was 15.7%. Compared to the region, one in 10 units (9.6%) were vacant in 2015–2019 throughout Erie County.

Single-family housing units make up 35% of the housing stock in the area, comparable to the City of Buffalo's average of 34.4%, but half of the County average of 58.6%. The classic two-story Buffalo double, and other 2-unit structures make up 42.7% of housing units, 5% higher than the City of Buffalo as a whole, and well over double the Erie County figure of 18%.

When examining the Black household structure, we can expand our understanding of how the organization of households might affect financial security. As presented

in *The Harder We Run*¹⁶, a low-income married couple with two wage earners will likely be financially better off than a low-income female householder with a child. The low-income couple's combining of wages likely provides more resources, with shared assets and expenses.

In Black Buffalo, married couples comprise only 17% of households, the lowest among all racial groups in the city. At the same time, male and female single parents account for 36% of households, while 43% of Black householders live alone, the highest proportion of live alone households in Buffalo. These rates are about 23% higher than the rest of New York State. In total, about 79% of African Americans live in dwelling units with one adult living alone or a householder with children. These households may have more financial challenges than households with multiple wage earners.

2015–2019 Housing Stock	Number of Units	Percent of Units
Single Fam Detached	7,492	34.83%
Single Fam Attached	743	3.45%
2-Unit Homes/ Duplexes	9,988	46.44%
2-Unit Homes/ Duplexes	2,433	11.31%
Units Large Apt Bldgs	774	3.6%
Mobile Homes Or Manufactured	79	0.37%

15 [Engaging the Future of Housing in the Buffalo-Niagara Region: A Preliminary Exploration of Challenges that Lie Ahead \(2021\)](#)

16 [The Harder We Run: The State of Black Buffalo in 1990 and the Present, 2021](#)

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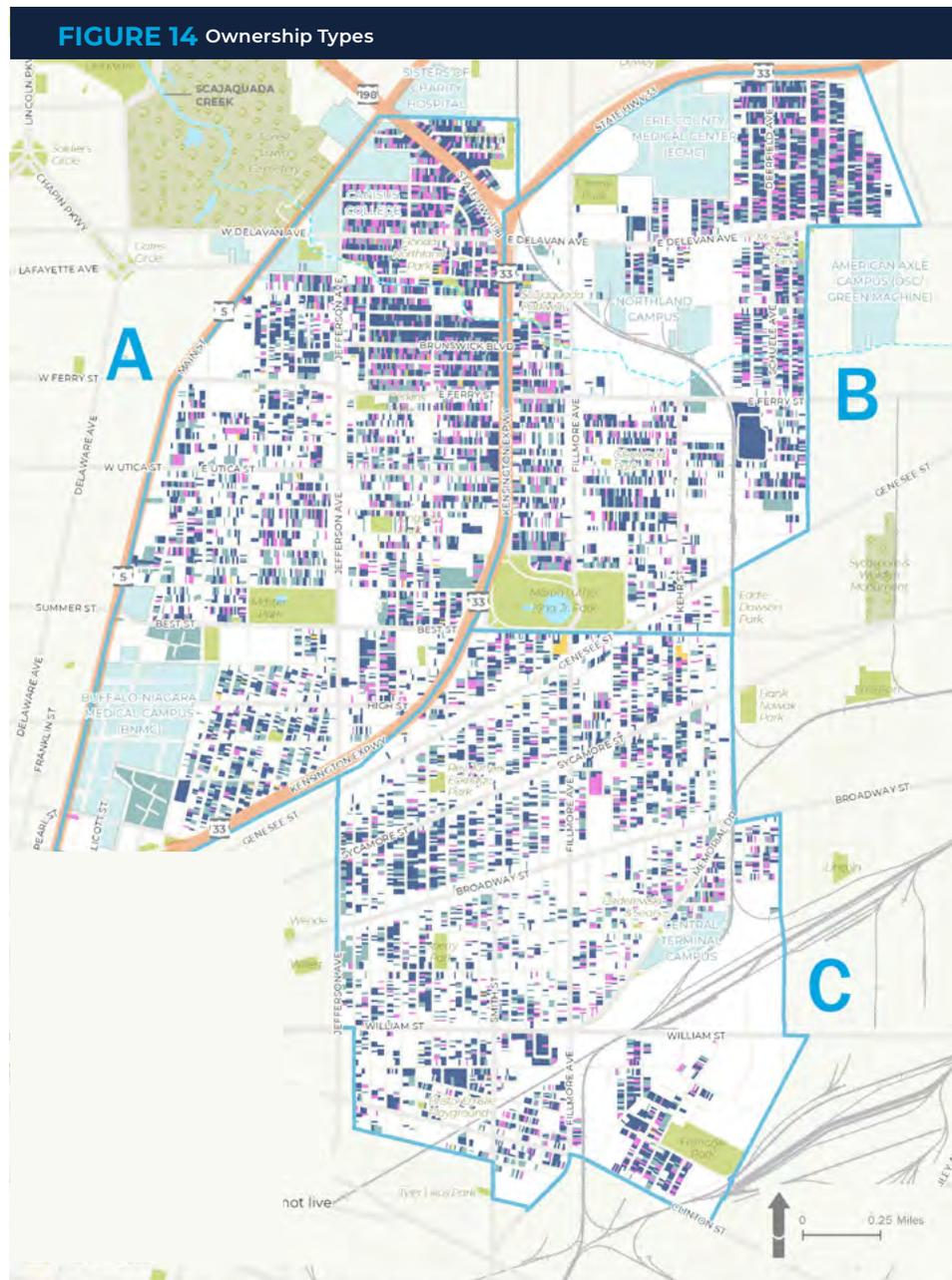


FIGURE 14 Ownership Types

- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

Residential Ownership Types

- Private-Local, Owner Occupied
- Private-Local, Not Owner Occupied Owner lives in City of Buffalo
- Private-Nonlocal, Owner does not live in City of Buffalo
- Public-Local

SOURCE: ESRI, 2020; CITY OF BUFFALO, 2020; OPEN STREET MAP; 2018; 2019; 2020; ESRI COUNTY DEPT. OF PLANNING, 2020

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The map on the previous page reflects that most residential properties are privately owned. Local resident non-owner occupied (light blue rectangles) simply means that the owner lives in Buffalo, but doesn't reside in this residence. Absentee landlord homes (in pink) indicate an owner who lives outside of Buffalo. The map does not indicate whether the absentee landlords live within Western New York or farther, which is a topic to be further explored. Publicly owned homes (in yellow) are few and far between. While publicly owned properties are sprinkled across the planning areas, only one cluster, just south of MLK Park, has a majority of publicly owned properties (indicated with golden honeycomb on the map on the following page).

The map on the following page indicates majority owner-occupied vs. non-owner-occupied homes, regardless of whether the owner is a Buffalo resident or absentee owner. Area A has large swaths of areas that are majority non-owner-occupied, as does most of the eastern side of Area C. Area B has a little more balance in owner-occupancy density, though it visually seems to be about 50/50.

Renter to Owner Balance.

We have heard through our engagements that people want more wealth building opportunities, one of which is the ability to own a home and build equity. Though this is the case in the areas east of Main, this is also where redlining most commonly occurred in the 1930s. According to a 2018 Partnership for the Public Good study, approximately 85% of people who identify Black within the City of Buffalo, live in these neighborhoods east of Main Street.

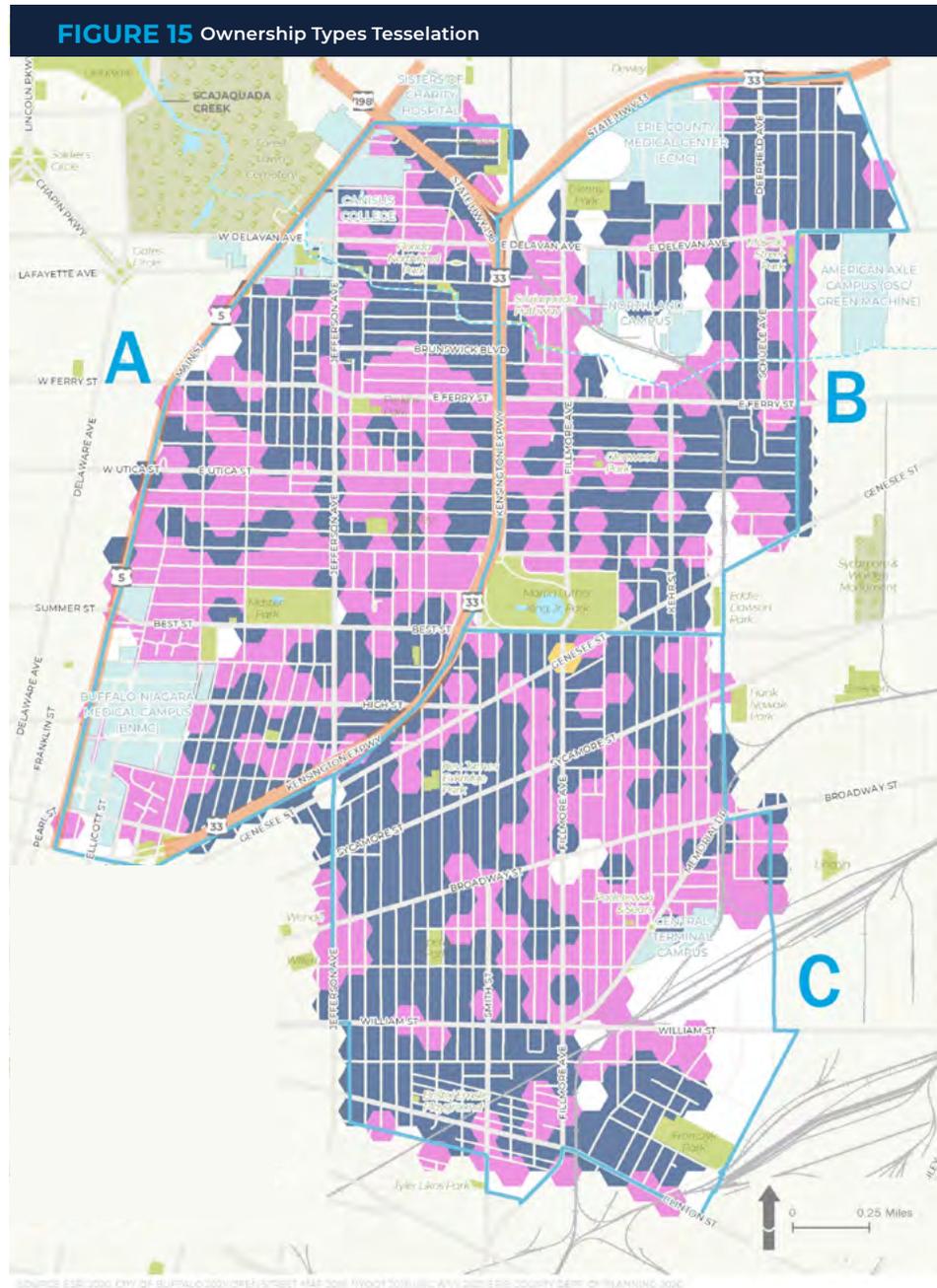
Even though formal "redlining" has been rendered illegal, mortgage lending remains inequitable, creating an institutional barrier to ownership for the cost-burdened renters who could most benefit from lower monthly housing costs.

Throughout Erie County, Black mortgage applicants are around twice as likely to be denied mortgages as White applicants after controlling for income. Furthermore, the County's highest mortgage denial rates, by far, occur in the areas East of Buffalo. In February 2021, the New York State Department of Financial Services released its analysis of Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data for the Buffalo area. The report identified a distinct lack of lending by mortgage lenders, in neighborhoods with majority Minority Populations and to minority home buyers in general. The report recounts the history of housing segregation in Buffalo and its negative effects; an analysis of current mortgage lending in the Buffalo metropolitan area; a description of the Department's investigations targeting several lenders that have underserved minority populations; and proposed legislative changes aimed to help remediate this tenacious problem.

The NYS Department of Financial Service's investigation revealed that these lending institutions had little or no engagement with minorities. There was little marketing directed to minorities; no real effort to serve majority-minority neighborhoods within the Buffalo MSA; and little or no effort to track how well the lenders were serving minority communities. This likely accounts for the low percentage of applications and originations in minority communities.

Both Evans Bank and Five Star Bank originated more than 12% of their loans in majority-minority census tracts, far exceeding the market average of roughly 4.5%. It is worth emphasizing that the success of Evans Bank and Five Star is influenced by each of those banks having been required to remediate fair lending violations. These examples demonstrate that efforts to promote lending in minority communities can indeed be effective.

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- Neighborhood Plan Areas
 - Anchor in the near East Side
 - Park / Open Space
 - Cemetery
 - Water
 - Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
 - NYS Highway
- Residential Ownership Types (Majority Ownership)
- Private-Local, Owner Occupied
 - Private-Not Owner Occupied
 - Public-Local

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The fair lending programs of Five Star, M&T, Evans, and Homestead presently incorporate the following elements:

1. Robust fair lending compliance policies and practices,
2. Specialized product and service offerings,
3. Community outreach and engagement efforts.

Because of the systemic discrimination and barriers to homeownership, The Erie County Poverty Committee, created in 2015, urged the Erie County Department of Social Services to initiate a study exploring barriers to adequate housing throughout the County, with a particular focus on renters, renter housing cost burden, and renter exploitation. According to the study, the City of Buffalo east of Main Street is home to a vulnerable renter population, with nearly nine of ten tenant households (86 percent) falling below the County’s low-income threshold. Of particular concern, the Housing Security Report found that “renters pay significantly higher (15.5%) housing costs than similar owners for similar housing, even though rental units are significantly less valuable (-4.4%) than comparable owner units. [...] That is, renters appear to be paying more for less valuable housing,” suggesting that some property owners might be preying on the poor.

The Advancing Housing Security Report goes on to share that, “even though most non-owner-occupied residential structures in Erie County are owned by persons or entities in or near Western New York – or, at minimum, in New York State – this geography is changing. Residential units in Erie County are now owned by parties from all fifty U.S. states and the District of Columbia, as well as from several locations outside the U.S. (mainly Canada, but representation from non-North American nations has been on the rise).”

The City of Buffalo maintains a Rental Registry “to help identify problem properties and absentee landlords.” It is used to assist code enforcement efforts to improve the

Lending Institution	% Applications	% Originations
Evans Bank	14.17	12.83
Five Star Bank	13.26	12.6
Homestead Funding Corp.	6.79	6.62
Bank Of America	12.31	5.84
M&T Trust Co.	7.49	3.68
Ownerchoice Funding, Inc.	7.91	3.55
Alden State Bank	5.17	3.41
Northwest Bank	6.42	6.42
Sefcu Services, Llc	4.93	4.93
Citizens Bank	7.27	7.27
Quicken Loans, Inc.	5.17	5.17
Premium Mortgage Company	4.16	4.16
Wells Fargo Bank	6.83	6.83
Keybank	6.09	6.09
Nationstar Mortgages, Llc	4.59	4.59
Community Bank	3.49	3.49
USAA Federal Savings Bank	3.62	3.62
First Priority Mortgage, Inc.	3.19	3.19
Home Mortgage Corp	2.52	2.52
Caliber Home Loans, Inc.	2.12	2.12
Fairport Savings Bank	1.38	1.38
Cornerstone Community Federal	0.86	0.86

Buffalo MSA Mortgage Lending Activity in Majority-Minority Tracts 2016–2019

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quality of life for tenants and neighbors of rental dwellings. At present, Buffalo's rental registration system requires owners of one- and two-family rental units to submit applications for the "issuance of a rental dwelling unit registration certificate." The initial application fee is \$20 for single-family units and \$40 for two-family units. Once certificates are issued, there are annual renewal fees of \$25 for one-family and \$50 for two-family units. Additional fees of \$75 per visit are collected from property owners each time the City needs to dispatch inspectors to rental units to follow-up on previously cited code violations.

Housing Conditions.

Housing conditions can have a tremendous impact on health and affordability. In 2016, the City of Buffalo conducted a windshield survey of 70,500 housing units in Buffalo's East Side. About 77% of the units ranged from average to severe distress. Outside of this analysis, there is little reliable data on the housing conditions as improvements are often made without permits and investments in energy efficiency, rehab, or lead abatement are not tracked in a consolidated location.

While more than 60% of housing in the focus area was constructed before 1939, the age of a structure is not always indicative of housing quality or conditions. In many cases, these historic homes were well built by craftsmen and have been maintained throughout the years. Important updates like lead and asbestos removal, and roof and electrical pane replacements ensured these buildings protect resident health and safety.

In other cases, several factors contribute to building deterioration and severe health hazards. 85% of housing in the focus area was built before 1978 when lead was banned exposing many residents to lead poisoning – and lifelong impairments. "Open wiring" using knobs, tubes and cloth insulated wires was used between 1900 and 1940. When not properly maintained



Lead Action Plan

The major cause of lead poisoning in Buffalo is deteriorated lead paint (chipped, peeled or dust). The Community Foundation, on behalf of a dedicated group of partners, was pleased to share a first-of-its-kind Lead Action Plan in 2018. Recognizing that lead poisoning permanently reduces a child's ability to learn and is preventable, the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) was commissioned to evaluate comprehensive lead poisoning data. The result is a report entitled: [Renewing Our Pledge: A Path to Ending Lead Poisoning of Buffalo's Most Vulnerable Citizens \(2017\)](#).

In 2020, the City was able to secure \$2.3 million in federal funding to address this issue.

or insufficient for new electrical loads these systems contribute to electrical fires. Without ongoing maintenance, roof, structural, ventilation and drainage issues contribute to mold. Many houses feature asbestos. Low appraisals and rent rates make it difficult to finance and/or recover needed capital investments. Off-site landlords may not regularly monitor and manage their properties to meet building codes. For many years, local nonprofit housing organizations,

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community advocates, the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, Erie County, the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency, the NYS Attorney General, NY Court system and researchers have worked to address substandard building conditions. Interventions have included both “carrots and sticks” including rent registry and code enforcement, emergency demolition, rehab assistance funding, the Green and Health Homes Initiative, Aging in Place retrofit supports, and Get Out Lead programs.

The GHHI efforts work to minimize negative impacts and additional stress for residents by braiding funding together upfront and using a single project manager. While the above efforts have received substantial funding investments over time, there remain several challenges:

1. The cost per building remains very high due to the extent of deferred maintenance, rising labor and material costs, and the size of the structures;
2. While the exact number is unclear, thousands of buildings require rehab investment;
3. The racial appraisal gap continues to suppress housing values making conventional financing difficult—particularly in minority majority neighborhoods;
4. Many funding sources have strict parameters making it time consuming, complicated, and expensive to address buildings holistically.
5. Funding comes in irregular cycles making it difficult to sustain the administrative and construction systems necessary to complete work once funding is available.

Energy & Climate.

New York State has established an energy affordability goal where household energy costs do not exceed 6% of income. In general, housing is considered affordable, when housing costs, including energy, are no more than 30% of a household's income.

Nearly 85% of housing within the focus area was constructed before 1970, when the first national energy code was enacted. While most of the houses have some form of centralized heat system and early designs may have included some passive heating and cooling design features, 99% of homes do not have central air conditioning with cooling generally restricted to limited use of window air conditioning units. Notably, according to the City's Energy Plan, there is also a small cluster of homes on the East Side that are heated by space heaters.

