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# **GROUNDWORK BUFFALO FEASIBILITY STUDY**



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For the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

*and*

The Groundwork Buffalo Steering Committee

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# Table of Contents

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
  - 1.1 Groundwork Buffalo
  - 1.2 Outline of the Feasibility Study
- 2.0 METHODOLOGY
  - 2.1 Data Collection
  - 2.2 Engagement Process
- 3.0 COMMUNITY ASSETS AND NEEDS
  - 3.1 A City of “Good Bones”
  - 3.2 Buffalo Assets
  - 3.3 Challenges
  - 3.4 Opportunities
- 4.0 MIDCITY -- BUFFALO’S NEAR EAST SIDE AS THE FOCUS AREA
  - 4.1 Justification
  - 4.2 Assets
  - 4.3 Challenges
  - 4.4 Opportunities
- 5.0 PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS
  - 5.1 Groundwork Buffalo Goals and Vision
  - 5.2 Groundwork Buffalo Initial Project Proposal: Vacant Property and Brownfield Conversions
  - 5.3 Other Opportunities for Future Groundwork Buffalo Projects
  - 5.4 Programs
- 6.0 ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT
  - 6.1 Mission
  - 6.2 Organization Structure
  - 6.3 Board of Directors
  - 6.4 Strategies for Implementation
- 7.0 FUNDING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
  - 7.1 Five-Year Budget
  - 7.2 Projected Sources of Income
  - 7.3 Anticipated Expenses
  - 7.4 Additional Potential Funding Sources
- 8.0 LAUNCHING STRATEGIES

## WORKS CITED

April 12, 2009

## APPENDICES

- A. Groundwork Trust Case Studies
- B. Organization Inventory
- C. Selected Citywide Planning Inventory
- D. Summary of Focus Area Planning Designations
- E. List of Contacts
- F. Mapping Inventory and GIS Database
- G. Meeting Summaries

## Executive Summary

### Groundwork Buffalo

The purpose of this Feasibility Study is to determine if the City of Buffalo is the right place for a Groundwork Trust. After nearly two years since the Steering Committee initiated its proposal with Groundwork USA, the Steering Committee is **confident that Buffalo needs a Groundwork Trust, and that a Groundwork Trust can be sustained in the long run**. Furthermore, the City of Buffalo has promised to supply Groundwork Buffalo with the \$25,000 three year annual match. **The Steering Committee formally recommends establishing Groundwork Buffalo as soon as possible**. The Steering Committee will continue to devote their time and resources to ensuring its success.

### The Planning Process

The Steering Committee's decision to move forward with Groundwork Buffalo upon approval from Groundwork USA comes only after an extensive planning process. The Steering Committee, comprised of 26 individuals representing 24 community organizations in the city, hired a consultant to complete a feasibility study in 2008. This consultant, the Urban Design Project in the School of Architecture and Planning, inventoried and analyzed the city's related planning framework, surveyed community organizations, mapped physical and demographic characteristics of the city, and researched the city's assets and challenges that relate to Groundwork USA's mission. The findings of this research demonstrate that there is an immediate need for a Groundwork Trust in the city, especially in the Near East Side focus area, and there is the political, organizational, and community support to make Groundwork Buffalo successful.

### Why Buffalo?

Buffalo is a struggling post-industrial city. Although fortunate to enjoy bountiful natural resources, including the largest surface freshwater supply on Earth in the Great Lakes, Niagara Falls, and good climate for agriculture, its economy has faltered and its population is declining. In 1999, there were approximately 2,722 acres of vacant land in the City of Buffalo. In 2007, that amount reached over 3,222 acres, an increase of 500 acres and 15.5% over an eight year period. Between the years 1990 and 2000, Buffalo went from being ranked #55 with 10.2% of all housing units vacant, to being ranked #3 with 15.7%, trailing only Detroit and New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> As of 2007, Buffalo reached 21% with over 30,000 vacant housing units. It is estimated that by the end of this year, the City will own an estimated 7,000 to 8,000 properties, 60% of which are vacant lots.<sup>2</sup> Buffalo's vacant land is also contaminated because of the historic legacy of heavy industry and residue of lead paint on older homes. The City considers all land potential brownfields,

April 12, 2009

and requires the removal of the first two feet of soil on any new residential development involving city funding. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Buffalo “bears a disproportionate number of contaminated sites. . .”<sup>3</sup>

While Buffalo is home to the historic and much loved Olmsted-designed park system, parts of the city are ‘under-parked,’ meaning that Buffalo has proportionally less parkland than cities with similar population densities. Only 4.7% of Buffalo’s total land is parkland compared to a national average of 8.8%; the national average of acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in cities of similar population densities is 9.3 acres per 1,000 residents, while Buffalo offers only 4.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.<sup>4</sup> The lack of formal greenspace and toxic contamination have resulted in increased rates of health problems, including elevated asthma rates, high rates of obesity and heart disease, and the prevalence of autoimmune disease clusters.