The majority of East Side homes do not have:

- Double or triple pane windows
- Well insulated roofs
- Insulated walls and basement spaces
- Ceiling fans and/or air conditioning
- Modern electrical panels and wiring to help prevent electrical fires, support growing electricity demand and on-site renewable energy generation & storage
- High efficiency and/or low carbon systems such as heat pumps
- Large lots, driveways, or garages to facilitate on-site renewable generation and/or electric vehicle charging.

Climate change—particularly increasing incidents of extreme temperatures and humidity—will exacerbate the impact of substandard energy systems and housing conditions on resident health.

The New York State Climate Leadership and Protection Act set ambitious goals including dramatic reductions in the use of natural gas for buildings, beneficial electrification, and renewable energy development. Critically important, 40% of climate act investments must be targeted in support of disadvantaged communities which include most of the City of Buffalo and the East Side. In accordance with the Climate Act, the New York State Climate Action Council is developing the State's Climate Action Plan in 2022.

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The Climate Action Plan represents a critical opportunity to equitably address East Side housing conditions and help residents and neighborhoods respond to our changing climate. They also represent a tremendous opportunity to develop and support East Side and BIPOC energy and climate-focused businesses.

In addition to building improvements discussed above, the Climate Plan will need to address several financial, information, and policy barriers:

- Regional renewable hydropower allocations and incentives are typically inaccessible to residential customers.
- Energy investments favor large scale infrastructure versus distributed, non-wires alternatives, and “behind the meter” solutions like energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy development.
- Many tenants pay utilities directly, removing incentives for landlord property upgrades.
- The racial appraisal gap—and resultant low housing values, make it difficult to leverage home equity for deep energy upgrades.
- The lack of a residential energy disclosure program to help tenants and residents better understand and evaluate alternative solutions.
- Low-income tax obligations, and limited cash flow reduce the power of tax incentives.
- The inability to access on-bill or non-credit dependent financing to support energy improvements.
- Training, risk management, financial, and marketing supports for East Side and BIPOC energy and climate-focused businesses.
- Long term financing options to support longer break-even periods.

PUBLIC USE MICRODATA AREAS (PUMAs) are non-overlapping, statistical geographic areas that partition each state or equivalent entity into geographic areas containing no fewer than 100,000 people each. PUMA data, provided by the US Census, can provide more detailed information about a place because it is provided for a larger number of people, therefore individual data is protected.

Many of these issues have been lifted in local housing and energy planning efforts including the City of Buffalo Energy Plan, Erie County’s Climate Plan Housing and Neighborhoods Committee and the One Region Forward climate strategy.

Median Income	Extremely Low-Income	Very Low-Income	Low-Income
\$54,400	\$16,350	\$27,200	\$43,500
\$62,100	\$18,650	\$31,050	\$49,700
\$69,900	\$21,720	\$34,950	\$55,900
\$77,600	\$26,200	\$38,800	\$62,100
\$83,900	\$30,680	\$41,950	\$67,100
\$90,100	\$35,160	\$45,050	\$72,050
\$96,300	\$39,640	\$48,150	\$77,050
\$102,500	\$44,120	\$51,250	\$82,000
\$108,700	\$48,600	\$54,350	\$86,950

Median Family Income and Selected HUD Income Thresholds (for Fiscal Year 2020), by Family Size, in the Buffalo-Niagara Region

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Geography	OWNER OCCUPIED			RENTER OCCUPIED			TOTAL	
	#	% Cb	% Scb	#	% Cb	% Scb	% Cb	% Scb
Buffalo East Of Main (Puma 1205)	25,964	10.5%	8.7%	31,034	23.0%	38%	17.3%	24.6%
Buffalo-Niagara, Total	310,414	11.6%	7.5%	152,564	23.2%	30%	15.4%	15.0%

Buffalo East of Main and Buffalo-Niagara Cost Burden (CB) and Severely Cost Burden (SCB) Comparison

Housing Affordability.

There is a long-standing convention among financial experts that families spend around 30% of their gross monthly income on housing (including utilities, taxes, insurance, etc.). Related, New York State has an affordable energy goal of 6% to be included within that figure, and the EPA recommends that water/wastewater bills to be less than 4.5% of family income.

Using American Community Survey Data for 2015–2019, researchers Knight and Weaver analyzed the affordability gap for those cost burdened and severely cost burdened by geography for renters and owner-occupied units. This helps us understand if people are paying more than the conventional 30% of their gross monthly income on housing expenses (see graphs on following page).

The researchers used Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA) data to understand housing burden for different groups of community members. **Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA) data covers a larger geography than our three focus areas, but by using a larger geography, the census bureau can**

give us more detailed information about the people living there than they can at the next smaller level. We get a much more detailed understanding of individuals, but the larger geography allows for protection of privacy. Information we are able to glean from PUMA data, for example: in the City of Buffalo east of Main Street (PUMA 1205), 70.1% households headed by Hispanic or Latinx women are cost-burdened—roughly two-and-a-half times the rate of cost-burden for households headed by white men.

The researchers also broke down housing cost-burden by type of difficulty present in a household. Households that contain persons with disabilities are significantly more likely to be cost-burdened compared to the population as a whole. For the East Side, cognitive difficulties are linked to the greatest degree of cost-burden in most Public Use Microdata Areas across the region.

One of the most dramatic and impactful components of the study involved a “thought exercise” that broke down

This table, gleaned from PUMA data, indicates that cost-burden in the neighborhoods East of Main Street is comparable to the region as a whole; however, the severely cost burdened category is significantly more than the region as a whole by close to 10%.

- HISTORY
- DEMOLITIONS
- TYPE & MIX
- OWNERSHIP
- DISPLACEMENT RISK



Emerson Place Rowhouses. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

the entire universe of 101,398 cost-burdened Extremely Low Income and Very Low Income households, by PUMA, based on the type of structure they live in and the number of bedrooms in their unit. To carry out this exercise, the research team focused on three different values for number of bedrooms in a unit: 0 or 1 bedroom; 2 bedroom; and 3 or more bedrooms.

At present, the U.S. Census Bureau asks ACS PUMA respondents to describe their housing unit type by classifying it into one of nine categories:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Single-family detached | 6. 10-19 family |
| 2. Single-family attached | 7. 20-49 family |
| 3. Two-family | 8. 50+ family |
| 4. 3-4 family | 9. Mobile home |
| 5. 5-9 family | |

Employing that classification scheme, the research team computed, for each cost-burdened household, a maximum “affordable” monthly payment, by unit type and number of bedrooms, based on the household’s family income and the 30% threshold used to define cost burden. For the City of Buffalo, East of Main Street (1205 PUMA) the results are presented as on the following page.

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
TYPE & MIX
OWNERSHIP
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Structure Type	0-1 BEDROOM		2 BEDROOM		3 BEDROOM	
	# Units	Median Affordable Rent	# Units	Median Affordable Rent	# Units	Median Affordable Rent
1 Family House, Attached	138	\$255	291	\$277	538	\$350
1 Family House, Detached	52	\$320	864	\$377	6,295	\$417
2 Family	867	\$260	3,531	\$296	4,208	\$327
3-4 Family	561	\$299	796	\$404	403	\$352
5-9 Family	180	\$198	214	\$587	262	\$188
10-19 Family	190	\$237	159	\$313	145	\$239
20-49 Family	423	\$269	131	\$539	42	\$167
50+ Family	682	\$258	303	\$257	81	\$493
Mobile Home /Trailer	0	\$0	0	\$0	35	\$407
Total	3,093		6,289		12,009	

Households Experiencing Cost Burden And Affordability At 30% Income Threshold; Neighborhoods East Of Main Street (Puma 1205)

**HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
TYPE & MIX
OWNERSHIP
DISPLACEMENT RISK**

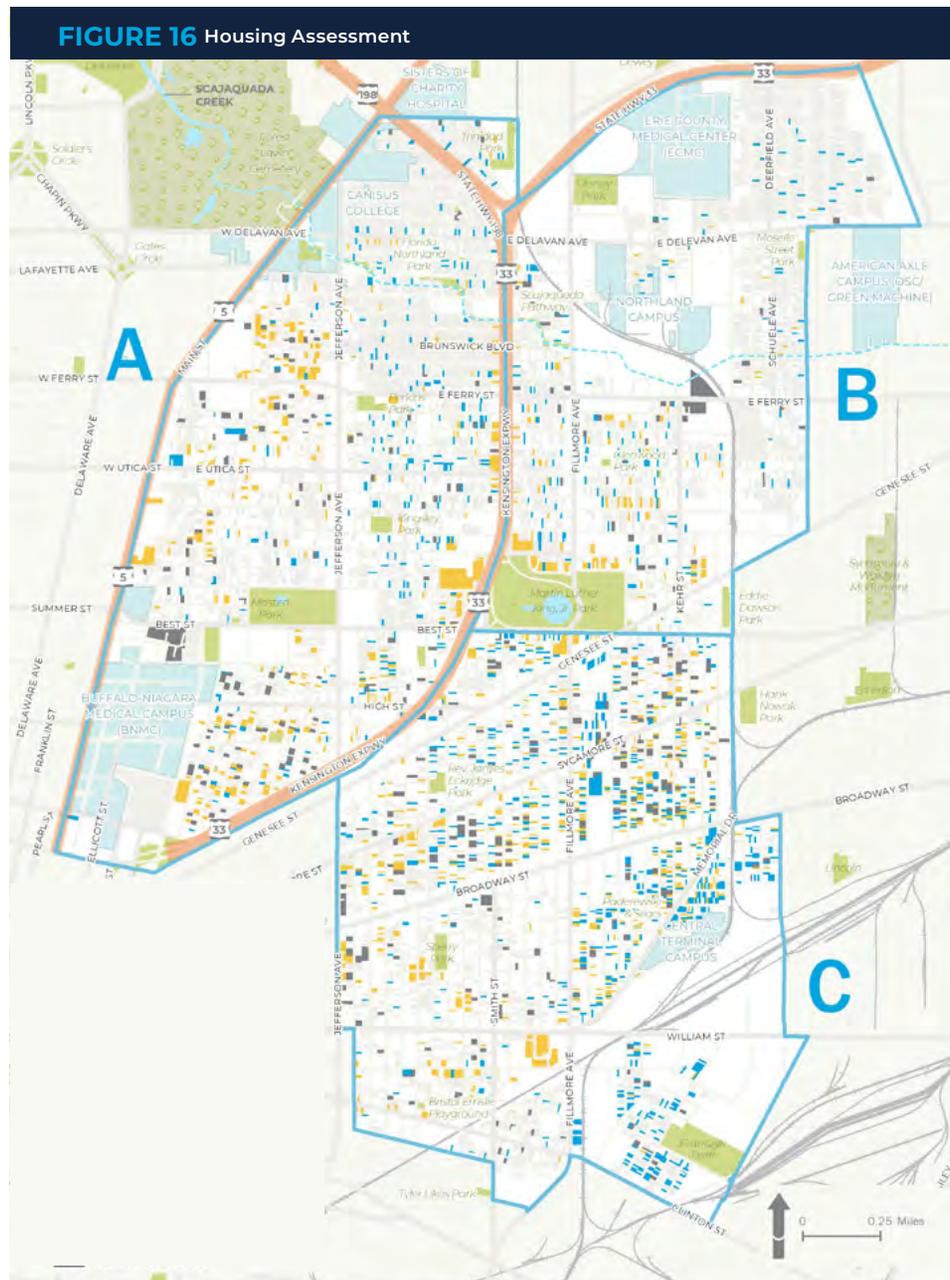


FIGURE 16 Housing Assessment

- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway

Change in Assessed Value of Residential Land Use Between 2010–2020

- Increase
- Decrease
- No Change
- Insufficient Data

SOURCE: ESRI (2000), CITY OF BUFFALO (2001, 2008), STREET MAP 2018, AVDOT (2014), LIC (2014), WNY (2014), ERIE COUNTY DEPT. OF PLANNING (2014)

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
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Fruitbelt Properties. Photo: PBN (Preservation Buffalo Niagara)

The change in assessment map provided on the previous page indicates decreases in home assessments (in blue), and increases in home assessments (in yellow). Light gray indicates no change, whereas dark gray indicates insufficient data. Decreases in home assessments are scattered throughout Hamlin and Trinidad Park, East and West of the Kensington Expressway, east of ECMC, and also concentrated south of William, around Franczyk Park. Increases in assessments are concentrated in Masten Prak directly east of Main Street, and in the Fruit Belt neighborhood, behind the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. We also see a large amount of increased assessments around Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Broadway Fillmore (Area C), as a whole has the most drastic changes in assessments with an even spread of increases and decreases in assessments.

Buffalo is part of a national project administered by the Urban Institute, called Turning the Corner. Buffalo Turning the Corner aims to understand how local housing and development policies and practices drive neighborhood change, especially

in neighborhoods at-risk of becoming unaffordable to low-income groups. The objectives are (1) to identify those factors producing undesirable neighborhood change; (2) develop a strategy for recognizing neighborhoods in need; and (3) design an approach to monitoring and preventing unwanted changes from occurring in these neighborhoods at-risk of displacement.

The Turning the Corner effort included an analysis of the Fruit Belt neighborhood and the unique nature of gentrification and displacement currently underway. “In this neighborhood, the growth and development of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus are generating market dynamics, which are causing property values to rise. Land speculation so rampant in this neighborhood that the Buffalo Common Council imposed a ban on development until the forging of a more holistic plan of community revitalization. Regardless, market forces are still causing housing prices and rentals to rise, which is forcing out many of the lowest income residents. Meanwhile, outside investors own most of the land and property in the community. When the City completely lifts its ban, the Fruit Belt might be overwhelmed by a tidal wave of market-based development.”

One renter said the City’s code enforcement and tax foreclosure processes caused many homeowners to lose their properties: “I spoke with a lot of people in the city who left the Fruit Belt. They were forced out because the City was coming hard on them for the violations they had in place about the roofs, the eaves, the porches, the stairs, the sidewalks. And there was a number of people that were saying they couldn’t keep up with the fines and pay the taxes at the same time and were forced out of their residences and abandoned the houses, which the City now possesses.” A stakeholder put it this way, “It just seems like since the medical campus, it seems the people are being robbed of their homesteads.” Some residents believe the City’s foreclosure policy is contributing to a reduction in homeownership and the outmigration of lower-income residents.

HISTORY
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The report argues “A unique set of community development problems exist in the Fruit Belt neighborhood. This community has experienced tremendous population loss. In 1970, more than 9,000 African-Americans lived in the area. Today less than 2,000 African Americans reside in the neighborhood. The cluster of tax foreclosures is a contributor to the outmigration, along with the demolition of hundreds of housing units. In the Fruit Belt, unlike other neighborhoods in the study, displacement is driven by institutional expansion.” According to MLS data gathered by the WNY based Connolly ReMax office team, there were 492 residential single-family sales recorded between 2015 and 2020 in the target study area. Over that time, the median sale price of a single-family residential unit more than doubled from \$30,000 to \$61,500. The number of units sold rose substantially in 2018 from under 80 sales per year to nearly 120 sales – an increase of 50 percent. These figures are consistent with trends recorded for all areas East of Main Street and the Erie-Niagara County region for the period 2012–2020¹⁷.

Across all geographies, and for both single and multi-family units, the number of sales peaked in 2018 when both record housing prices and mortgage rates were both higher than average for the previous decade. Nationally, similar reports of limited housing supply, sales prices, limited time on market, and rising mortgage rates have raised concern that the cost of housing may exceed its 2018 peak.

According to the Housing Market Study, regional housing prices are dramatically outpacing income growth by four times. Further, report researchers point out that the “gap is even wider for multi-family units in the City of Buffalo where median multi-family housing prices are rising almost six times faster than real wages.” Given that many multi-family units tend to be purchased as commodities by investors looking to rent them out to households who often lack the capital to buy a home, one likely consequence of these fast-rising multi-family housing prices in and around the City of Buffalo is greater

housing cost burden and housing unaffordability for urban renters.

According to local researchers, “it is much too early to understand how COVID-19 will impact long-term housing market and housing conditions in Buffalo-Niagara or anywhere else. While the commodified housing system is built in such a way that periodic crises are the norm³, the coronavirus pandemic is far from a normal shock to the economic system. In the short term, initial COVID-related shutdowns in lumber mills are being linked to lumber shortages that are expected to raise new home construction costs by an average of \$36,000.⁴ While housing market inventories were already in the process of falling for years before COVID-19, since March 2020 the number of homes for sale has plummeted to historic lows. According to Redfin, there were 737 homes for sale at the end of March 2021, less than half of the March 2020 total of 1,514, and just 12% of the 6,174 total homes for sale from March 2012.

A combination of private investment and government action are fueling new developments. Neighborhoods close to anchor institutions, such as D’Youville College and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, are susceptible to residential displacement. A combination of institutional expansion and residential upgrading can trigger increases in rents, property values, and housing prices. Those most at risk where market demand is increasing, are renters of color earning lower wages. Housing is becoming unaffordable, and most householders earning lower wages are burdened by housing costs already, meaning the slightest increase in rent can be the cause for displacement. The exception is those low-income residents residing in site-based Section 8 housing units and those receiving subsidized rent through HUD’s Housing Choice Vouchers. The presence of site-based subsidized housing and landlords who accept housing choice vouchers protect these low-income residents from displacement in neighborhoods undergoing residential upgrades or nearby institutional expansion.

¹⁷ [Engaging the Future of Housing in the Buffalo-Niagara Region: A Preliminary Exploration of Challenges that Lie Ahead \(2021\)](#)

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
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Within the East Side focus area, the Turning the Corner report identifies census tracts adjacent to Main Street as Zones of High Vulnerability to Housing Displacement. The goal is to keep the neighborhoods in these zones from becoming exclusive communities, which are unfriendly to families, children, and those with special needs. In these communities, housing must be kept affordable to low-income groups to prevent them from becoming exclusive places. The report lists several interventions the City could do in support of non-displacement, including:

1. Using deed restrictions, or Restrictive covenants, to determine the future of vacant (unbuilt) lots
2. Develop community land trusts
3. Establish a Below Market Rate Housing Ordinance
4. Build Limited Equity Cooperatives
5. Use the New York State Housing Trust Fund dollars to incentivize affordable housing units in softer markets,
6. Develop a “Just Cause” Eviction Ordinance
7. Develop “Right of First Refusal” Ordinances.

Housing Stability, Displacement & Choice

Housing choice involves a complex set of factors including, but not limited to, cost, location, housing type and neighborhood conditions. The planning areas have been heavily impacted by disinvestment and demolition resulting in large numbers of vacant lots in some areas while other residential pockets remain largely intact.

As vacant land and buildings are considered for re-development, there is a substantial risk that lower income families and longtime residents will be displaced. In some cases, the driver may be rising housing costs – either in the form of increasing rent or taxes as property values rise. In these cases, changes in the neighborhood increase housing costs faster than resident incomes rise – up to four times the pace in WNY. In other cases, as the mix of residents change, implicit bias,

increasing housing density, and changes in the small business network may alter the community so much that long standing residents no longer feel at home. Dr. Taylor’s research in the Turning the Corner and The Harder We Run report documents these risks extensively. In addition, many local housing advocates and developers have participated in collaborative anti-displacement initiatives including policy advocacy and feasibility analyses. Several strategies have been identified by national and local housing experts to help residents stay in place and minimize cases when residents feel forced to move. They include working with:

1. Existing homeowners to reduce their mortgage financing costs, access residential property tax exemptions, challenge assessments when appropriate, access incentives to reduce energy costs, and maintain their properties.
2. Homeowners whose circumstances have changed to either
 - use life estates, wills, and other title settling strategies to preserve inter-generational wealth; or
 - work with a community land trust or affordable housing not for profit to stay in their home while the organization takes on ownership and maintenance responsibilities.
3. Tenants and landlords to use rent payments to build credit, build equity in a building, allow tenants to purchase their units, and/or help tenants prepare for first time home ownership.
4. Mission based developers to develop a range of affordable housing options and permanently preserve affordable housing units.
5. A wide range of partners on place-keeping measures that honor and protect the rich culture of neighborhoods and communities.

HISTORY
DEMOLITIONS
TYPE & MIX
OWNERSHIP
DISPLACEMENT RISK

	Year	# Single Family Sales	Median Price	# Multi Family Sales	Median Price
Buffalo Niagara	2012	7,875	\$149,725	1,359	\$90,400
	2013	8,520	\$153,440	1,728	\$90,034
	2014	8,865	\$149,850	1,895	\$88,800
	2015	9,617	\$154,000	1,907	\$93,500
	2016	9,971	\$160,920	1,933	\$113,400
	2017	10,424	\$164,300	2,324	\$103,615
	2018	10,644	\$166,400	2,485	\$104,000
	2019	10,495	\$171,195	2,204	\$121,200
	2020	8,304	\$180,000	1,588	\$115,000
	East Of Main Street Puma 1205	2012	428	\$61,020	330
2013		461	\$55,888	418	\$44,520
2014		605	\$56,777	461	\$46,420
2015		535	\$59,400	485	\$49,500
2016		539	\$66,971	459	\$56,700
2017		709	\$63,600	648	\$58,300
2018		907	\$62,400	800	\$63,440
2019		782	\$65,650	655	\$73,730
2020		611	\$65,000	472	\$67,000

Households Experiencing Cost Burden And Affordability At 30% Income Threshold; Neighborhoods East Of Main Street (Puma 1205)

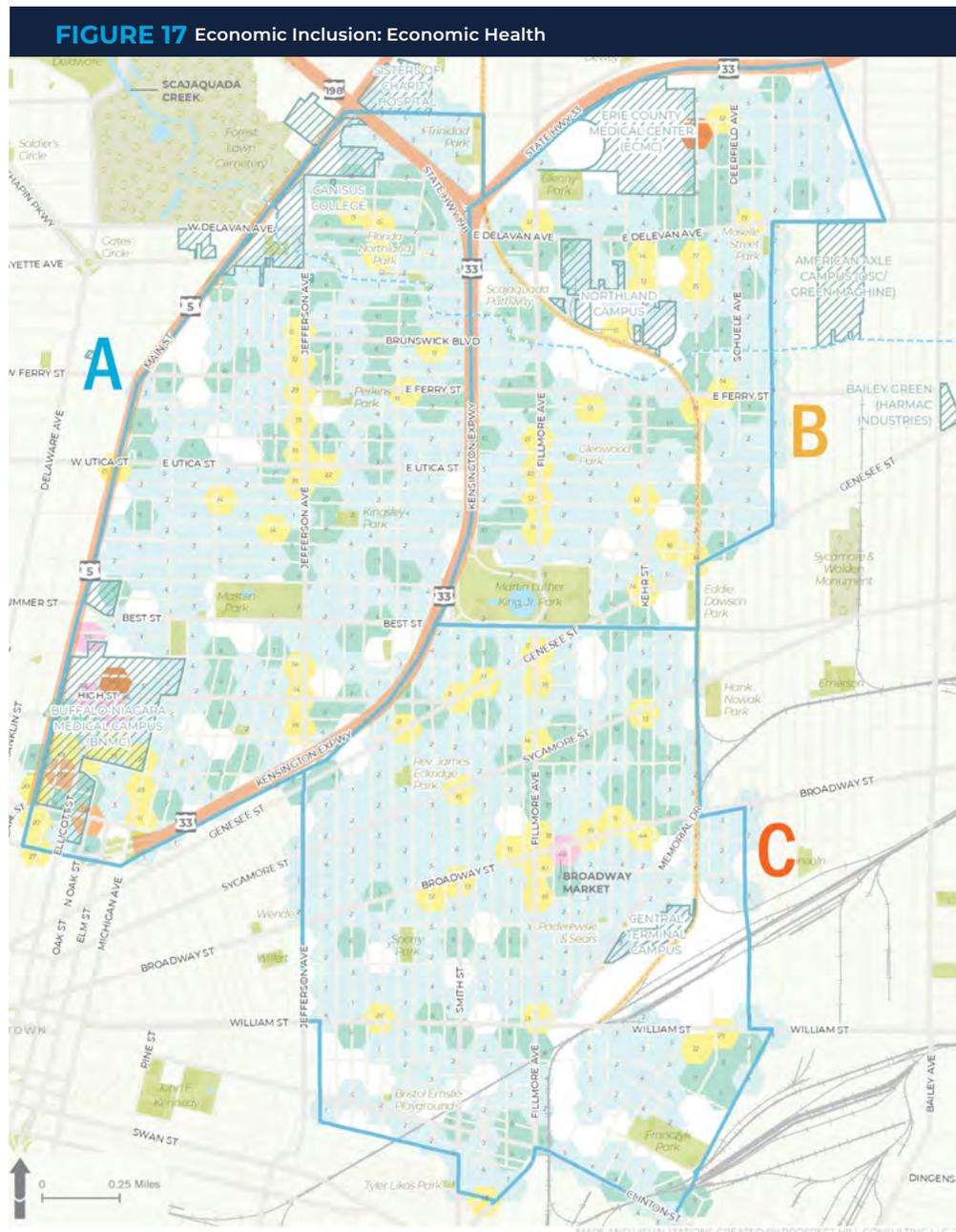
NORTHLAND WORKFORCE TRAINING CENTER
PHOTO: NWTC



Economic Inclusion

EMPLOYMENT	116
ANCHOR CAMPUSES	118
WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET	126
SMALL BUSINESS	131
ARTS & CULTURE	138
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS	150

EMPLOYMENT
ANCHOR CAMPUSES
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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;

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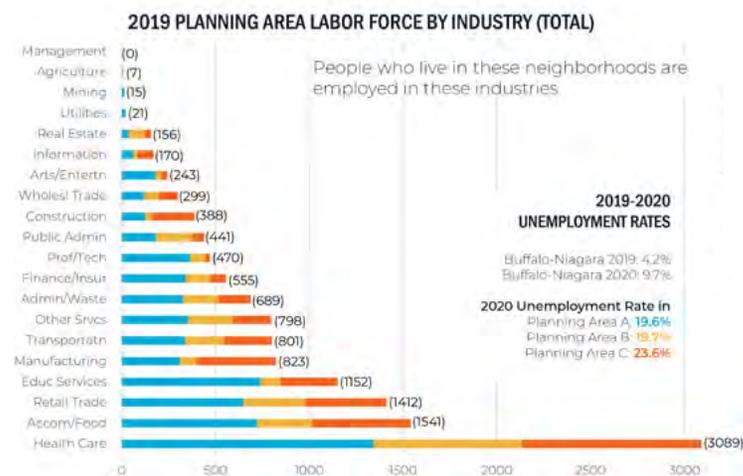
The colors seen on the Economic Health map on the previous page represent business density. We see that there are a number of businesses present in Area A, around the Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC). This area is smattered with yellow, pink, light and dark orange honeycombs, indicating numbers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

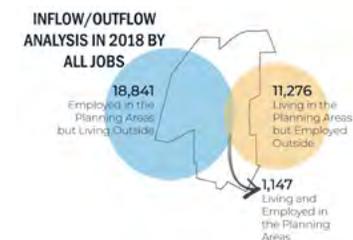
In 2018, 18,841 people were employed in the entire planning area, but did not reside within any of these three areas. Meanwhile, 11,276 people lived in the planning area, but were employed elsewhere. The overlap of those residents who lived in and

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%



EMPLOYMENT
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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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REGIONAL
CONNECTIONS

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.

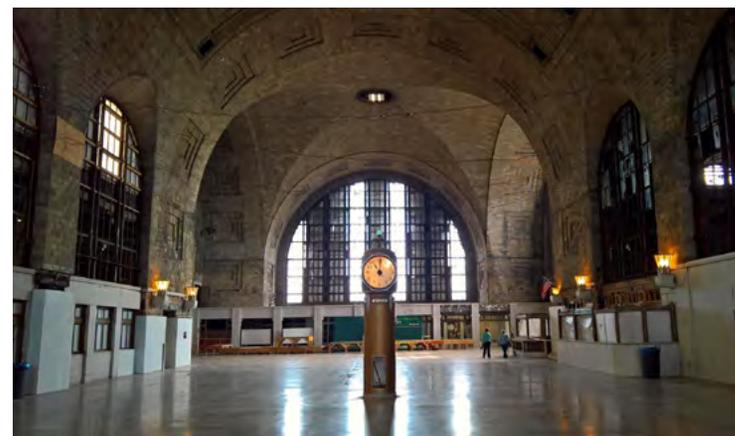
In 2020, while the effects of the pandemic were felt across the country, the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC) worked with the University at Buffalo Real Estate Development graduate students on a report for Northland campus strategies²⁰. Recommendations anchor Northland as a community institution/asset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

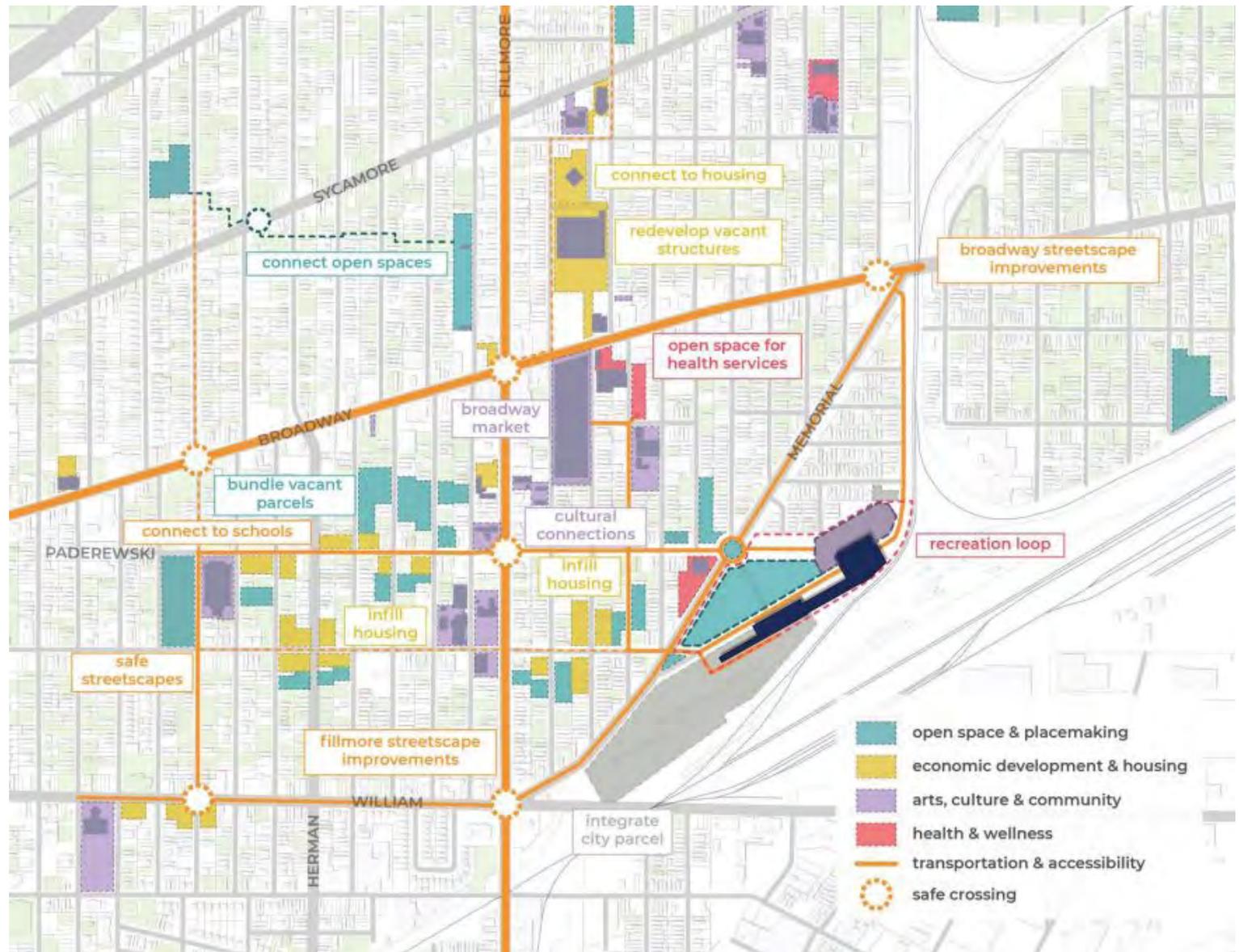
Preserve and activate cultural nodes to celebrate community diversity with events and activities to expand accessibility throughout the neighborhood.

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



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.

²¹ [The Buffalo News](#)
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

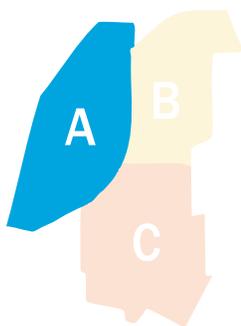
Regional planning efforts have designated growth industry sectors to target for workforce development and funding opportunities. Therefore, in recent years workforce programming has taken a sectoral employment approach, which provides jobseekers with training in the technical or “hard” skills needed 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

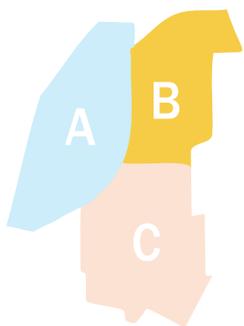
The labor force in all three Planning Areas represents a large number of service sector jobs, with health care employing nearly double the amount of any other industry. By contrast, those employed in tech and manufacturing (also part of the regions sectorial approach), represent a much smaller fraction 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

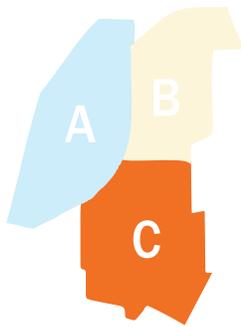
[Strategic Plan, 2011](#)

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:

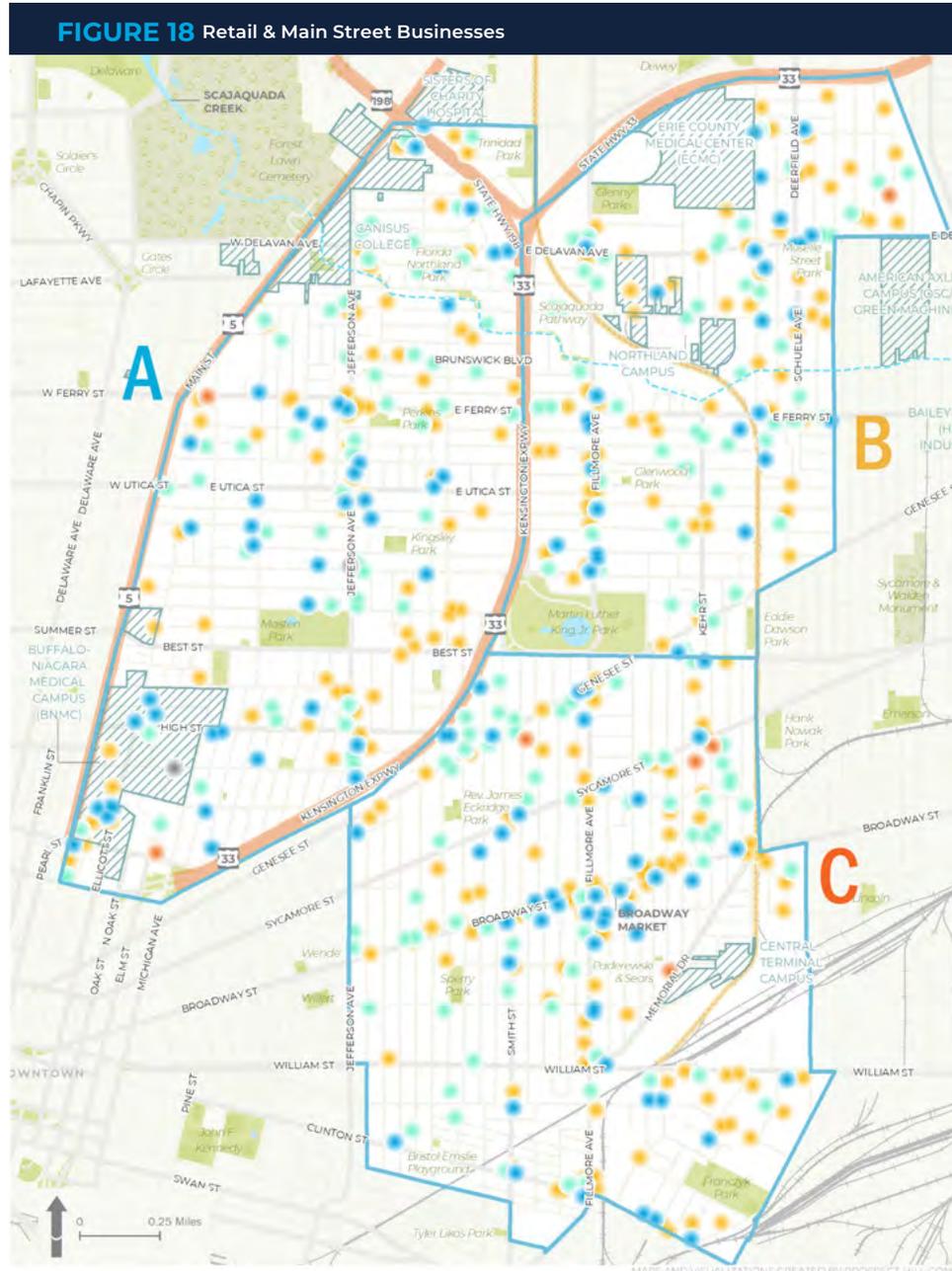
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Buffalo General | 6. Sisters of Charity Hospital |
| 2. Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center | 7. Buffalo VA Medical Center |
| 3. Erie County Medical Center | 8. Mercy Hospital of Buffalo |
| 4. Buffalo City School District | 9. Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority |
|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



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

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FIGURE 18 Retail & Main Street Businesses