The table below demonstrates the challenges facing the city, and how those challenges are exacerbated in the focus area.\*

#### City / Mid City Focus Area Comparison

Attributes	Buffalo	Focus Area
Total Area	26,072 acres	1,000 acres
Total Vacant Land	3,222 acres	158 acres
Percentage Vacant	12%	16%
City-owned Vacant Land	657 acres	68 acres
<i>In rem</i> Properties	4,488	334
Sites of Demolition Activity	1,536	109
Total Housing Units (2000)	145,574	7,894
Vacant Housing Units (2000)	22,854	1,615
Percentage Vacant (2000)	16%	20%
Public Green Space	1,459 acres	81 acres
Green Space Per 1000 People	5 acres	5 acres
Population (2000)	292,648	15,903
Educational Attainment (25+ years w/ HS diploma, 2000)	75%	68%
Unemployment Rate (2000)	13%	24%
Poverty Level (2000)	27%	27%
Transportation to Work – Car/Truck/Van (2000)	80%	69%

Data Source: City of Buffalo MIS and 2000 US Census <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>

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\* US Census statistics from 1990 and 2000 for the focus area include all of Census Tracts 32.01, 32.02, 33.01, 33.02, and 52.02.

April 12, 2009

The city's socioeconomic conditions are also staggering. Based on new estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, Buffalo has been ranked the second poorest city of over 250,000 people in the United States, with approximately 30% of the population living below the poverty line.<sup>5</sup> The city has very low median household incomes, just over half that of Erie County, and very high unemployment rates, nearly double those of the county. Buffalo's high school graduation rate is also extremely low, 46% in 2007, well below the state average of 68.6%.<sup>6</sup>

The Feasibility Study has identified the Near East Side of Buffalo as the most suitable location for Groundwork Buffalo to begin work. This focus area is bordered by Main Street to the west, The Scajaquada Expressway and the Kensington Expressway to the north and east, and East North Street to the south. The focus area comprises the Mid City Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area (NRSA), a program that targets the focus area for reinvestment by enabling the city more flexibility in spending Community Development Block Grants. The focus area is a microcosm of the entire city.

## **The Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

Groundwork Buffalo will serve as a **convener, organizer, project identifier and implementer** within the focus area to highlight opportunities and challenges of underutilized and contaminated land and to transform those spaces into productive lands. Groundwork Buffalo will be able to implement a variety of "greening" projects in the focus area, to include community gardens, other green infrastructure projects such as parks and green streets, and stormwater management projects including constructed wetlands and rain gardens. Program areas can include youth programming, training and business development, volunteer coordination, leadership on vacant land and brownfield reclamation, neighborhood planning, and brownfield assessment.

### **The Mission of Groundwork Buffalo**

To bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the (City of Buffalo's) physical environment by developing community-based partnerships that empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic and social well-being.

Groundwork Buffalo will launch by working on vacant property and brownfield conversions in a subsection of the focus area. Immediate action is proposed for a city-owned vacant lot (1070 Ellicott) next to the new Artspace project that could incorporate the residents of Artspace as well as other neighborhood groups. Minimum treatment will include 'clean-up and greening' but given the partners here, we anticipate that it will be more of a park-like setting with capacity for art work developed by the artists collaborative. This project, called ArtSpace Green, will include the city, local residents and neighborhood organizations, especially Artspace, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper and the Buffalo Sewer Authority.

April 12, 2009

ArtSpace Green is the first project in support of the transformation of a subarea of Mid City described in a later chapter. Within this area, Groundwork Buffalo will work to develop a comprehensive strategy for improving each city-owned vacant lot in the area (and others when possible), a plan to implement the strategy, and actual work as funding permits.

Collaboration with allied greening organizations and environmental agencies will be essential. Funds for implementation will be sought from local sources such as foundations, the Buffalo Green Fund, ReTree Buffalo, AmeriCorps, Buffalo Sewer Authority, the City of Buffalo Livable Communities, and from state agencies such as DEC Parks Grants, DOS Environmental Protection Fund, NYSOPRH, and federal US Brownfields Grants. As of December 2008, the Steering Committee for the Feasibility Study has requested an additional \$75,000 from the City of Buffalo to begin implementation in the summer of 2009.

## **From Challenges to Opportunities**

With these challenges come tremendous opportunities; with abundant vacant land comes the opportunity for new and much needed greenspaces; with contamination and brownfields come the chance to restore our fragile and globally significant environment; with poverty and economic stagnation there will be new ideas and innovations. Where there are now abandoned buildings, there is a glorious past and through their restoration a glorious future. Where there is decline, there are new generations of people ready to grow.

Groundwork Buffalo is comprised of these people. Their devotion to the city they love, the city they live in, and the city their children will one day call home can overcome the obstacles of the past. For many reasons, including the availability of abundant fresh water, the future of the City of Buffalo is bright. As one of many voices, Groundwork Buffalo can help be that guiding light that reshapes our environment, our economy, and our quality of life.



# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Groundwork Buffalo

The City of Buffalo is the right place for a Groundwork Trust. Its residents, both young and old, the economy, and the environment can greatly benefit from the coordinated action Groundwork Trust will bring. A former industrial powerhouse, Buffalo's population peaked at roughly 600,000 residents in the 1950s but today is home to an estimated 275,000 as a result of deindustrialization and out-migration to the suburbs. This decline has left much of the city blighted, contaminated, and under-used. The economy is struggling, and the public education system is failing our youth. For too many residents, there has been no 'here' in these neighborhoods, no reprieve from blight, no areas from which to rebuild, no light at the end of a long tunnel of decline. Vacant buildings become playgrounds or dens of illegal activity, and all too often the line between the two becomes blurred.

Though still coping with its post-industrial legacy, Buffalo is fortunate to have significant natural resources and an impressive cultural infrastructure, both by-products of the city's early 20<sup>th</sup> century success. Among Buffalo's many amenities are abundant fresh water, a temperate climate, an historic urban fabric, and many other quality-of-life elements that make this a desirable place to live, work, and play.



Lincoln Parkway is one of the grandest Olmsted-designed parkways in the city.

The extensive Olmsted park and parkway system anchors many neighborhoods and provides a unique asset upon which to build. But even as demolition of abandoned homes clears large amounts of land in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, parts of the city are significantly underserved by green space and recreation opportunities – to such an extreme extent that the city fails to meet New York State's minimum established standards for parkland. These underutilized lands provide Buffalo with a significant opportunity if they can be properly harnessed.

This feasibility study demonstrates several important findings:

- First, there is a need for “greening” projects to help revitalize distressed areas of the city. This includes reusing brownfields and other vacant or underutilized land, engaging youth through education and training programs, supporting green entrepreneurs, and coordinating existing organizations and initiatives. The Near East Side, the selected focus area of Groundwork Buffalo, is a perfect laboratory for such projects because it has a need for them while also presenting significant investment opportunities. Further, it is a target for city revitalization projects.
- Second, in order to combat substantial challenges Buffalo’s residents must address problems of disinvestment, decay, abandonment, and contamination not only through independent efforts and single projects, but through a coordinated and strategic process. Although there are several organizations in Buffalo that focus on community gardens, water quality, urban forestry, and parks -- among other green focus issues -- many lack the capacity to address the scope of problems throughout the city. There are geographic gaps in coverage by these organizations as well. Many organizations have demonstrated the desire to work with a Groundwork Trust by participating on the Steering Committee, while others have expressed their interest in collaborating with Groundwork Buffalo once established. These partnerships are not limited to grassroots community organizations, but also include well established institutions and local government. The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) has spearheaded this effort. The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and The John R. Oishei Foundation are represented on the Steering Committee. The City of Buffalo has committed the necessary matching funds, and a representative of the Office of Strategic Planning serves as a member of the Steering Committee.
- Third, funding is available for projects and programs in the short term and the long term, making Groundwork Buffalo sustainable. The city has identified Mid City that includes most of the Near East Side focus area as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area (NRSA) and will commit resources for its revitalization. Several local, state, and federal grant opportunities are identified in Chapter 7. The City of Buffalo and the Buffalo Sewer Authority are working to eliminate combined sewer overflows and treat storm water, and have the resources and will to use alternative strategies.

## **1.2 Outline of the Feasibility Study**

The *Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study* is comprised of eight chapters, including this introduction. The second chapter of this study, Methodology, describes the methods used to collect data for this study and the planning process. The third chapter, Citywide Assets and Needs, demonstrates that there is a need for a Groundwork Trust in the City of

Buffalo and outlines the opportunities for the trust to build on. The fourth chapter, Focus Area Assets and Needs, presents the argument for Mid City and the Near East Side of Buffalo as the best location for a Groundwork Buffalo to begin work. The fifth chapter, Projects and Programs, describes those that Groundwork Buffalo can pursue, especially those within the focus area, including potential sites, partners, and funding sources for each. The sixth chapter, Organization and Management, proposes a nonprofit organizational structure for Groundwork Buffalo. The seventh chapter covers Funding and Resource Development for Groundwork Buffalo. The concluding eighth chapter outlines launching strategies for the new trust, including project strategies for the initial years, and benchmarks for the trust to use to measure progress.

The Feasibility Study also includes a series of appendices containing background research that was used to build the study. Case studies on other Groundwork Trusts provide information regarding other trusts' projects and programs, organizational structure, funding, and launching strategies. Information was collected on other related Buffalo organizations in order to determine strengths and gaps through Web research, phone interviews, and an online survey. Recent city-wide planning initiatives were summarized and analyzed in order to understand what initiatives are high priorities, what projects will come out of them, and who is involved. The city has focused a lot of attention on revitalization in the focus area, and the focus area has several designations aimed at steering resources toward it. These designations and their implications were researched and summarized as an appendix. The appendices include a database of contacts including potential partners (individuals and organizations), funders, clients, advisors, and board members. An extensive series of maps is included to demonstrate assets and needs at the city-wide level and within the focus area. These maps and their GIS source files are included as an appendix and digital database.

April 12, 2009

## Chapter 2: Methodology

The following chapter describes the methodology used to collect data for this study, as well as the process of engaging partners, constituents, the public, and the local government.

### 2.1 Data Collection

Background research was conducted in order to determine the feasibility of a Groundwork Trust in Buffalo. This data collection helped determine gaps that a Groundwork Trust could successfully fill. These gaps were based upon the planning framework for the city, current organizational roles and geographic scopes, and the physical conditions of the city. Research was also conducted on other Groundwork Trusts and was used to model Groundwork Buffalo.

**Planning Framework:** Over 25 recent plans for the physical environment in Buffalo were analyzed. These included transportation plans, neighborhood plans, land use plans, parks and recreation plans, and environmental plans, among others. (See Appendix: Citywide Planning Inventory) These plans were summarized, and relevant recommendations and findings were used in the Feasibility Study. They were analyzed for their geographic scope, their sponsoring party, and their focus, in order to determine strengths and gaps in planning.

**Organization Research:** Research examined existing organizations that relate to Groundwork Buffalo to determine what Groundwork Buffalo's role could be, who was doing what, and who potential partners are. There were three approaches to this research. First, Web research was conducted on a list of organizations generated by the Steering Committee. Second, phone interviews and meetings were conducted with representatives of several of these organizations. Third, an online survey was conducted to learn about organization's role, their projects and programs, capacity and willingness to partner with Groundwork Buffalo, and to generate excitement about Groundwork Buffalo. Over 70 organizations were contacted, and close to 40 local organizations responded to this survey. Organization summaries and an analysis of the data collected can be found in Appendix: Organization Inventory.

**Mapping:** Several maps were created to demonstrate assets, challenges, and opportunities. These maps were created at the citywide level, and are paralleled by focus area maps. The maps include assets such as existing green infrastructure, including parks

and tree canopy coverage. They also include challenges, such as socio-economic characteristics, vacant land and brownfields, and contaminated sites. They were created using GIS computer mapping programs, and the maps and mapping data are included in Appendix: Mapping Inventory and GIS Database.

**Groundwork Case Studies:** Case study research was conducted on other Groundwork Trusts in cities similar to Buffalo. Based on Steering Committee suggestions, these trusts included Groundwork Milwaukee, Groundwork Lawrence, and Groundwork Yonkers (now Groundwork Hudson Valley). Data was collected through phone interviews with executive directors of each trust. Questions asked were related to each trust's role, projects and programs, organization structure, funding, launching strategies, and opportunities and challenges. The full report can be found in Appendix: Groundwork Trust Case Studies.

## 2.2 Engagement Process

The Feasibility Study was guided by a Steering Committee and Consultant/Study Committee along with the potential impacted communities, potential partners, and representatives of the city. This process was designed to provide Groundwork Buffalo with community support, collaboration opportunities with other organizations, and the support of the city government if the feasibility study is accepted.

**Steering Committee:** The Groundwork Buffalo Steering Committee is comprised of 28 individuals from the 24 organizations listed in the table below. These organizations include community organizations, other greening organizations, foundations, and the local government. The list of individuals can be found in Appendix: Contacts. The Steering Committee met four times as a group from May to November in 2008. Summaries of these meetings can be found in Appendix: Meeting Summaries. They were charged with guiding the Feasibility Study, and reviewed the work for the study as it was produced.

**Table 2-1: Steering Committee**

Board of Block Clubs
Buffalo Micro Parks
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
Buffalo Police Department
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation
City of Buffalo, Office of Strategic Planning
Coalition for Economic Justice
Community Action Organization
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
Daemen College - Center for Sustainable Communities and Civic Engagement
Erie County Industrial Development Agency
Fix Buffalo

Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo
Green Options Buffalo
Group Ministries
Keep WNY Beautiful
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Massachusetts Avenue Project
National Parks Service
Queen City Farm
The John R. Oishei Foundation
VOICE Buffalo
Wellness Institute

**Consultant/Study Committee:** The Consultant/Study Committee was comprised of a small group of committed individuals who initiated the Feasibility Study, prepared the RFP and selected the Urban Design Project as the consultants. The Consultant/Study Committee included representatives from Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning, Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and the Massachusetts Avenue Project. The list of individuals on this committee can be found in Appendix: Contacts. The Consultant/Study Committee met five times as a group from May to November in 2008. Summaries of these meetings can be found in Appendix: Meeting Summaries. The Consultant/Study Committee helped establish the Steering Committee, and helped organize Steering Committee meetings.

**Meeting with City Representatives:** On September 10, 2008, and again on October 24, 2008, Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study consultants and members of the Consultant/Study Committee met with city officials to discuss the proposed Groundwork Trust. The city officials represented the Office of Strategic Planning and the Mayor's Office. An overview of Groundwork Buffalo's role was described in relation to the selected focus area, and the city officials expressed interest in supporting Groundwork Buffalo.