- 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

MAPS AND VISUALIZATIONS CREATED BY PROSPECT HILL CONSULTANTS

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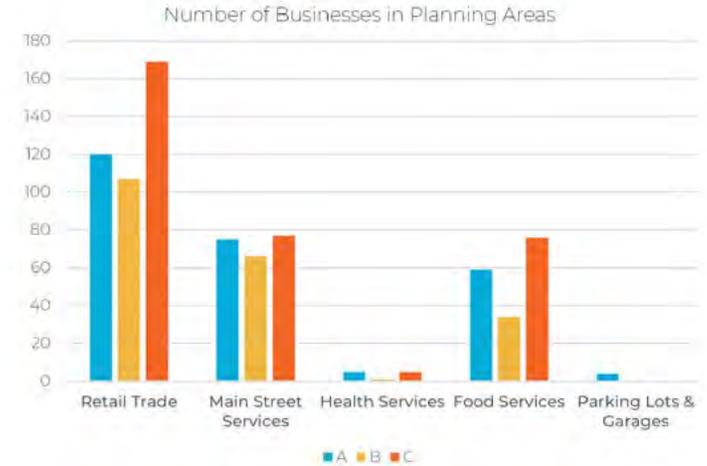
predominate business corridors within the Planning Area. The Exchange’s goal is to “serve the underrepresented and BIPOC entrepreneurial community in Buffalo.” Beverly Gray is a technical resource center for entrepreneurs. Housed within the building is Pursuit Lending, a community focused lender for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

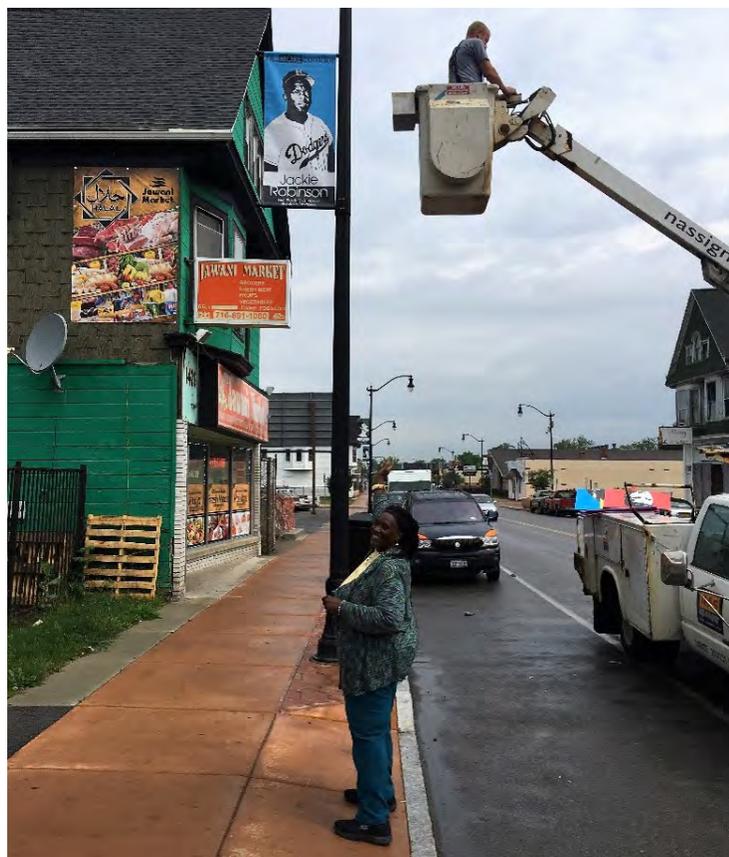
There has been some collaboration among the aforementioned business support organizations to streamline efforts and address the gaps. It appears there is a need to strengthen and support services at the neighborhood level, recognize business competitiveness strategies specific to the community and focus 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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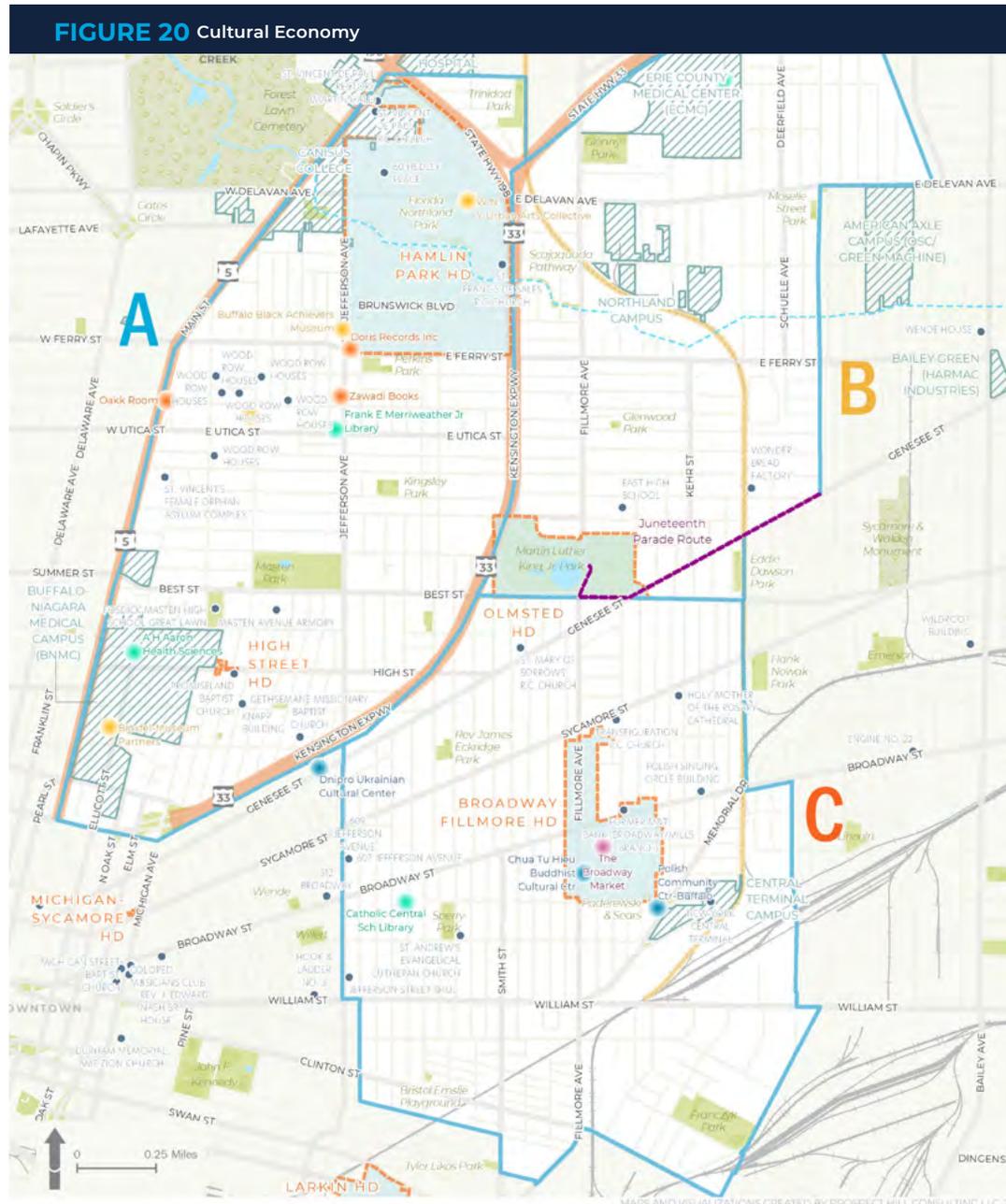
This significant investment is backed by Buffalo's Racial Equity Roundtable Racial Equity Report, which states that people of color are less likely to live in neighborhoods with intact commercial areas. While almost nine in ten white residents in the region live in neighborhoods with low commercial vacancy 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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- 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



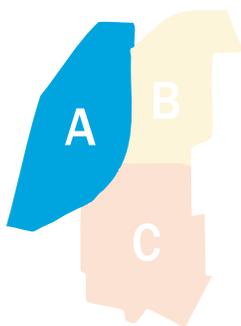
BCAT. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

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](#)

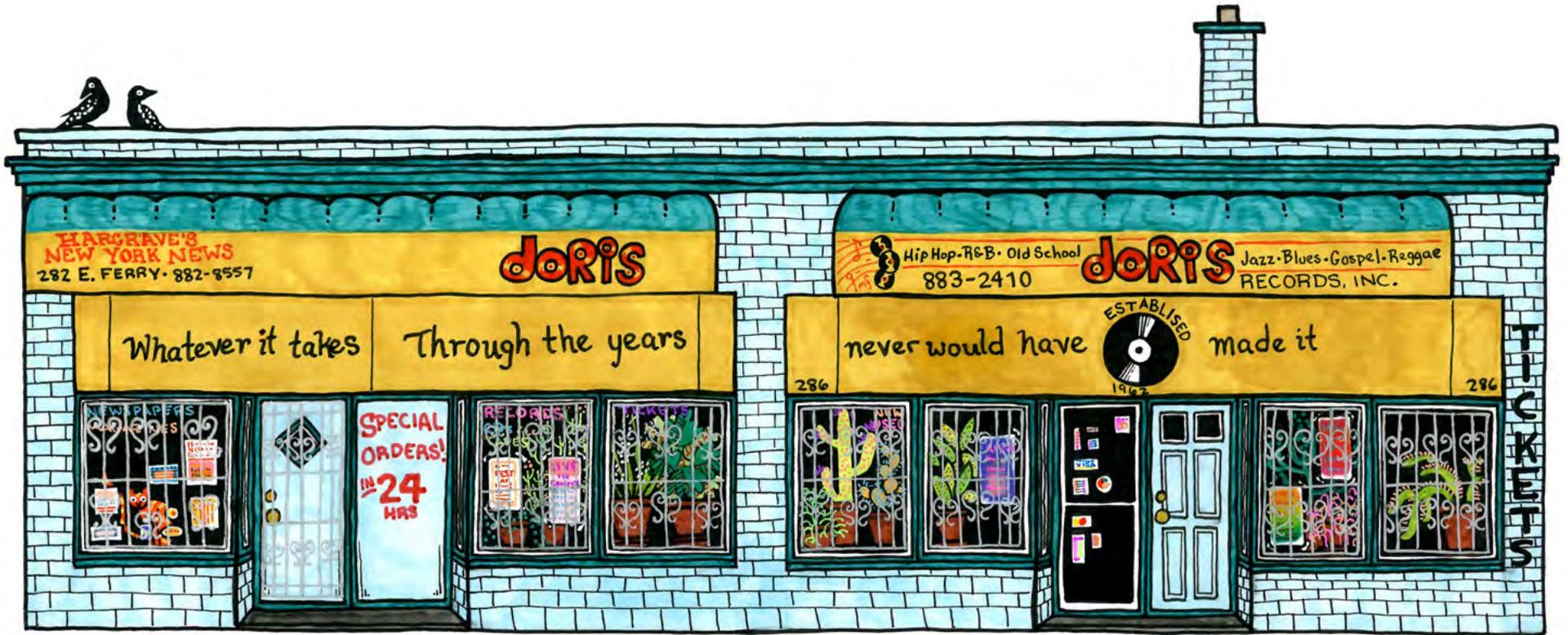
26 [AACC Paul Robeson Theater](#)

27 [Buffalo Rising](#)

28 [Oakk Room](#)

29 [PBN](#)

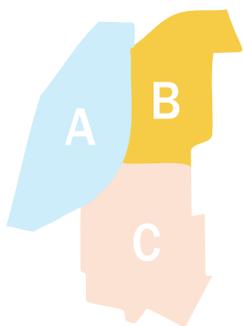
30 [buffaloah.com](#)



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.

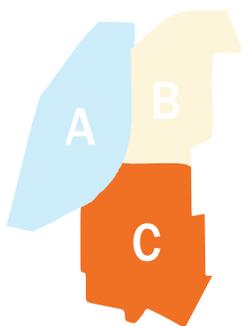
When shifting to Area B, we see a cluster of Entertainment businesses in the top right corner of the Delavan Grider neighborhood. Publishing firms are also scattered in a cluster in the top right of Area B. Three broadcasting A/V businesses are adjacent to, or within, the Northland Campus.

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.

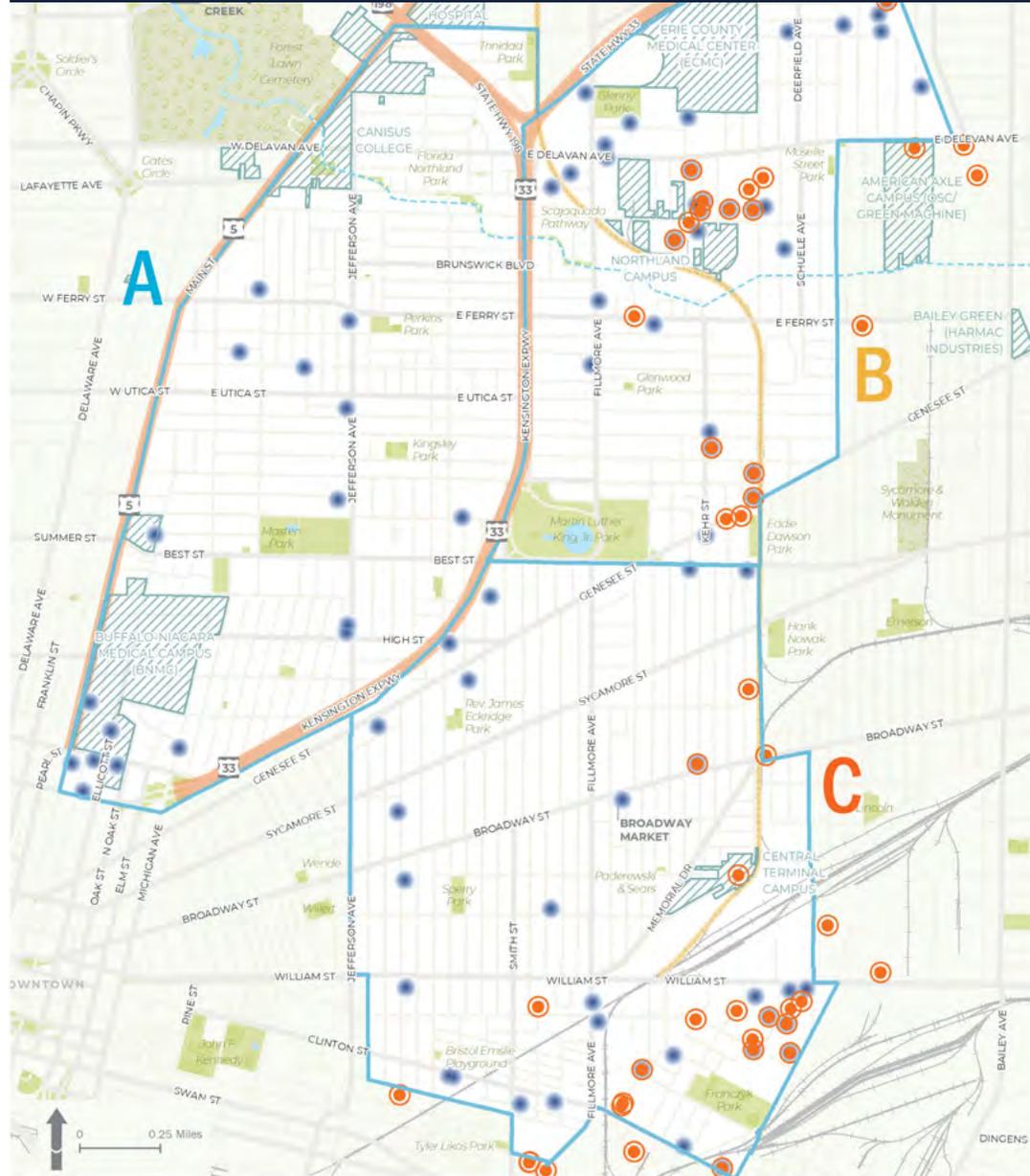
Pappy Martin Legacy Jazz Society

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

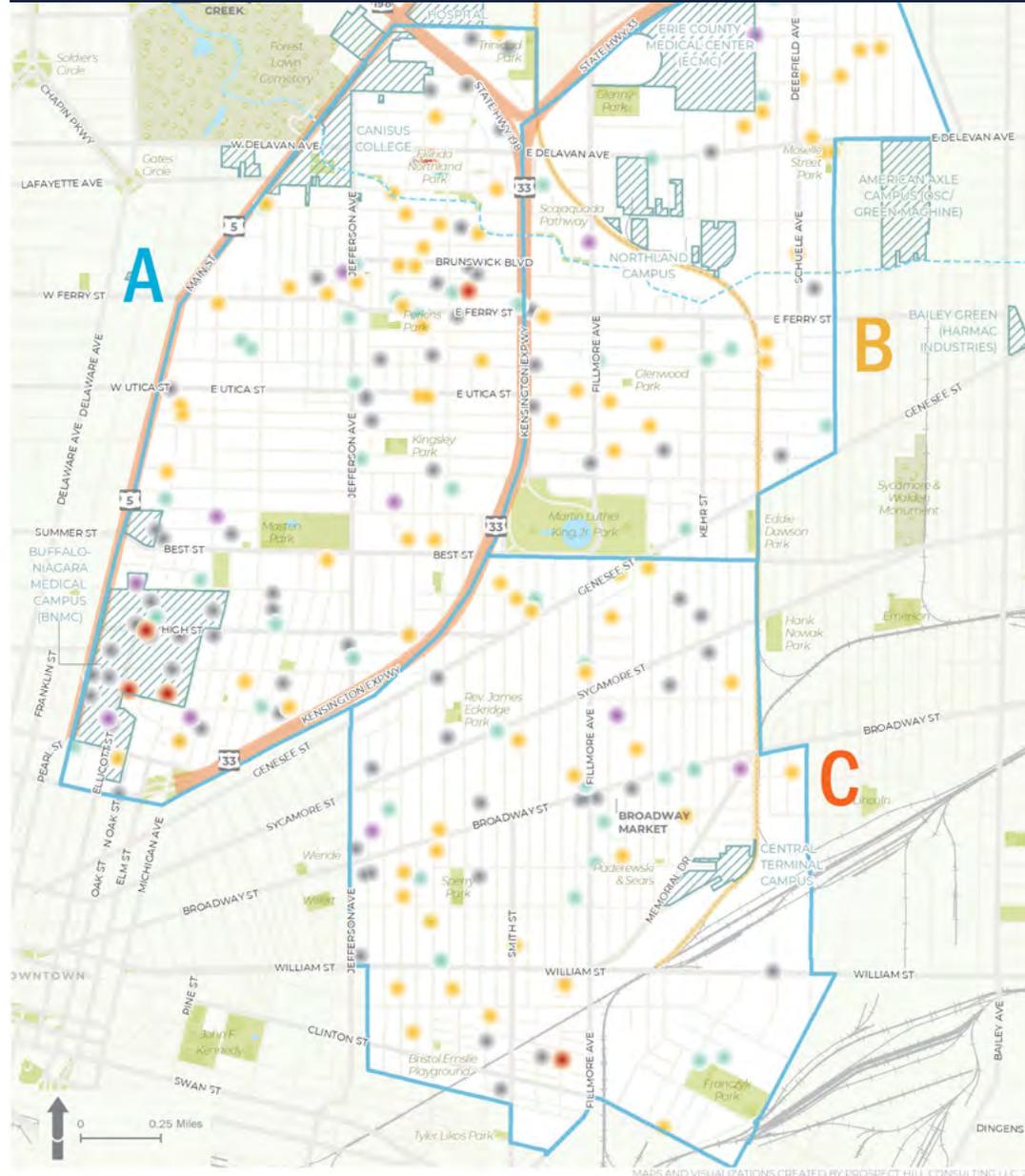


- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- Manufacturing
- Second Stage Manufacturers