**New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets:** On October 2, 2008, representatives from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets met with representatives from local organizations related to urban agriculture. The representatives hope to generate support for food and urban agriculture projects in Buffalo. There is strong interest at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the Department of State, and potentially others in an interagency collaboration to support a pilot project in Buffalo. The potential for a pilot project in the Groundwork focus area generated a lot of support from other organizations at the meeting. A list of attendees and summary of the meeting can be found in Appendix: Meeting Summary.

**“Open Space Technology” – City-Sponsored Community Forum:** On October 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Groundwork Buffalo co-sponsored a city-held community meeting in

the focus area. This was an Open Space Technology meeting, as the agenda was determined by the individuals in attendance. The meeting was titled “How Can We Maximize the Local Economic and Social Capital Impacts of Buffalo’s Vacant and Abandoned Residential Properties?” Over 50 people from local organizations and the community attended the meeting. Overall, there is strong support for greening projects that involve youth and promote employment on underutilized and vacant land in the focus area. A full list of attendees can be found in Appendix: Meeting Summaries.

**Wiki Site:** An online wiki site was used for communication purposes throughout the planning process. The wiki site ([www.Groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com](http://www.Groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com)) included resources for users such as relevant plans and contact information, materials for meetings and summaries of those meetings, and Feasibility Study report materials for review. The site was open to the Steering Committee and Consultant/Study Committee members.

**Parallel Projects – Western New York Environmental Alliance:** The Urban Design Project, the consultant for this Feasibility Study, and members of the Steering Committee have been engaged in a parallel environmental planning process during the Feasibility Study. The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo (CFGB) has established a new initiative – enhancing and leveraging significant natural resources – as a priority focus area for funding. To more effectively identify, leverage and distribute resources, the CFGB seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region’s environmental community, to establish a shared agenda, and to identify priorities for funding. This process includes regular meetings with a regional environmental steering committee, known as the Western New York Environmental Alliance, and three large public Congresses, the first already held in October 2008. The Urban Design Project is the lead consultant on this process. This parallel process has informed the Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study, especially regarding the work of existing organizations and their need for collaboration to increase capacity to achieve their missions.



Over 100 people from Western New York attended the first Congress of the Western New York Environmental Alliance.



April 12, 2009

## **Chapter 3: Community Assets and Needs**

### **3.1 A City of “Good Bones”**

The City of Buffalo, NY is located in Erie County on the eastern shores of Lake Erie and the Niagara River, opposite Fort Erie, Ontario. Commonly referred to as The Queen City of the Lakes, Buffalo is the second largest city in New York State. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of the City of Buffalo is 292,648, while the greater Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is home to over 1 million people. Looking at major population trends between the years 1950 and 2000, we can see that while the City of Buffalo population decreased by nearly 50%, the Buffalo-Niagara MSA has actually increased by approximately 7%, showing an obvious trend of outmigration from city to suburbs over time. However, even the MSA has begun to lose population. From 1990-2000, the MSA lost 19,177 people, or 1.6%, suggesting that there is outmigration to other regions as well.

Despite its long-term population loss and economic decline, the City of Buffalo still has many “good bones” or, in other words, basic elements and intrinsic resources that can be built upon through strategic investment. As we will see below, these distinct characteristics – such as the city’s location on the Great Lakes and an international border, unique street pattern, historic parks and parkways, and industrial past with a highly skilled workforce – provide the foundation for a potentially well-structured and sustainable built environment.

### **3.2 Buffalo Assets**

#### **3.2.1 Community Assets**

There are vast opportunities for the establishment of a Groundwork Trust in the City of Buffalo. These opportunities are based mainly upon a natural correlation between the city’s assets and needs. For almost every one of the city’s assets, a parallel need exists; and with every need comes an opportunity. For example, the loss of population, jobs and industry in Buffalo has left behind huge amounts of vacant land and abandoned buildings across the city. Yet, the potential for sustainable reuse is now enormous, giving Buffalo essentially a blank slate for revitalizing our infrastructure and making communities greener and more sustainable.

**An International Border City:** One of Buffalo's greatest assets is its strategic location at the confluence of Lake Erie and the Niagara River, which serves as an international border and a shared crossing with our Canadian neighbors. The Peace Bridge, built in 1927, spans the river between Buffalo and Fort Erie, and accommodates about 25,000 cars, 5,000 trucks, and \$87 million in trade per day.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Buffalo-Niagara region is the route of choice for nearly 30% of overall Canada-U.S. merchandise trade.<sup>8</sup>

The open border between the U.S. and Canada is also a symbol the 200 years of peace and collaboration that have existed between our two great nations since the end of the War of 1812. Beginning in 1909 with the signing of the Boundary Waters Treaty, the International Joint Commission was established in order to manage lake and river systems along the border wisely and fairly and "to protect them for the benefit of today's citizens and future generations."<sup>9</sup> The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the treaty will be celebrated in the cross border Niagara Region in 2009. In addition, since 2001, binational regional partners have been advancing the concept of the Niagara International Peace Park, a designation by the IUCN which requires a binational region to develop a sustainable approach to economic and community development, and natural and cultural resource management.



Buffalo is located at the eastern edge of Lake Erie and the mouth of the Niagara River. Niagara Falls and Toronto are all less than a two hour drive away.

**A Grand History:** The Niagara Region was originally a part of the Holland Land Purchase, with the City of Buffalo laid out by surveyor Joseph Ellicott in his 1804 plan for “New Amsterdam.” The most distinct feature of the plan was Ellicott’s use of a radial street pattern, a system of long arterials and infill grids that emanate from a centralized location on the waterfront and extend throughout the rest of the city. This unique characteristic of downtown Buffalo is still seen in and around Niagara Square, yet parts of Ellicott’s historic street pattern have been obscured by incongruent forms of development and improperly placed highway networks.

Adding further to Buffalo’s “good bones” was Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., founder of landscape architecture in America and co-designer of Central Park in New York City. In the 46-year period between 1869 and 1915, Olmsted and his sons, the Olmsted Brothers, designed and created the Buffalo Olmsted Parks and Parkways System, a series of six major parks and grand connecting parkways extending throughout the City of Buffalo. It was the first of its kind in America and is still considered one of the most outstanding park and parkway systems in the world. In 1982, it was named a historic designed cultural landscape by the National Park Service and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. In January 2008, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy completed a restoration and management plan, named *The Olmsted City*, in order to restore the system’s extraordinary assets and to plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Buffalo’s greatest resource has always been its water. As a growing port city throughout the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Buffalo was a strategic gateway for the transshipment industry, connecting the Midwest grain producers with the East Coast cities by way of the Erie Canal. It was at this time that the population of the city grew to its greatest extent and much of Buffalo’s historic infrastructure, such as parks, housing and the grain elevators, were developed. Today, though altered from years of industrial activity followed by a general disinvestment in the area, Buffalo’s waterfront still provides vast opportunities for reuse, such as cultural and heritage tourism, ecological regeneration, sustainable energy, and economic development.



Buffalo was once a vibrant port city at the terminus of the Erie Canal.

Harnessing the turbulent waters of the Niagara River at the falls has also contributed to the city's grand history, making Buffalo the first American city to have widespread electricity. It was at the turn of the century when Buffalo, an emerging wealthy and modern city, would showcase the new invention of hydroelectricity by hosting the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in and around Olmsted's Delaware Park. One of the exposition's main attractions was a 250 ft. tall glass and steel supported structure that illuminated the sky with thousands of light bulbs, known as the Tower of Light. Today, the Niagara Power Project provides electricity for millions of households throughout the Northeast U.S. and Canada. In addition, Niagara Falls is considered one of earth's natural wonders and a world-class tourist destination.



The Richardson building complex and the Olmsted designed grounds are undergoing rehabilitation.

Buffalo's grand history includes the work of some famous architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright with his prairie-style Darwin Martin House. Buffalo also boasts one of Louis Sullivan's ("Father of the skyscraper") most famous structures, the 13 story Guaranty Building constructed in 1895 with a wooden frame and clad in terra cotta.<sup>10</sup> In 1870, architect H.H. Richardson

designed an enormous complex near Delaware Park known then as the Buffalo Insane Asylum. Today, though long abandoned and in strong need of repair, the Richardson Complex is on the National Register of Historic Places and in the early stages of being rehabilitated.

Due to Buffalo's long and industrial history, a number of distinct historic neighborhoods have evolved throughout the city. In the earliest stages of Buffalo's history emerged the Cobblestone District, where the original cobblestone streets still lay exposed along the inner canal. In the Old First Ward in South Buffalo, Irish immigrants established a strong community while working the grain elevators. The Michigan Street Historic Corridor on Buffalo's East Side is not only home to the Michigan St. Baptist Church, a final stop on the Underground Railroad's path to freedom, but a vibrant African American community with many artists and performers, such as at the Colored Musicians Club. The Broadway-Fillmore District was originally a German and Polish working-class community known as the "Polish Colony," containing Broadway Market (1889) and the Buffalo Central Terminal (1929) as well as many examples of Craftsman Bungalow residential architecture.

Most recently, the historic Elmwood Village has emerged as a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use neighborhood surrounding Elmwood Avenue on Buffalo's West Side. It was recently described by the American Planning Association as "able to support the needs of today's local businesses and residents without losing sight of its historic past."<sup>11</sup> Other historic neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo include Allentown, Hamlin Park, the Theater District and the West Village.

**A Good Infrastructure:** As explained earlier, the "bones" of the city are still intact and provide the potential for a highly functional and sustainable built environment. In terms of transportation, both old and new elements contribute to the viability of Buffalo's resurgence as a modern and forward-thinking city. As the world continues exploring alternative methods and modes of transportation in urban areas, such as bicycle use, greenways, light-rails and transit oriented development, the potential for Buffalo as a hub of new and creative transportation initiatives is immense. Buffalo's early stages of development brought Joseph Ellicott's radial street pattern, and Olmsted's parks and parkways system provided residents with equal access to common resources, such as the water, parks and greenspace, business districts and major landmarks.