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

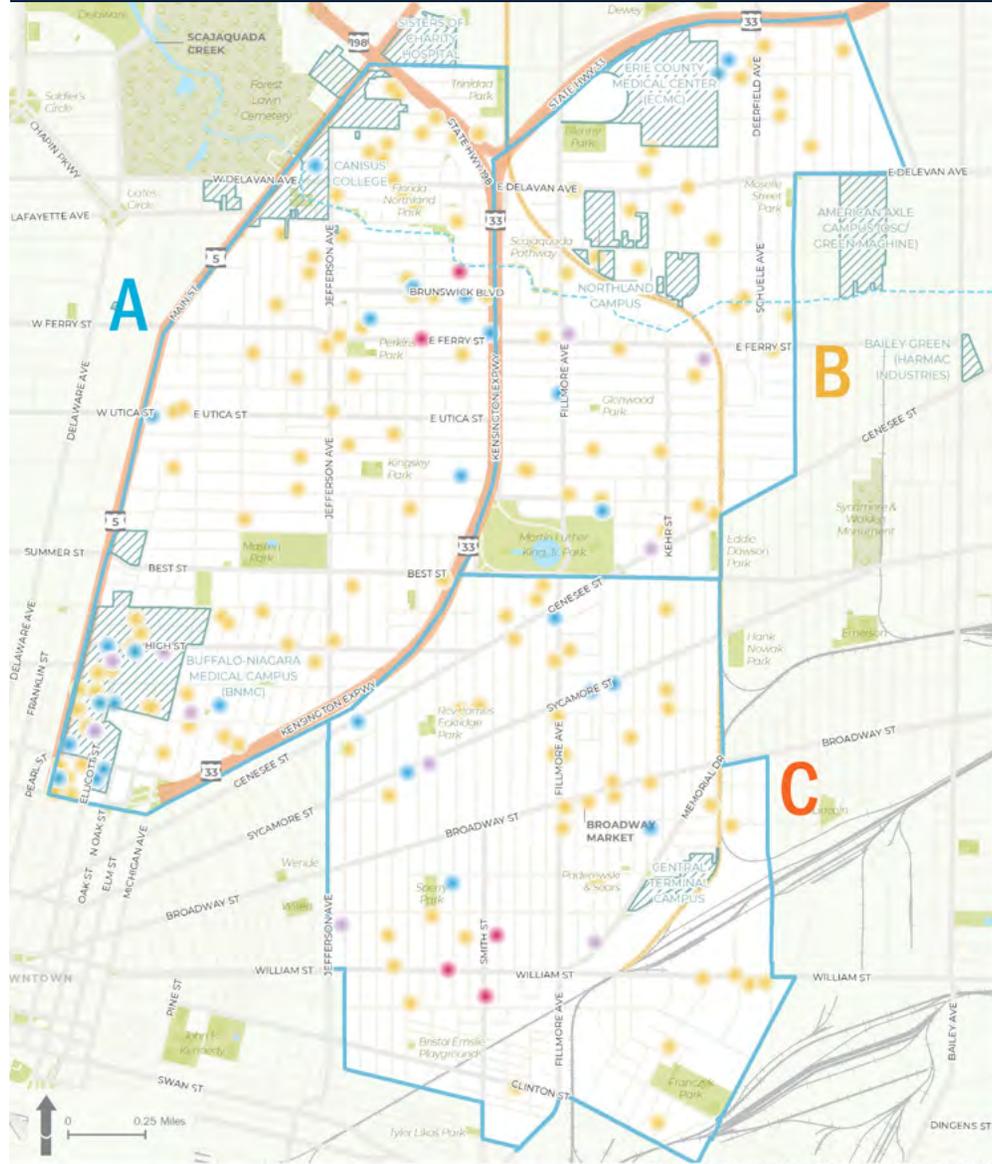


- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Beltline
- Railroad
- Local Event Location
- Healthcare Services
- Child & Youth Services
- Behavioral Health Services
- Continuing, Retirement,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

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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:

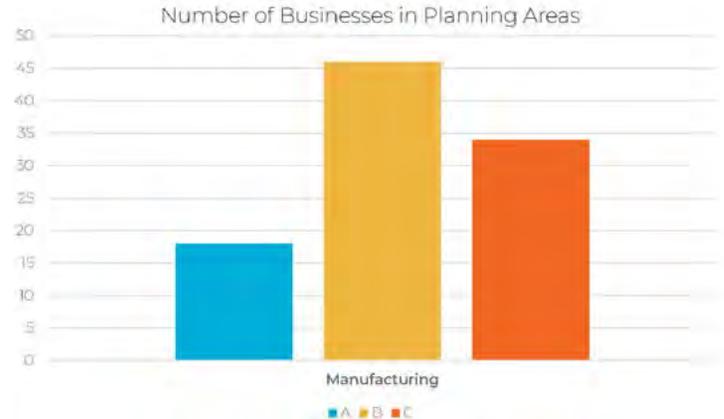
- 1. advanced manufacturing
- 2. agriculture
- 3. bi-national logistics
- 4. energy
- 5. health & life sciences
- 6. higher education
- 7. professional services
- 8. tourism.

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.

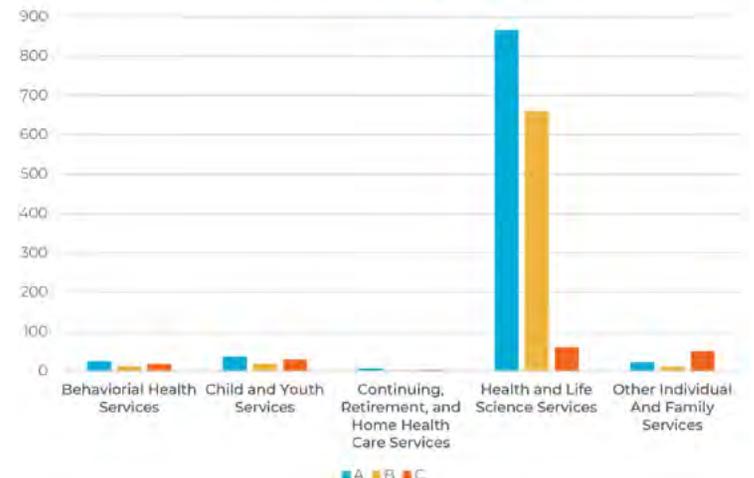
Of the remaining six industries, we found that manufacturing and health and life sciences each had a higher density than the remaining four. Therefore, we created one map outlining manufacturing businesses, one map for health and life science businesses, and a final map that encompasses the four remaining 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.

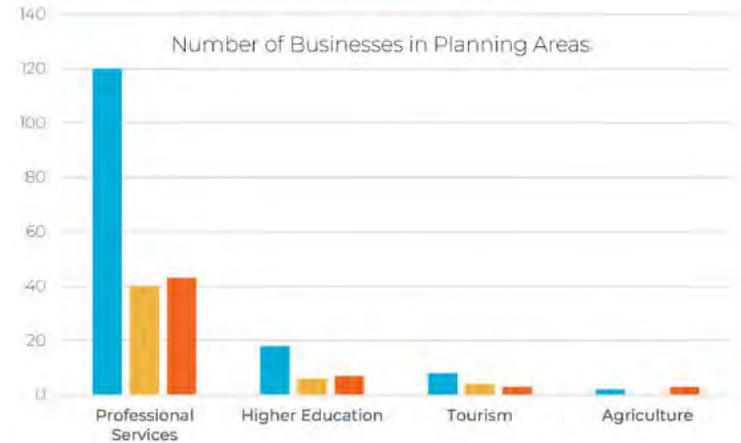
Manufacturing.

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.

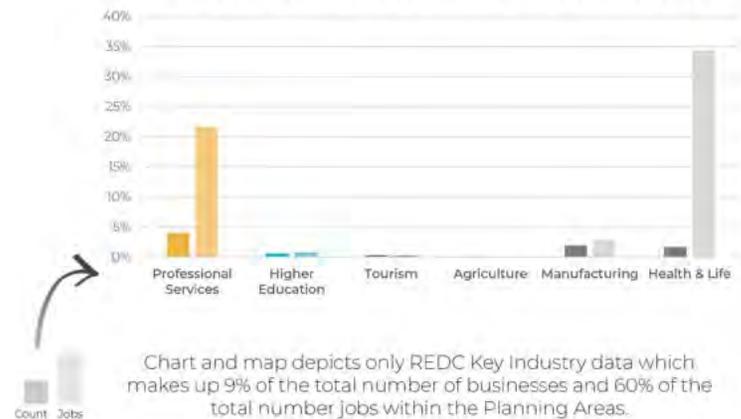
Data from Invest Buffalo-Niagara show that 36 businesses in the planning area are considered ‘second-stage’ companies, defined as having 10–99 employees and \$1–50 million in revenue. These businesses are poised for future growth. There are particularly large clusters of second-stage companies within 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**



EMPLOYMENT
ANCHOR CAMPUSES
WORKFORCE & LABOR MARKET
SMALL BUSINESS
ARTS & CULTURE
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

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

EMPLOYMENT
ANCHOR CAMPUSES
WORKFORCE
& LABOR MARKET
SMALL BUSINESS
ARTS & CULTURE
REGIONAL
CONNECTIONS

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.

INTERSECTION TREATMENTS
PHOTO: GOBIKE BUFFALO



Quality of Life

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Urban Nature

Ed Roberson

Neither New Hampshire nor Midwestern farm,
Nor the summer home in some Hamptons garden
Thing, not that Nature, not a satori
-al leisure come to terms peel by peel, not that core
Whiff of beauty as the spirit. Just a street
Pocket park, clean of any smells, simple quiet—
Simple quiet not the same as no birds sing,
Definitely not the dead of no birds sing:
The bus stop posture in the interval
Of nothing coming, a not quite here running
Sound underground, sidewalk's grate vibrationless
In open voice, sweet berries ripen in the street
Hawk's kiosks. The orange is being flown in
This very moment picked of its origin.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

- FOOD ACCESS
- PARKS & OPEN SPACE
- INTERGENERATIONAL
- CHILD CARE
- DIGITAL ACCESS

What is here now?

This map considers mobility from multiple perspectives—as a pedestrian, bicyclist, public transit User, carpool, or driver of any age for mobility to work, health services, school, and recreation. More residents living in these planning areas utilize mobility options outside of a car than in other areas, as 1 in 3 households own a car. In addition, about three-quarters of the residents live more than a five-minute walk from open space, which is a critical relieve, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

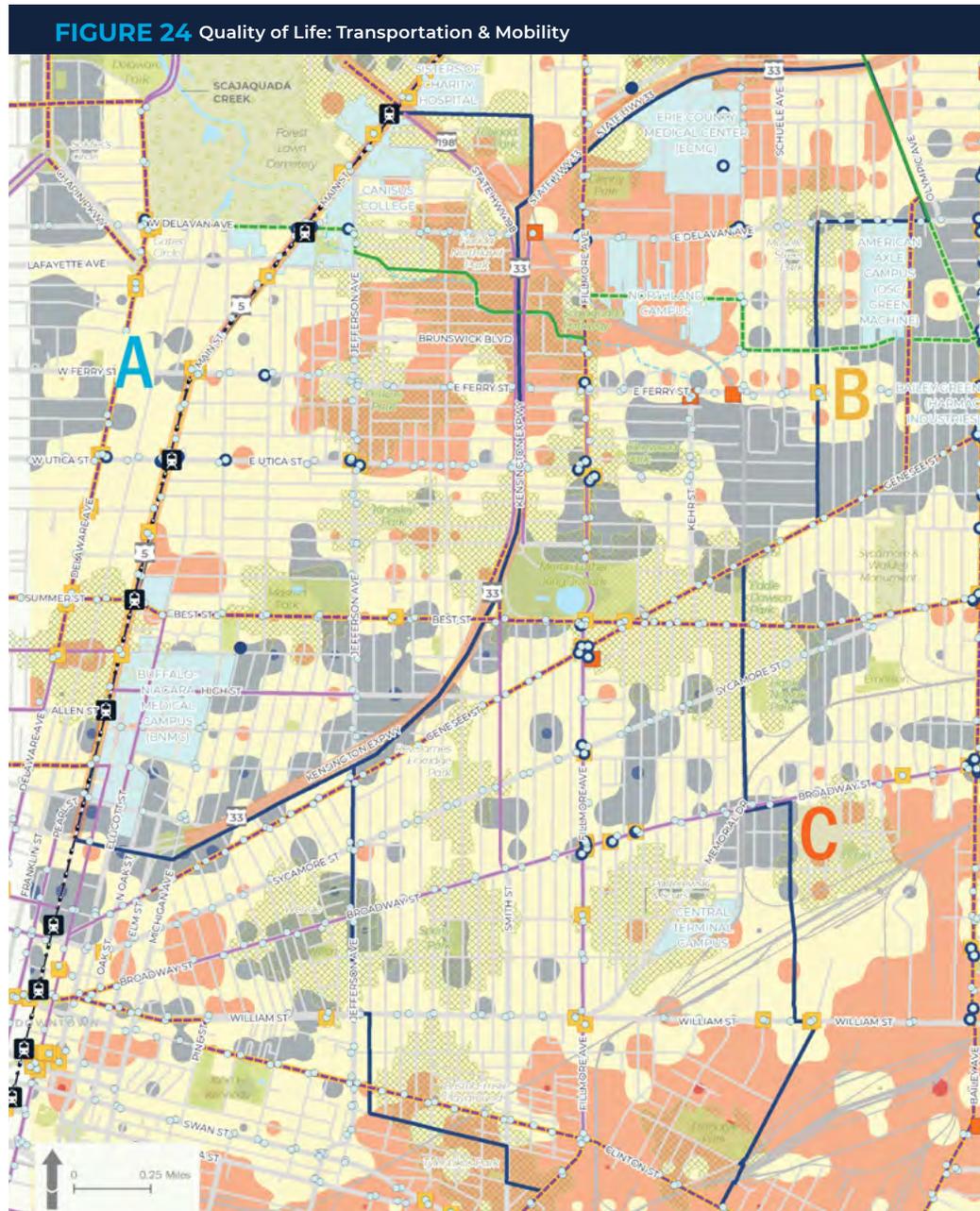


FIGURE 24 Quality of Life: Transportation & Mobility

- Neighborhood Plan Areas
- Anchor in the near East Side
- Park / Open Space
- Cemetery
- Water
- Scajaquada Creek (Buried)
- NYS Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Railroad
- Existing Bicycle Route
- Existing Off-Road Greenway Trail
- Other Proposed Bicycle Routes
- Proposed Greenway Trail Connector
- Metro Rail
- M Metro Rail Station
- Bus Stop
- High Use Bus Stop
- Planned Bus Shelter
- Existing Bus Shelter

Source: Esri 2020; City of Buffalo 2021; Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021; University at Buffalo 2021; Nfta 2021; Walk Score 2021

**TRANSPORTATION
& MOBILITY**

FOOD ACCESS

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

INTERGENERATIONAL

CHILDCARE

DIGITAL ACCESS



Kids Painting Bump Outs. Photo: GOBike Buffalo

Transportation and mobility are not only important social determinants of health in and of themselves, but they also impact almost all other health determinants as either a facilitator or barrier to accessing services and places. Current issues facing planning areas A, B, and C include pollution, traffic violence (crashes into people walking or biking, and property), unaffordable and inconvenient bike hubs, bus, and train routes, and inequitable traffic enforcement that contributes to violent or unnecessary interactions with the police, fines, fees, over-surveillance and incarceration of people of color, among others. In Buffalo, 31,343 households

(28%) do not have access to a personal automobile; 54% of these are Black households (ACS 2017, 2014–18 IPUMS). In the predominantly Black communities on Buffalo's east side, about 1 in 3 households don't own a vehicle. Adults 65+ are slightly less likely to own a car (33 vs. 31%) and a third of workers don't use a car to get to work (Mobile Safety Net Team, Numbers in Need, 2019). The 2019 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Equity Map (GBNRTC) indicates a large concentration of the highest needs on the east side of Buffalo when factoring 5 equity indicators: race, age 65+, income, limited English, and no vehicle access. There is

GOBike Buffalo and Buffalo Common Council teams up on an effort to create safer streets.

[View the Website & Data](#)

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

FOOD ACCESS

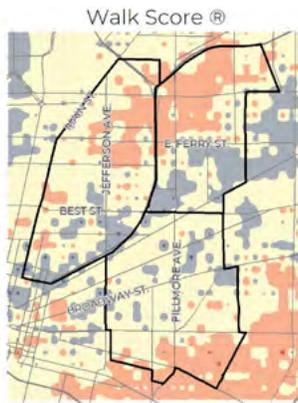
PARKS & OPEN SPACE

INTERGENERATIONAL

CHILDCARE

DIGITAL ACCESS

limited connectivity between high density transit hot spots, other parts of the city, and even within the neighborhoods to various parks or open spaces. In fact, only 27% of the population in planning areas live within 5-min walk of open space (73% outside) similar trend in each area. On Bailey Avenue, from 2014–2019, 120 pedestrians and 41 bicyclists have been hit by motor vehicles with three of these crashes resulting in fatality. The presence of separate and protected bike lanes are the most reliable indicator of lower fatality and injury rates for all users. In cities where safe bicycle facilities are most abundant, fatal crash rates dropped by 44% compared to the average city, and injury rates halved. Evidence also suggests safe complete streets decrease traffic safety risks for drivers, too.



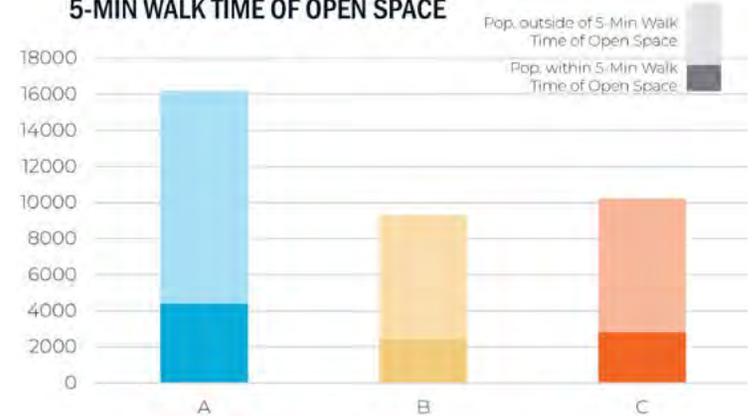
- **14–24:** Car-Dependent
Almost all errands require a Car.
- **25–49:** Car-Dependent
Most errands require a car
- **50–69:** Somewhat Walkable
Some errands can be accomplished on foot.
- **70–89:** Very Walkable
Most errands can be accomplished on foot.
- **90–95:** Walker's Paradise
Daily errands do not require a Car.

A commitment to anti-displacement is critical to toward improved mobility infrastructure in these neighborhoods. This type of community development has led to increases in property values that ultimately drive current residents out of their neighborhoods. This reality has also built an appropriate and reasonable mistrust of outside partners looking to “improve” neighborhoods. An approach to improving mobility infrastructure must be coupled with, and held accountable to, wealth building and employment, pathways to home ownership, access to affordable housing, educational opportunities, and neighborhood-based civic leadership.

Given that transportation is one of the most significant barriers to jobs and services, there is also a need to work with employers to both invest in transportation on behalf of their employees, and to locate more jobs closer to where the residents live.

Access to safe, efficient, affordable, quality transportation is critical to accomplishing most other life tasks. The need for high quality transportation and mobility infrastructure transcends geographic, socioeconomic, and other

2020 POPULATION WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF 5-MIN WALK TIME OF OPEN SPACE



In each planning area, more residents live in areas that are outside of a 5-min walk to open green space, than within. Residents have communicated a desire for more quality open spaces and improved maintenance and quality of current spaces.

discriminating factors. We all need choice, flexibility, and efficiency when it comes to mobility. Improving health equity outcomes across Buffalo neighborhoods will require collaborative, multi-sector solutions that invest in mobility infrastructure, programs, and policy. It’s not solely up to the transportation and mobility sectors; rather, public and private entities in other sectors can come together to advocate for, invest in, and implement successful mobility solutions in the community.

Specifically, public transportation investment can result in improved health and health equity by reducing traffic crashes and air pollution, increasing physical activity, and improving access to medical care, healthy food, vital services, employment, and social connection. Lack of access or poor public transit and mobility conditions, disproportionately and negatively impacts people who rely on it, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, and commuters—namely

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The Push to Redesign Buffalo's Kensington Expressway is Set to Become Reality

“ The Restoring Our Community Coalition (ROCC) announced the city is set to receive \$1 billion in state funds to improve Route 33.

A part of the expressway near the Museum of Science is expected to get an upper deck that will create greenspace. The goal is to reconnect the community and improve the environment.

Restore Our Community Coalition envisions a beautiful, green parkway that will serve as a gateway connecting the historic Humboldt Parkway community to downtown and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. At the same time, a green parkway and promenade will serve as a vibrant community gathering place that is an attraction within a neighborhood that includes anchor institutions the Buffalo Museum of Science, Olmsted-designed Delaware and MLK Park and Canisius College. We seek to restore the Humboldt Parkway Community that has suffered from decades of decay and economic decline due to the construction of the Kensington Expressway. ”

[Spectrum News Article](#)

women, younger adults, Black workers, and workers earning low wages³⁵.

The metrics that are historically used in transportation policy, planning, and investment typically center roads and cars over people and mobility, which has resulted in an aggregated negative impact on community health and segregation. We see this trend in Buffalo with the building of Route 198 and the 33 highways that dissect historic parkways and neighborhoods, and segregate our communities. The highway was built to move people from outside of the city through the city, rather than to positively benefit the community in which it separates from the city center.

This highway dissection, compounded by industry and manufacturing facilities built, run, and then abandoned in these neighborhoods, have resulted in increased carbon emissions, air, water, and soil pollution. When planners and engineers design the mobility landscape for moving cars, rather than people, the results are higher risks from vehicle crashes, increased pollution, and decreased options for people without access to cars (Blatt, 2021). The long-term disinvestment in public transportation, active mobility, and pedestrian environments in the planning areas have resulted in health disparities, barriers to accessing jobs and essential services, and isolation of these vibrant communities from connection with the rest of the city. A shift in the goals and metrics of policy, planning, and development toward healthier mobility choices for people, like better access to public transportation, safe bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure, and shared transportation models will promote better air quality, increase levels of physical activity, decrease risks from car crashes, and improve mental health (Blatt, 2021).

Often transportation planning rushes to pursue the latest technology solutions to deploy in communities, often with large-scale, long-term implementation in mind. This approach

35 [Health Affairs Policy Brief \(2021\)](#)

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leaves behind neighborhoods that have experienced historic disinvestment and do not have the baseline infrastructure to support these solutions, nor do they have transportation and mobility options that meet their most basic needs in the present.

This approach is evidence that traditional transportation planning does not meet communities where they are, or prioritize investment in their current needs. With the substantial impacts of climate change bearing down on our communities, it is critical, however, to consider how our current transportation systems and planning must change to reduce these negative impacts for Buffalo residents. We must work across sectors, with policy makers, engineers, planners, social services, and community residents to BOTH effectively address the immediate, current mobility needs of residents AND plan to implement proactive, climate smart solutions that ensure a healthier future.

The COVID-19 pandemic only emphasized the critical need for public transportation for frontline workers, childcare needs, testing and vaccination access, among other essential services. In addition, there was a significant increase in active mobility choices like biking and walking during the pandemic. With this increase, residents underscored the need for better bicycle infrastructure, improved snow maintenance on streets and sidewalks, repairs for cracked sidewalks, more green spaces and outdoor gathering spaces that are welcoming and safe, and more places for children and older adults alike to be outside and to play. Community input over the last year also points toward a need for better connectivity from the neighborhoods to the Main St. metro line and improved train station design and amenities.

While the data shows that residents across the planning area neighborhoods are already higher frequency users of NFTA public transportation services and other active



East Side Bike Club. Photo: East Side Bike Club

mobility options, whether by choice, or necessity, the mobility environment does not reflect this high usage. Residents' mobility behaviors produce less vehicle miles traveled, are more active, and cause less carbon emissions than in neighboring areas where residents choose to drive.

Often residents are making active mobility choices out of necessity, rather than choice, and since the mobility and transit landscapes are inadequate, their travel times are often much longer and more dangerous. Active, green mobility is not positively reinforced by high quality environments and systems that are safe, feel comfortable, and are highly efficient. It is understandable, then, why many residents pursue savings for car ownership before other saving priorities, like home ownership. This dissonance between environmental design to support green mobility and efficient mobility in Buffalo must be reconciled if we are to expect a widespread adoption of more active mobility by all for a safer,

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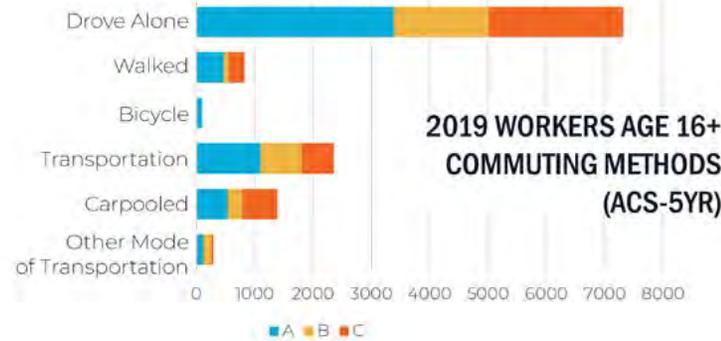
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cleaner future. Residents in these east side neighborhoods in these behaviors and the facilities they use to travel within and through their neighborhoods should respect them as such.

Many institutions, local entities, and non-profit organizations are working on transportation and mobility projects that will impact the planning areas. There is a significant need to coordinate, organize, and maximize the resources allocated across efforts, while also identifying how neighborhoods leaders and residents are participating in the current work and will lead future work that impacts their communities. Discussions about mobility and transportation have historically been led by Citizens for Regional Transit (CRT), the NFTA's Citizen Advisory Council, Buffalo Transit Riders United (BTRU), and the Center for Self Advocacy, among others. Local mobility advocacy has primarily been led by Buffalo Transit Riders United (BTRU) and bicycling organizations like GOBike Buffalo and Slow Roll Buffalo, and more recently joined by, BIPOC-led bicycling organizations like Colored Girls Bike Too (CGBT) and the East Side Bike Club (ESBC). There continues to be a need to expand leadership opportunities for people of color in local and regional transportation planning. In addition to increased participation by people of color, community members have suggested that a more transit-diverse advocacy community also be engaged, beyond regular bicyclists. Mobility

and transportation are reported as important issues by people of all ages who use various modes across the planning areas.

Current Mobility Planning Overview Related to the Planning Areas or Residents

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), our region's metropolitan planning organization, manages several regional planning efforts that impact the future of mobility in the planning areas.

1. [Region Central](#) is an effort to re-imagine mobility options within and surrounding the Scajaquada Corridor, which runs directly through the planning area and has historic segregating implications and impacts within our community.
2. [One Region Forward](#) is a collaborative effort to promote sustainable forms of development throughout the region. The plan is called, [A New Way to Plan for Buffalo Niagara](#).
3. Several partners have also been engaged in developing the [Bike Buffalo Niagara Regional Bicycle Master Plan](#) that will create more bike-able communities throughout the region. Two specific major greenway projects in the planning areas have received initial funding to begin planning and construction work include the Northeast Greenway Initiative and the Scajaquada Creek extension, seen on [this interactive map](#).
4. GBNRTC also manages the [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP), which is a priority listing of all federally funded transportation projects during a 5-year period. The specific projects that impact the neighborhood may be found on [this interactive map](#) and include:
 - The City of Buffalo's [Main Street Complete Street Treatment](#)
 - [Jefferson Ave Complete Street](#) Phase 2
 - Phase I Buffalo Bicycle
 - Master Plan for Jefferson
 - Phase I Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan for E. Utica St.

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- the BNMC's Phase 4 Complete Street features
 - paving on Fillmore Ave; the NFTA's pilot program for
 - [Equitable Transit Oriented Development](#) along Main St.
 - additional intersection improvements at Bailey and E. Delavan & [Main St/Humboldt/Kensington](#) among others.
5. The current planning efforts of the [Unified Planning Work Program](#) include: a new Mobility as a Service (MaaS) model, a transit ridership study to support NFTA initiatives and Title VI requirements, Phase 2 of the Transit Oriented Development Study, and continued participation in the next phases of the NFTA's [Metro Transit Expansion Project](#).
 6. A newer priority of the NFTA includes looking at the feasibility for [Bailey Avenue Bus Rapid Transit](#) and they continue to process [Bus Shelter Requests](#).
 7. [GO Buffalo Niagara](#), managed by GOBike Buffalo, and a partnership between 511 Rideshare, NYS DOT, GBNRTC, BNMC, and the NFTA, is an effort to coordinate transportation services and options throughout the region. This includes employer incentive programs, among other services like, [Go Buffalo Mom](#).

The City of Buffalo continues to manage the [Slow Streets Program](#), which aims to reduce speeding on residential streets in the City of Buffalo by installing permanent traffic calming measures like speed humps. Current applications for treatments may be found on [this interactive map](#). At the County level, there are several Erie County initiatives that address mobility and transportation including [Live Well Erie](#), which houses an Older Adults Transportation Group and Working Families Mobility Group with similar goals. In addition, the County has a [Climate Transportation Group](#) as part of their climate action work, and they participate in the Walkability Action Institute Team (WAI). The Department of Senior Services, specifically, runs [transportation services](#) for older adults. The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) is working on a specific program in the Fruit Belt Neighborhood funded by the US Department of

Transportation called the [Complete-trip ITS4US Deployment Program](#) in partnership with the NFTA and UB. The project seeks to create integrated trip planning and a community AV shuttle pilot program.

Shared Mobility Inc (SMI) has partnered with the East Side Bike Club, a group of community members who meet regularly for rides in the east side, and launched an electric bicycle pilot program in Buffalo. SMI also led a regional application for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA) [Electric Mobility Challenge](#). LISC WNY led an additional application for NYSEDA's [Clean Neighborhoods Challenge](#) in collaboration with several additional partners, addressing the need to build a sustainable, equitable future of mobility in the planning area neighborhoods. This application was awarded a planning grant to continue developing the application ideas and an opportunity to win one of three \$10 million grand prizes in the challenge. LISC also participates with GBNRTC and PUSH Buffalo in the [Regional](#)

NYSEDA Clean Neighborhoods Challenge

The [NYSEDA Clean Neighborhoods Challenge](#) addresses the need to build a sustainable, equitable future of mobility in the planning area neighborhoods. A collaborative application was submitted for an opportunity to win one of three \$10 million grand prizes in the challenge.

[View the Master Plan](#) and interactive park maps, or learn more about the City of Buffalo parks system.

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[Planning Exchange](#)'s equitable transportation outreach & learning group.

LISC worked with the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC), Albright Knox Northland, and GOBike, on an intersectional application for the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant. The grant proposes enhancing placekeeping arts and culture efforts with local artists at important crosswalks and intersections, connecting the Northland campus to the broader neighborhood around it.

[Citizens for Regional Transit](#) (the Citizens' Regional Transit Corporation) is committed to creating a broad base of support for the improvement and expansion of bus and rail transit for all citizens of the Niagara Frontier. The purpose of the organization is to build an understanding of the benefits of transit by facilitating public participation through educational events, information sharing and other outreach efforts. Citizens for Regional Transit operates on a grass-roots level, working through concerned citizens writing letters and being involved which then reaches upwards to the commercial and governmental levels. This is essential to CRT's mission of providing transit access for everyone.

[Colored Girls Bike Too](#) (CGBT) is a local, radical cycling organization founded in 2017, focused on Black women (cisgender and transgender) and gender nonconforming people (GNC) to provide safe space for health and mental health through group bicycle rides and advocacy for mobility justice, primarily through participation in the Fair Fines and Fees Coalition (FFFC). [Buffalo Transit Riders United](#) (BTRU) is a collective of transit riders, and faction of the Coalition for Economic Justice, who are working for a more efficient, equitable, and responsive public transit system in the greater Buffalo area. FFFC and BTRU have been pivotal leaders in advocating for and creating more equitable mobility and transit policy in our region.

A few excellent transportation resources:

[How Can Policymakers Ensure the Push for Electric Vehicles Doesn't Harm Low-Income Communities and Communities of Color?](#)

[Healthy, equitable transportation policy: recommendations and research](#)

TRB Webinar: [Addressing Justice in Transportation](#)

Health Policy brief: [Public Transportation In The US: A Driver Of Health And Equity](#)

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Areas within a 1 mile walk of:

- 1 supermarket
- 2 supermarkets
- 3 to 6 supermarkets

Walk Time Model based supermarkets within the planning areas only

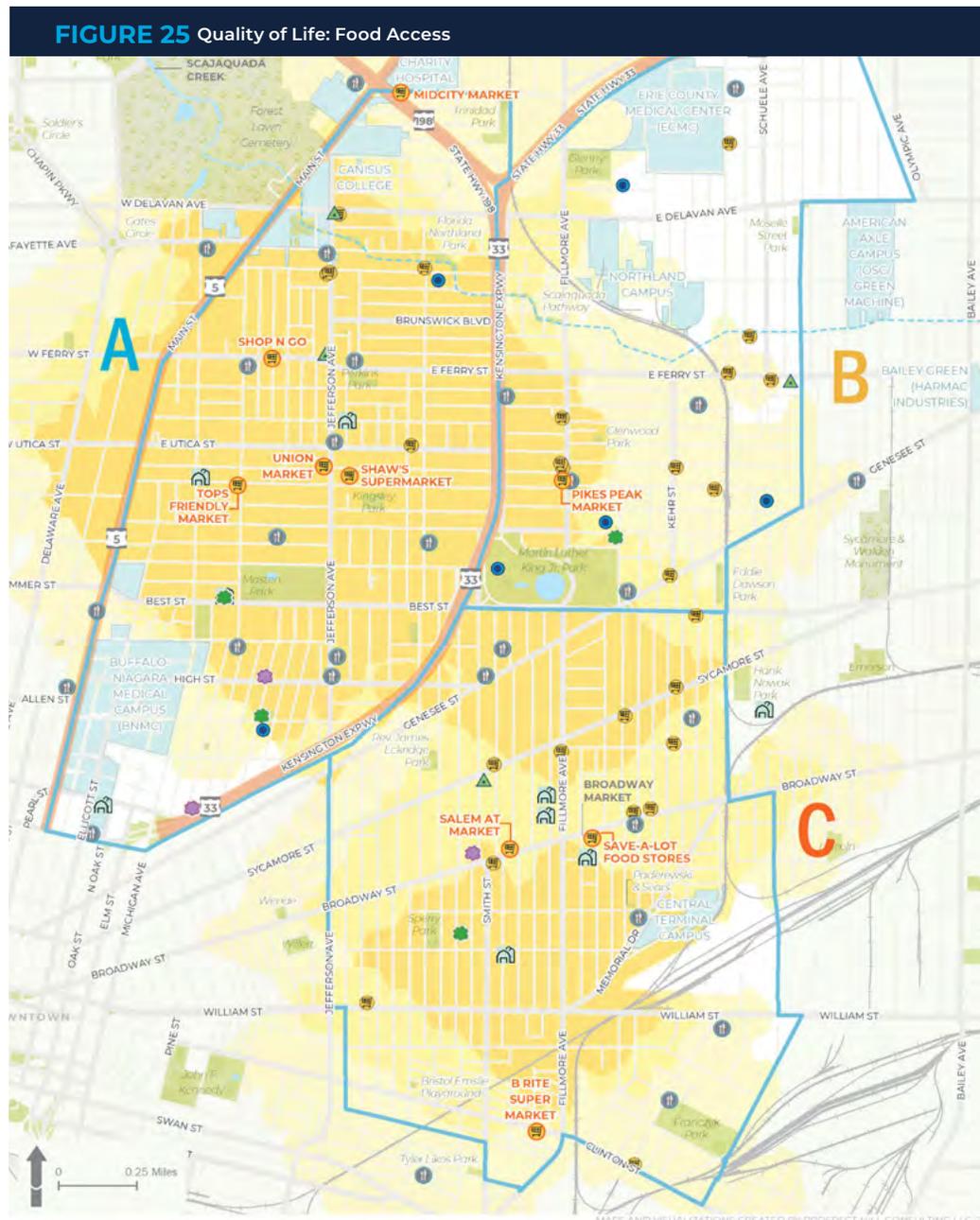


FIGURE 25 Quality of Life: Food Access

- 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
- Healthy Corner Stores (\$)
- Comm. Schools Food (Free)
- Food Bank or Pantry (Free)
- GGWNY School Gardens
- GGWNY Community Gardens
- Urban farms (\$)
- Food Retail Stores (with annual sales <\$500K)
- Food Retail Store (supermarket) with annual sales of \$500K or more

Source: ESRI 2020 and GfK MRI; City of Buffalo 2021, Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021, University at Buffalo 2021, Buffalo Art Commission 2020; Data Axle Verified Business Data -Erie County Library 2021, Google Maps 2021

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Amana Halal Food by Julia Wald Art

The map on the previous page indicates locations of grocery stores, free food banks and pantries, corner stores, and urban farms and gardens. The light and medium yellow colors on the map indicate the number of supermarkets available to residents within one mile of homes. The map suggests that planning area B has an opportunity to increase food options, as there are mostly white spaces, meaning no supermarket within a mile, or light yellow, indicating one supermarket within a mile. Area B also presents the opportunity to increase connectivity between anchor employer institutions and adjacent neighborhoods. There are several local food producers throughout the planning areas who could contract with neighborhood anchors to increase access to locally sourced healthy foods.