The City of Buffalo has also long addressed the need for an efficient public transportation system. Beginning in 1832, Buffalo's street railway began operations with horse car routes on Pearl Street, and trolley service continued throughout the city up until 1950.<sup>12</sup> In 1984, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority completed the construction of the NFTA Metro Rail that replaced car use on the downtown portion of Main Street and extended below-grade subway on a single line from the downtown area to the University at Buffalo South Campus. Today, it carries approximately 23,000 riders a day. While the NFTA metro-rail has not been further developed since its inception, plans for its extension northward are being seriously considered.

The Great Lakes have been the basis for Buffalo's past growth and for its future prosperity. Where once factories and industry, using water for transport and production, were the primary basis of the economy, now that same water is the center of new development, restoration, and a recreational industry related to 'quality of life' issues. Hydroelectric power generation on the Niagara River has long created a sustainable source of energy for much of the northeast, even before the smart concepts of a sustainable community were acknowledged. More recently, wind turbines have been built on an abandoned steel mill site just south of Buffalo in the City of Lackawanna, taking advantage of the strong westerly winds upon the Lake Erie shoreline. These types of sustainable power sources can be used to develop an emerging green economy in Buffalo.

**A Strong Planning Framework:** There is no lack of good planning in the Buffalo-Niagara region. In fact, the City of Buffalo is involved in many different types of planning initiatives on the regional, county, city-wide and neighborhood levels. In 2006, *The Queen City in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan* was completed with the involvement of city residents, businesses and political leaders. The plan's

recommendations were designed to serve as “tools to revitalize the city and stabilize the region... by building on our cultural assets, increasing the economic base through strategic investments in infrastructure and business development, and enhancing the green environment.” In 2007, Buffalo developed the Waterfront Corridor Initiative that included the LWRP (Local Waterfront Revitalization Program), an extension of the New York State Coastal Management Program, “aimed at restoring and revitalizing the deteriorated and underutilized areas of the waterfront.”<sup>13</sup> In 2001, the Good Neighbor Planning Alliance (GNPA) initiative was established as part of the city’s comprehensive planning process, which has actively involved citizens in the creation of action plans for their communities.<sup>14</sup> There are also many other planning initiatives occurring in and around the city which will be explored in depth later in the plans analysis portion of the study.

**A Growing Reinvestment in Downtown:** Downtown Buffalo has also seen a recent resurgence in development guided by recommendations made in *The Queen City Hub Plan* (2003), a key component of *The Queen City in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Until the late 1990s, downtown had for decades seen a steady loss of residents as well as occupants of commercial and office space. The growth of new residential units, including loft conversions and condominiums, has been coupled with new government buildings, new offices, and new retail and entertainment space. In 2003, there were 3,210 residents living downtown in only 1,207 units, just 1.1% of the city’s total population. Since that time, a thousand new units of housing have been created downtown accounting for over \$90 million in new investment. A proposed new BassPro flagship store, a new yet controversial casino, a new downtown campus for the University at Buffalo, and Erie Canal Harbor development projects, are just a few examples of recent and ongoing investment in downtown.

**A Low Cost of Living:** Compared to the cost of living in other cities with comparable resources, Buffalo’s historic neighborhoods, such as the Elmwood Village and Allentown, are some of the most affordable in the country. A recent study performed by the American Chamber of Commerce Research Association found that “Buffalo housing costs are 15% lower than the U.S. average, making Buffalo living as affordable as it is appealing.”<sup>15</sup> According to the 2000 US Census, the median monthly rent in the City of Buffalo was just \$357, which is nearly 25% lower than the national average for the same year. However, higher property taxes in some areas of the region and home heating costs negate some of the savings from low housing costs.

**Access to Quality Food:** City residents have access to fresh and affordable food at various locations such as the Lexington Coop on Elmwood Avenue on the West Side. On the East Side, the Broadway Market and the Clinton-Bailey Farmers Market in the southeast part of the city have long provided fresh food to residents. New farmers markets have been established recently, including one on Bidwell Parkway on the West Side, a downtown farmers market, and a market on the University at Buffalo’s South Campus in North Buffalo. There are also community supported agriculture programs that

have distribution locations within the city. In the last decade, a few large grocery stores have been built or improved, including a Wegman's in Black Rock, a Tops in the Lower West Side, and a Tops on the East Side. The Massachusetts Avenue Project is a West Side organization that works on food security issues. It runs a community kitchen microenterprise development program, an organic agriculture youth training program, and mobile food market. Urban agriculture is gaining momentum in many organizations and locations throughout the city.

### **3.2.2 Natural Assets**

The City of Buffalo sits upon the predominately flat land of the Erie-Ontario Basin and along the eastern shores of Lake Erie and the Niagara River, created between 15,000 and 12,000 years ago when the Wisconsin ice sheets formed the Great Lakes region. While this area was once a vast wilderness full of pristine waterways, the industrialization of Buffalo has scarred a great deal of its natural resources. Yet, in recent years, we have begun seeing a regeneration of the city's blue and green infrastructure as well as a growing acknowledgement of the critical importance of a healthy urban ecosystem. Of the eight new waterfront parks, five of them are conservation areas. For example, Times Beach, a new wetland nature preserve and bird sanctuary located downtown on a former U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contained disposal facility, is one of just a handful of nature preserves in the United States located within such a highly urbanized area. Other similar examples of projects prompting this ecological turnaround in the City of Buffalo are the Tifft Farms Nature Preserve and Seneca Bluffs Habitat Restoration Project.