Planning area C, which is anchored with the Broadway Market, is another opportunity to use food as a social and economic connector throughout these neighborhoods. In particular, planning area C is home to a higher percentage of New Americans than the other planning areas. The Broadway Market has historically been a food retail hub, attracting many from outside the neighborhood, and is receiving state funding for renovations. Through our engagements, we heard that food could lead in this neighborhood as a cultural connector and economic driver. Small scale restaurant owners and pop-up food retailers may also see opportunity in larger scale shared kitchen and retail models for entrepreneurship.

In addition, throughout the planning areas there are several smaller scale food retail stores or corner stores. While some are already participants in the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, a more robust effort to equip these business owners with resources to make residential year-round, affordable access to healthy food possible is necessary. Planning Area A has the most residences within one mile of a grocery store and several supermarkets in close proximity. Although it

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is home to a Tops Grocery Store, based on feedback in our engagement process, community members don't feel Tops meets their grocery needs when it comes to fresh produce and healthy food options.

NOTE: Community engagement was done prior to the recent terrorist attack that occurred in the Tops grocery store, and the walkshed in the map above does NOT account for Tops being closed. The walkshed area would be significantly impacted by this closure for many residents and an updated analysis will be completed.

A more comprehensive regional mapping effort led by the University at Buffalo's Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab was recently completed as part of the [Food Future Western New York](#), The Regional Food System Assessment and Planning project which is part of the [Moving Forward Together](#) Initiative. Moving Forward Together was one action by the Western New York COVID-19 Community Response Fund, a collaborative philanthropic effort launched in March 2020 to address the COVID-19 crisis in our community.

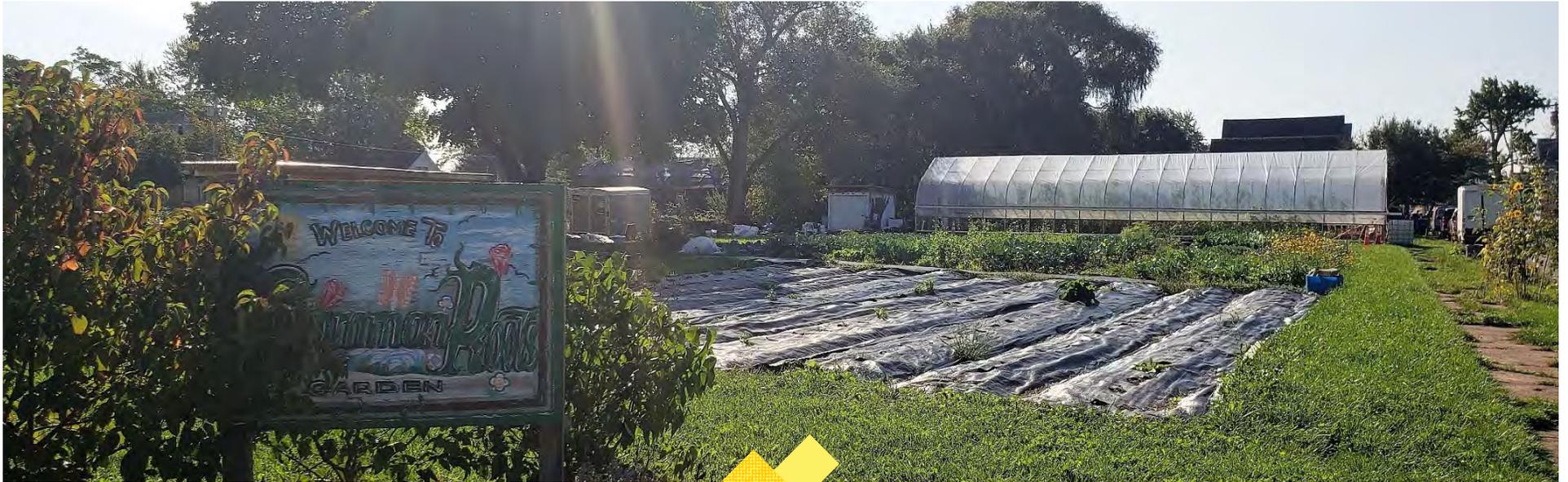
Food access and food security have long been neighborhood priorities across the planning areas, especially as there is an increased focus on health and wellness among residents. Sometimes neighborhoods across the east side of Buffalo are referred to as 'food deserts', however, local advocates and scholars have suggested the inaccuracy of the food desert terminology for several reasons. While many residents experience economic and social conditions that make accessing healthy foods more difficult, it's more accurate to cite government and tax policies that have contributed to this lived experience. Supermarkets and grocery stores use neighborhood environment metrics and are highly influenced by tax incentive policies when they choose locations. Since the neighborhoods across the planning areas have been deeply impacted by decades of disinvestment and racist economic



East Side Food Pantry. Photo: Buffalo Commons Photobank

and environmental policies, the metrics don't always add up and large-scale food access investments have been scarce.

The Mobile Safety Net Team's Community Assessment with both residents³⁶ and providers³⁷ in 2019, highlight some of



Community Roots Farm, Peckham & Colt.

Building stronger connections among farm and food stakeholders within the region helps to build a stronger, more resilient food system in Western New York.

Leadership on developing a regional strategy for food equity and sovereignty is being led by Food Future Western New York. The SCALE team of consultants guiding the initiative are leading a highly participatory process that meaningfully engages the full spectrum of WNY food system stakeholders, both rural and urban, across the nine counties of the project's focus. The engagement of farmers, businesses, food justice activists, non-profits, consumers, and others will enable the development of a plan that recognizes the many complex challenges within the region yet focuses on opportunities for real change. There is a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) composed of food system stakeholders and advocates who hold expertise of some element of the region's food system. The RAC is the primary partner to the SCALE team, providing both guidance to the food system assessment and critical feedback to the consultants throughout the project.

There are also workgroups focusing on particular key areas and issues of the region's food system including work groups on Access, Equity & Sovereignty; Farmers & Producers; Finance; Infrastructure; and Markets & Buyers. Leadership, recommendations, and tools generated from this effort can be found at <https://www.foodfuturewny.org/>.

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2019 HOUSEHOLDS WITH FOOD STAMPS/SNAP (ACS 5-YR)

	A	B	C
2019 (%)	43%	45%	52%
2019 (count)	2911	1748	2499

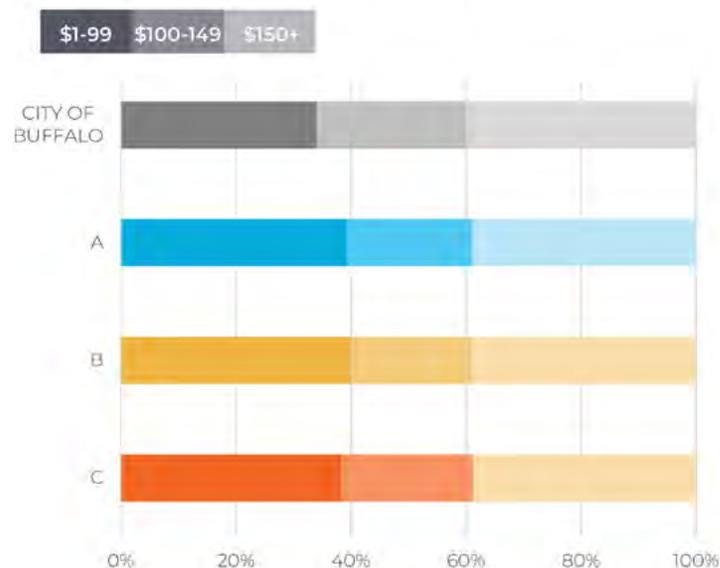
In 2019, prior to the onset of the pandemic, almost half of the households across neighborhood planning areas were participating in food assistance programs. The effects of the pandemic likely resulted in an increase in these numbers.

the challenges and strengths of neighborhoods on the east side of Buffalo related to food access. Residents reported that “no money for food” was one of their most urgent concerns among others such as having the utilities shut off, outstanding debt, legal problems, cost/availability of child care, foreclosure/eviction, or being hurt or threatened at home. Three fourths of the respondents of the 2019 survey

reported receiving public assistance, with SNAP being most frequent (78% of households receive one or more services – 60% Food Stamps/SNAP, 22% Food pantry/Meal Service, 10% WIC). Residents did report that food services, however, are among one of the strongest in the neighborhoods. Among providers surveyed, 1 in 3 offered food as part of their programs. The food insecurity and hunger experienced by residents are the results of poverty conditions, and while many strong programs are available to address food challenges caused by poverty, large-scale coordinated efforts must be made to resolve poverty conditions.

The locally owned and run food economy has also been working to close food security gaps through smaller, more direct models of providing healthy foods to community residents. The strengths of these entities and goals of residents must be coordinated and coupled with government

2020 HOUSEHOLD AVG. SPENT PER WEEK AT FOOD STORES



and institutional investment in food access, nutrition, and neighborhood health. During outreach for this neighborhood planning effort, we also learned that residents highly valued community garden space and want easier access to healthy foods at smaller, neighborhood owned businesses in walkable areas. Residents would like to see neighborhood land preserved and protection for green space and community gardens and markets. Food was also reported as an important cultural and social connector, and residents would like to see more active promotion of local restaurants, gardens, and shared maps to explore the many food options that are available. They also feel like this would help change the narrative about food in their community and support business owners in the food industry. There was also much discussion about how healthy food access is promoted through the design and feel of neighborhood food institutions and outdoor spaces. Many residents reported needing to travel outside of

[The Safe Routes to Healthy Food Report & Agenda](#) outlines strategies to connect active transportation and healthy food access efforts.

TRANSPORTATION
& MOBILITY

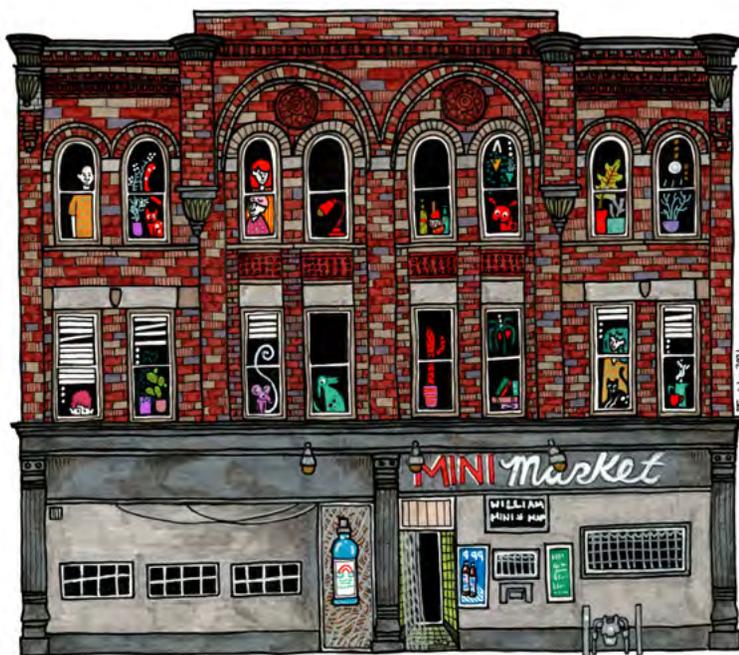
FOOD ACCESS

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

INTERGENERATIONAL

CHILDCARE

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William Mini Market by Julia Wald Art

the neighborhood to go to grocery stores or markets that feel nicer or have more quality produce and meats.

Food access and security are largely intertwined with other social determinants of health like housing stability, transportation quality, education, and neighborhood walkability. A comprehensive neighborhood planning model addresses these complexities together, rather than in isolated policy area silos. For example, access to quality, efficient public transportation is critical to equitable access to healthy foods, particularly in communities of color, who rely more heavily on transit services and experience food insecurity in higher numbers. Equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD), strategic planning should include co-locating healthy food access at transit hubs, and public transit options could include

environmental supports, like front-mounted cooler bins as an example, to making shopping easier.

Transit routes could be adjusted to include community food access points, and special services could connect residents to farmers markets or food events on the weekend.

The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized both food system strengths and challenges. The food access and affordability systemic injustices were immediate and catastrophic for many families, and continue today through the pandemic. Food industry and employees were among the most hard hit for unemployment and economic impacts of the pandemic. Our local food service programs, places of worship, and other mutual aid entities were the critical fabric that embraced and fed residents and showed that neighbors showed up for neighbors. The Seeding Resilience Initiative also promoted the sharing of an aggregated food-related resources map for Buffalo. Investment in these shared services models is an important lesson learned from the pandemic. We also saw many food behaviors change similar to national trends, such as an increase in cooking at home, thinking about healthy food more, and an increase in online shopping and delivery. In addition to the online ordering trends that groceries and restaurants needed to accommodate public health and safety, there was also an increase in social media and virtual cooking classes that diversified cooking methods and curiosities. The racial justice movement, re-ignited in 2020, also scaled an interest in Black-owned restaurants, traditionally Black and African cuisine, and locally owned entities.

For residents across the neighborhood planning areas, food is more than nutrition. Food is healing, food is social, food is fun, food is unity, food is liberation, and food is family. Several community entities are working toward scaling solutions that celebrate food, protect land, and promote healing.

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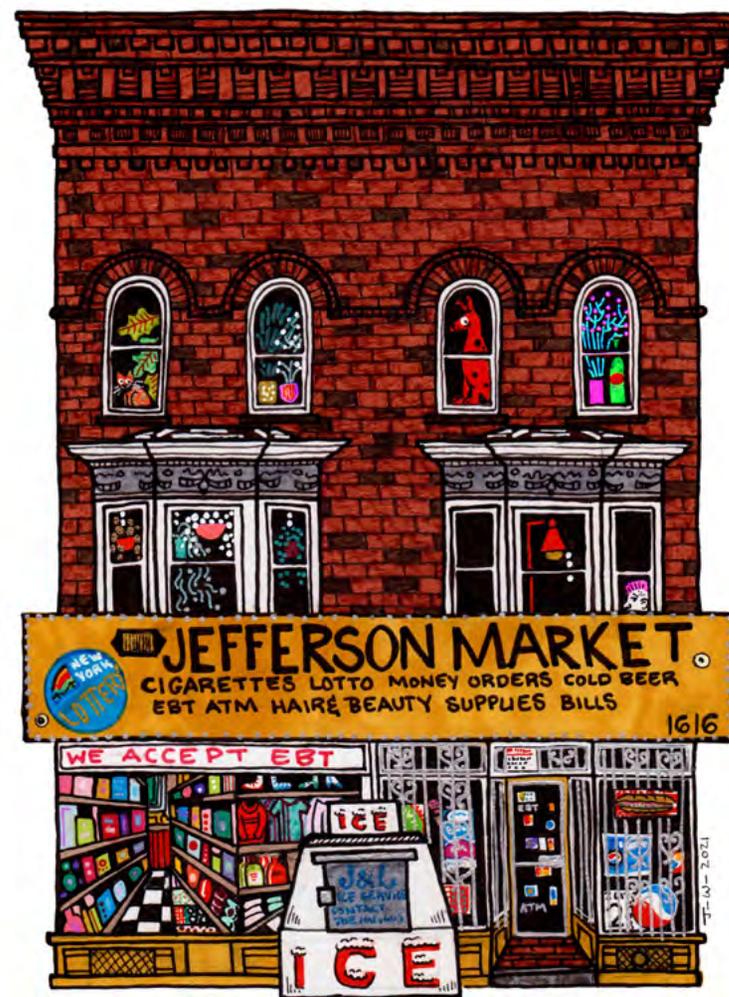


Ending Food Apartheid

Organizations who have been long focused on ending food apartheid in the East Side include these among others:

1. [Heritage Food Co-op](#)
2. [Buffalo Freedom Gardens](#)
3. [Buffalo Go Green / Urban Fruits & Veggies](#)
4. [Feed Buffalo](#)
5. [First Fruits Food Pantry at Lincoln Memorial](#)
6. [Food for the Spirit & the Buffalo Food Equity Network](#)

Several leaders and elders across these organizations have been involved in food planning and community support for decades, recognizing long ago, the nature of food apartheid and the health consequences on the Black community. When the massacre occurred at the Tops grocery store, it was also these organizations and many of their allies were pivotal in providing emergency supports, food distribution, and healing efforts within the East Side. It will be their long term visions, deep understanding of community, and healing nature that will guide the path toward food sovereignty for East Side residents.



Jefferson Market by Julia Wald Art

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Photo: GOBike

Early in our outreach, it became clear that increased curb appeal, green space, play space, and restorative spaces are greatly desired in the residential neighborhoods and commercial districts in the planning areas.

The things we heard time and again include:

1. Beautification, particularly related to garbage maintenance: trash receptacle installation, street cleaning, and maintenance plans for keeping the streets clean and attractive
2. More shared green space for all and investment in existing green spaces
3. Invest in MLK Park with more amenities and activities (lighting, benches, and arts/culture)
4. Develop safe spaces, playgrounds and parks for kids
5. Use vacant lots more creatively and constructively
6. Preserve the one-of-a-kind historic building stock that makes our district unique

The Transportation and Mobility Map [Fig 24] shows light green areas all around the planning areas. This indicates residences within a 5-minute walk to a park. The white spaces shown in the map amplify the sentiment that gathering spaces are not in close proximity to many residences in our planning areas.

In 2011, the City of Buffalo's Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) released a [Masten Park Neighborhood Action Plan](#), affecting Planning Area A. The plan outlines physical improvements in the 28-block Masten Neighborhood, include upgraded streets with pedestrian-standard lighting, fixing sidewalks, installing bulb outs and street repaving. The plan outlines the establishment of a civic green in a high-vacancy block for acquisition and park conversion. A 3.5-acre block bordered by Michigan, Masten, Laurel, and Riley was suggested for consideration, where 31 of 40 parcels stood vacant in 2011. This conversion could increase adjacent property values by 20–30 percent, according to OSP. Now, in 2021, and after the pandemic, increasing quality green spaces in Area A is still a priority, given our community conversations and outreach.

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Area B contains MLK Jr. Park, a historic park with historic designation. It was once connected to the overarching Olmsted Park infrastructure through the Humboldt Parkway. Through urban renewal, this parkway was removed and turned into roadways. There are existing groups working to restore this unique historic asset, including the ROCC (Restore Our Community Coalition). The Delavan Grider neighborhood in Area B contains the Beltline Parkway, which is under exploration as a bikeable mobility pathway. An intentional strategy to connect the Northland corridor with the surrounding community can ensure existing residents reap some of the benefits of all the new development. A Greening Strategy was recommended in the 2020 plan conducted by UB Students, complete with green installations and green infrastructure (rain gardens, porous paving, stormwater planters, tree pits, etc). It was also recommended to develop the Northland Trail, between 631 Northland to the William L. Gaiter Cycle Track. Lastly, repurposing the Houdaille chimney as a centerpiece for an outside social venue was a recommendation from the student report³⁸.

Though Buffalo is known for the Olmsted Park System, the Broadway Fillmore neighborhood presents a gap in this system. There are an excessive number of city-owned vacant lots in this neighborhood as visible in the Challenges Map [Fig 6].

The Central Terminal Master Plan highlights access to open space as one of its leading action strategies. Recommendations include:

1. addressing vacancy and blight with infill development and open space expansion,
2. establishing quality and safe green spaces for youth, seniors, and everyone in between,
3. building green infrastructure with new development,
4. building green infrastructure with new development,
5. bringing native habitats and species when possible, and engaging with community gardens as a food channel for healthy food options.

From the City of Buffalo Parks Master Plan

“Parks are an essential part of community life in Buffalo. Neighborhood parks are where we spend time with friends, family, or to let the kids play. They connect people to nature, improve community health, and keep our city cooler in the summer.

Buffalo has some great parks, but they could be even better. [Trust for Public Land](#) partnered with Mayor Byron W. Brown and the City of Buffalo, and Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation to release the Buffalo Parks Master Plan, the city’s first comprehensive parks plan in 40 years. While nearly 89% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, the Master Plan highlights targeted improvements to increase equitable access, add amenities like picnic areas and walking trails, enhance park safety with better lighting, and more, all to improve the Buffalo parks we know and love.

With extensive community input and demographic data analysis, this plan can help strategically update and improve Buffalo parks to better serve all residents—giving Buffalonians more reason to celebrate their park system!”

[View the Master Plan](#) and interactive park maps, or learn more about the City of Buffalo parks system.

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

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Street amenities bring life to a space. Photo: LISC

These open space opportunities align closely with our outreach work through this process. Several concept photos are available to view on the [Central Terminal Master Plan](#) document.

The health benefits of immersing ourselves in green space is widely accepted. Grass and trees have been linked with lower risk of health conditions. Greenspace is also associated with positive mental health. Beyond the health and wellness reasons, open spaces provide a myriad of economic benefits.

Economically, enhanced curb appeal with street furnishings, trees and shade, and litter-free environments support shopper-friendly traffic. Foot traffic is vital for retailers, and without the amenities needed for walkability in a commercial space, foot traffic minimizes. When speaking with business owners on Jefferson Ave during our summer outreach, two things that consistently rose to the top were more beautified streetscaping in the business districts, and more organized vendor events for community to gather in. Universal design of streetscapes also needs to be considered to develop inclusive



The Historic Broadway Theater. Currently undergoing Renovation. Photo: Google

spaces for all people to enjoy and support the retail and service environment provided in commercial districts.

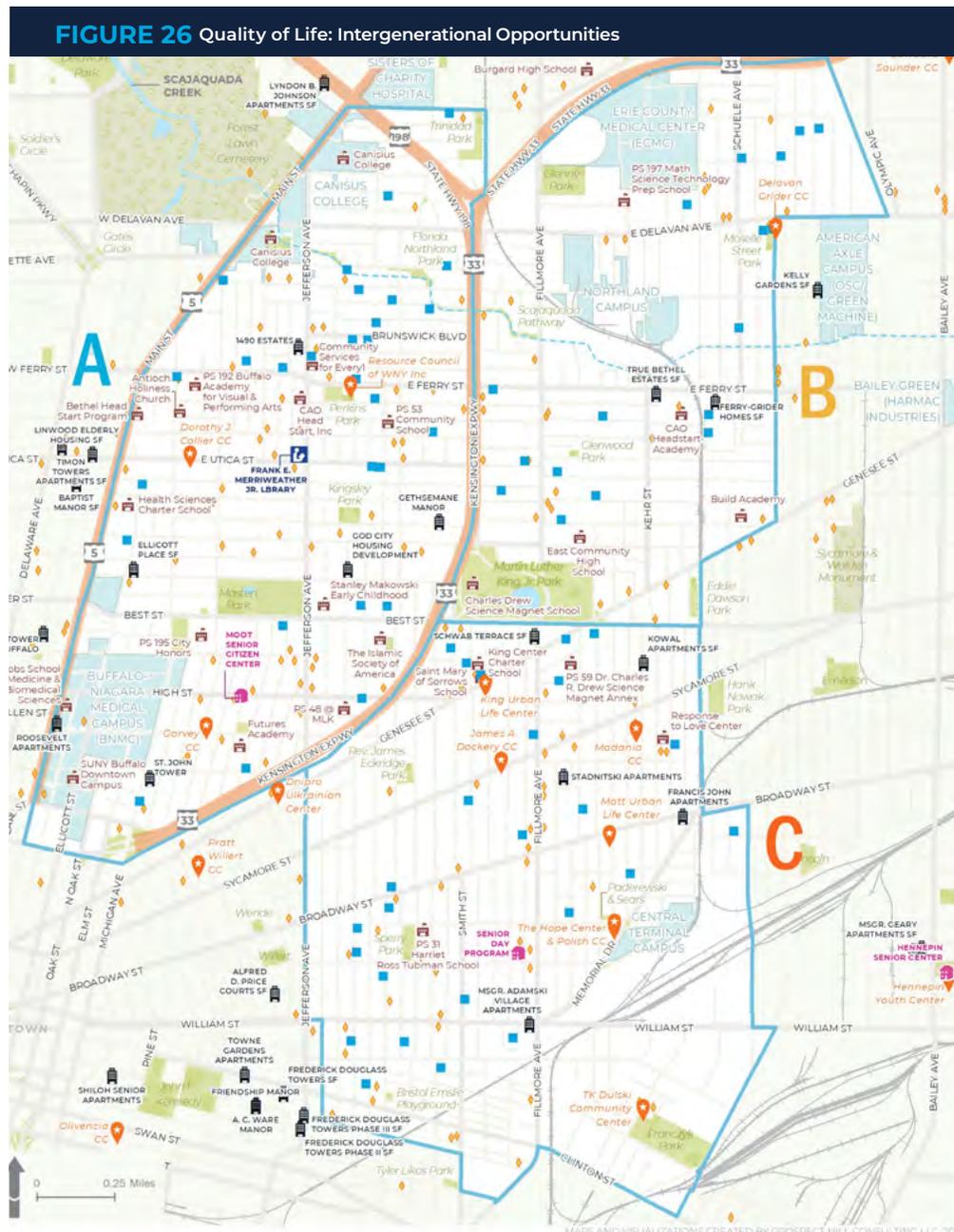
Additionally, we heard over and over again the need to preserve historic buildings in these neighborhoods. Lifting up the history of these buildings and the stories they tell helps develop a sense of place. Investing in historic buildings enhances the physical and visual assets that set a commercial district apart, resulting in more successful businesses recruitment programs, and more consumer foot traffic as a result.

“ People are starting to understand that we need to invest in entrepreneurs. We will be able to keep our young people here. We have to invest in their creativity. I think that’s going to transform Buffalo. ”

Mike Quinniey

East Side Resident & Sattler Theater Executive Director

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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
- Railroad
- 🏠 Senior Center
- 🏢 Senior Housing
- 📖 *Library
- 📍 Community Center
- 👤 Child & Youth Service
- 🎓 Educational Facility
- 🕊 Place of Worship

* 1 Library located across all planning areas

Source: ESRI 2020 and GfK MRI; City of Buffalo 2021, Open Street Map 2018; NYDOT 2013; LISC WNY 2021, GBNRTC 2020; Erie County Department of Environment and Planning 2021, University at Buffalo 2021, Buffalo Art Commission 2020; Data Axle Verified Business Data-Erie County Library 2021, Google Maps 2021; Erie County Department of Senior Services 2020; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2020.

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The map on the previous page identifies various older adult residences and services in the context of youth services and educational facilities and places of worship. Community engagement efforts throughout the planning process amplified intergenerational programming, support, and transition planning as high priorities. Community development, business support, and/or social programming efforts may use this information to guide a strategic approach for maximizing shared physical space, resources, and planning.

Intergenerational Connection.

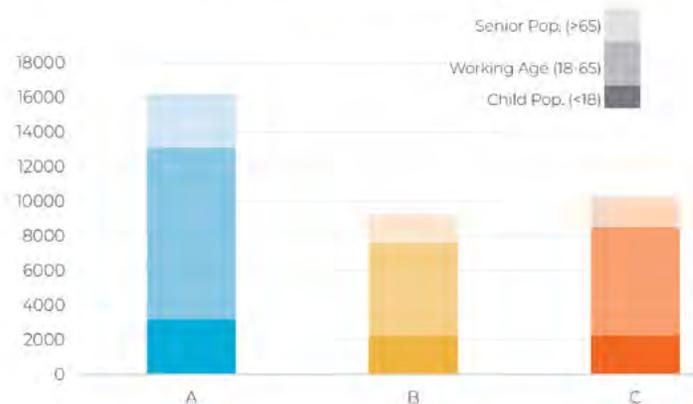
Through our listening activities and many engagements, it has become clear that youth within the East Side communities are viewed as a top strength. It has also become evident that there aren't enough safe spaces and constructive activities to assist the youth of these neighborhoods in their adolescent years. We have heard over and over again, the sentiment that "we need to invest in our young people." Finding ways to engage with talented youth is a high priority. Taking a restorative justice approach, to repair harm caused by crime, was also recommended in the youth engagement arena. Jes Breathe Block Club is starting a Youth City Spotters program, that does outreach to youth who are 'still reachable.' City Spotters function as youth park rangers and learn strategies for crime prevention. They essentially act as neighborhood ambassadors. The program is rolling out in September 2021, and may be an avenue to engage youth across the planning areas.

Across many sectors, we heard that more mixed-income housing is desired in these East Side neighborhoods. We have also heard that housing for youth who grew up in the neighborhood is tenuous. Youth can't access homes because other people are purchasing first, and finding safe housing for neighborhood youth is a high priority, particularly in the 18-24 age range. The idea that we will lose our youth to other places

was another theme arising that coincides with the housing and work opportunities available to them.

We have also heard in our listening engagements, the need to bring back the village mentality to support elders in the neighborhood. When an elderly person has housing or maintenance issues, there are not enough programs to assist them through the bureaucratic processes that currently exists in regards to home repair and maintenance. One solution that was posed by an interviewee was to build a network of

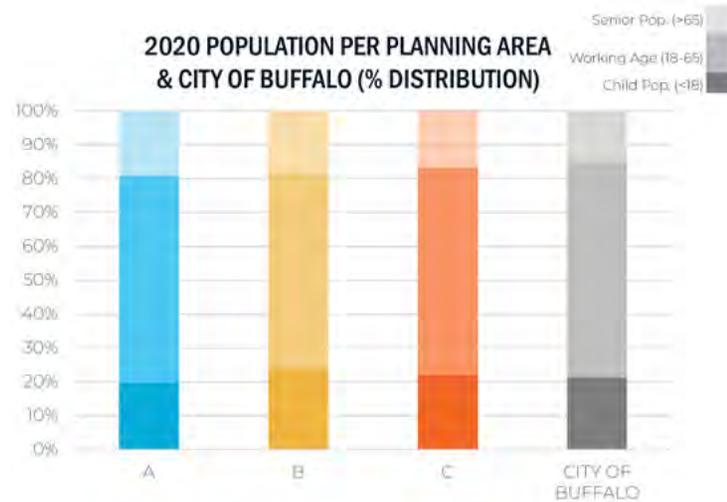
**2020 POPULATION PER PLANNING AREA
(NUMBER OF PEOPLE)**



Median Age of all people across Planning Area Census Tracts (2015-2019 ACS):

- Planning Area A 22-46
 - Planning Area B 35-43
 - Planning Area C 28-53
- Planning Area C skews slightly older than A and B.

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The graphs above show the number of people in different age groups in each planning area (left), and the percent distribution of age groups for each planning area as they compare to the City of Buffalo population (right).

people who can help elders in the neighborhood complete their paperwork and assist them with their projects.

In our discussions, we also heard that bridging the link between youth and elders is of high importance. Elders of the neighborhood hold history and untold stories. There is value placed on sharing this information between generations so history is upheld. Finding avenues to link these stories and history with the youth growing up there, along with skill sharing between older and younger generations is of strong importance in these planning areas.

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As an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, childcare has been escalated to be considered an essential workforce support and economic driver. As of 2020, the Regional Economic Development Council has adopted childcare as a new goal for the region's economic prosperity.

Efforts for childcare support began years before the pandemic began in our focus area. The Western New York Women's Foundation ('The Foundation') has been working with the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) on a comprehensive child/family developmental resource center. These conversations began back in 2015. The Foundation has been working in the crux of workforce support and childcare since 2014, as an economic mobility strategy, and has been moving this work into workforce certification programs with organizations like BCAT and Harvest House. Their role is mostly in advocacy mostly at the state level, but is now shifting to be advocates in the local and federal levels as well.

In our 2021 engagements and outreach, the Workforce Focus Group mentioned childcare as a real threat to progress in this industry. Through several factions, it has become clear that there needs to be a real focus on home-based, family providers, outside of childcare centers and facilities. In our interviews with the WNY Women's Foundation, we found that Erie County provides a childcare subsidy for parents who are in workforce training and transitioning to work. These family providers are the ones accepting the childcare subsidies, whereas the bigger centers are not. They are also the culturally appropriate choice for many, and provide fewer barriers to access. The business model of accepting subsidies and being a small, independent provider doesn't always add up. As practitioners, we need to find pathways to make this a viable option. Additionally, to participate in, and receive benefits of the subsidy program, families and provider must go through an incredible complicated, cumbersome and demoralizing process. Furthermore, the subsidy program only



Photo: LISC

gives partial funding to centers, but not nearly the cost of care. It is antiquated and not designed around today's needs.

Though this isn't the whole answer to the childcare dilemma, it is one viable pathway to increased wealth building for the childcare providers, and simultaneously address the need on the side of working parents. These centers only support a small number of placements – maybe 6–8 kids per provider, and with a handful of providers, we are only talking about a few spots in the grand scheme of need. The small providers are used to doing their own thing and are not at this time working collectively as a unit.

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There has been an overwhelming demand for their services, and the systems that exist currently do not provide meaningful support to the providers, leaving the providers traumatized and overwhelmed. They have been working hard to survive as essential services during the pandemic, but many are not trained in the art of business, though they excel in the art of being a care provider.

This recognition led to the recent project idea with the UB Social Innovation Fellows. Students won the top prize for their idea to propose a PR and marketing plan and a co-op model for small family providers to participate in. The students will work on the PR pieces, while the WNY Women's Foundation is moving forward with the co-op model. Goals of the co-op model are to reduce admin burdens, connect to the Office of Child and Family Services easier, and bundle overhead costs across providers where possible, to overall reduce overhead cost burden.

Conversations outside of providers have also been taking place in employer incentives. What would it look like for a business to invest in childcare like they do a 401k? Several entities in town, including Harmac, philanthropic groups, government, and The Foundation, have been discussing ways for these entities to collaborate to eliminate costs for a center/provider. Eliminating these costs enable childcare to actually be affordable for the masses.

High priority projects for the East Side:

1. The BNMC comprehensive child and family care resource center project, in partnership with The Foundation and LISC, is specifically targeted to families on Buffalo's East Side. This is a pilot program, which can then be replicated in other areas.
2. The family provider co-op project with providers on the East Side is also moving forward, and includes facilitated enrollment and funding.
3. Connecting major employers, workforce training and economic mobility programs with community partners like Harvest House, BCAT, Harmac, and American Axle
4. There is a desperate need for drop-in care models, where you can take your children somewhere for a temporary amount of time, as needed. Regulations allow for this model, but they currently do not exist.

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Digital access has risen to the forefront of critical needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Buffalo, there is a blatant “digital divide” that reveals significant disparity in access to broadband internet, technological devices or equipment, digital literacy, and affordability of services. Without high quality access to the internet, whole communities are at a disadvantage and are less able to obtain important information, apply for jobs or sustain work, access health services, participate in education opportunities, or participate in the digital economy.

In planning area A between 15.3%–35.4% of households do not have any kind of access to the Internet, and in planning area B and C, the numbers are 29.25%–45.53% and 16.5%–48.6% of households, respectively (ACS census tract data, 2015–2019). This is compared to between 0%–25% of households without Internet in adjacent neighborhoods west of Main Street. This is also compounded by similar disparity in access to any kind of computer in the household.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the critical importance of internet connectivity, access, and literacy with a shift to remote working and learning, telehealth, and online commerce. It exposed, from yet another angle, racial and economic disparity across Buffalo neighborhoods. Communities with higher quality infrastructure, faster connectivity, more provider options, and access to computers were well equipped to support children in digital learning programs, work-from-home, tend to their health needs, and maintain social connections. Emergency safety-net programs were required to support children and families in neighborhoods with less resources.

The Buffalo Bills partnered with the City of Buffalo to fund Internet access for Buffalo Public School students during the pandemic in 2020. Internet access and digital commerce preparedness were also major factors in the success of small

businesses being able to survive during the pandemic. Small businesses had to make sharp pivots to bring their business online, increase capacity to support that shift, and needed Internet access in order to apply for local, state, and federal relief programs.

Community-based, public Wi-Fi solutions have also been deployed in order to address the digital divide, however, the need to travel to a shared space, abide by open hours in community spaces, and the quality and speed of the access in those spaces continue to be barriers for families in east side neighborhoods. Some conversations have shifted toward implementing a municipal broadband system for the whole City, which has the potential to level the playing field, but comes with significant cost and infrastructure barriers.

Several local entities are working toward closing the digital divide. The [WNY COVID-19 Community Response Fund](#), established March 24, 2020, is a collaborative fund of over 70 local foundations and private companies, that has prioritized funding solutions for digital equity and inclusion as part of their collective agenda. They have convened over 55 local stakeholders to work on solutions to bridge the divide in both urban and rural communities.

In May of 2021, the City of Buffalo launched a City-wide Broadband Access and Adoption Survey as part of the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency’s (BURA) [STAND UP Buffalo Initiative](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of this survey are not yet published. Erie County received funding in early 2021 to establish, “Erie Net”, a 360-mile high-fiber line that will be installed throughout Erie County to increase access for communities in rural and under resourced areas. At the State level, as part of NYS 2021 Connectivity Agenda, affordable Internet services will be provided for low-income families, and the ConnectED NY Initiative will offer students in economically-disadvantaged school districts free Internet

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through June of 2022. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program that will provide subsidy for Internet access and equipment on a federal level. In addition, [Mission: Ignite](#), a local non-profit, in partnership with the University of Buffalo was [awarded \\$300,000](#) to expand Internet access in the Fruit Belt neighborhood as part of Project OVERCOME, a \$2.7 million initiative run by U.S. Ignite, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and Schmidt Futures, a charitable organization, aiming to expand high-speed internet access to under-served communities. They seek to provide Internet at no cost to 150 households.

[Greenlight Networks](#) is also prioritizing high need areas of the west and east sides of Buffalo for 2021 construction of new fiber networks. This will increase provider options, speed, and hopefully access to better Internet service for many Buffalo residents.

In order to reach more widespread digital equity, broadband and technology access must be planned for more similarly to public utilities, as they are necessary to fully participate in today's education, health, business, and social economies. Solutions need to be comprehensive, quality, affordable, and sustainable beyond temporary subsidy, service, or loan.

PHOTO: GOBIKE BUFFALO



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Appendices & Contributions

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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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- PROCESS**
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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.

**APPENDIX A
PROCESS
TIMELINE**

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C

CONTRIBUTIONS

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



**APPENDIX A
PROCESS
TIMELINE**

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CONTRIBUTIONS

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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DEFINITIONS
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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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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.