**The Water:** The Great Lakes compose the single largest network of freshwater resources in the world, making water Buffalo's greatest natural asset. While Lake Erie and the Niagara River are the most prominent water resources, the city also contains three important interior waterways – the Buffalo River, Cazenovia Creek, and Scajaquada Creek. Each has been altered in different ways since European settlement began in the early 1800s. As seen in maps of local historic waterways, prior to the city's industrial development, a much larger network of creeks and streams once flowed westward through the city and into the lake and river. Today most of the hydrologic system has either been filled or made part of the local sewer system.

The inherent characteristic of Buffalo as a water-city requires Buffalonians to perform an important role: to be stewards of the freshwater commons and protectors of the critical fish and wildlife habitat which it provides. Since 1989, the area has had a watershed group, the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper that has worked with agencies and municipalities on the restoration of the waters and the cleanup of years of contamination. In 1996, the Niagara River corridor was the first dedicated Globally Significant International Bird Area to be jointly identified by cooperating organizations in Canada and the United States. The most abundant birds in the corridor are gulls, as well as concentrations of



other waterfowl species. A total of 19 gull species have been recorded (60% of all New World gull species), with up to 14 species being recorded on a single day. During the winter migration, the Niagara River hosts up to 20% of the world's population of Bonaparte's Gulls.<sup>16</sup>



Buffalo is the neighbor to one of the Earth's natural wonders, Niagara Falls.

There are also countless recreational and tourism development opportunities that come with being a city on the water. For example, there are a number of marinas along both the Lake Erie and Niagara River shorelines, such as the NFTA Small Boat Harbor (outer harbor) and the Erie Basin Marina (inner harbor) which provide both public boat launches and private slips. The Buffalo River is a designated "Urban Canoe Trail" with an interpretation guide for both natural and historic resources. The same river, lined with towering grain elevators, has both structured and self-guided tours. The Buffalo Harbor Cruises have been giving guided tours of city's historic waterfront on the famed *Miss Buffalo* passenger and party vessel since 1971. The Erie County Naval and Military Park (inner harbor) is home to several historic and large naval war vessels, such as the USS Little Rock and USS The Sullivans, named in honor of the five brothers who gave their lives in the battle of Battle of Guadalcanal. Another great attraction on Buffalo's waterfront is the fishing, as anglers can be seen on a daily basis lining the water's edge in areas such as LaSalle Park and Squaw Island and can even be seen at the Small Boat Harbor during the deep winter.

The City of Buffalo is also taking bigger steps in terms of enhancing the environmental quality of the waterfront and improving its accessibility. Eight new parks and public access points have been added along the city's waterways in the last ten years and extensions to the shoreline bike trail will eventually connect the southern to the northern portions of the city's waterfront. In support of these types of



Tiff Farm Nature Preserve is located just outside downtown Buffalo. It was reclaimed from industrial shipping canals and is now a thriving wetland ecosystem.

initiatives, a recent settlement made as a result of the relicensing of the Niagara Power Project hydroelectric plant by the New York State Power Authority, provides municipalities (including Buffalo) adjacent to the Niagara River and agencies responsible for oversight \$9 million annually for the next 50 years to support greenway projects. The legislation created the conditions for the development of the 2007 *Niagara River Greenway Plan*.<sup>17</sup> Projects outlined include initiatives such as habitat restorations, parks, recreation projects and ecotourism development along the waterfront.

**Green Areas:** Buffalo has an extensive and growing parks and recreation system. In total, there are approximately 1,459 acres of parkland in the city, over 800 acres of which is part of the historic Buffalo Olmsted Parks and Parkways System. Yet, looking beyond designated parks and public green spaces, much of the city is actually engulfed within a complex urban ecosystem. For example, the city's many street trees are a vital and valuable part of Buffalo's green infrastructure. Trees clean the air we breathe and the water we drink. One study showed that each year, Buffalo's trees remove 335,000 pounds of pollutants from the city's air, a service valued at approximately \$826,000. Buffalo trees store 1,042 tons of carbon annually and 133,878 tons of carbon over their lifetime, reducing the amount of greenhouse gasses contributing to global warming.

Trees also provide the City of Buffalo approximately \$34.3 million annually in avoided stormwater services by absorbing rain water, rather than letting it drain into sewer systems.<sup>18</sup> Buffalo's trees are also a huge asset to keeping our water and aquatic habitats free of pollutants when growing within the city's many riparian zones, such as throughout the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek corridors as seen at Seneca Bluffs.

Yet, the benefits of Buffalo's green infrastructure also go beyond providing habitat for wildlife and recreation for residents, as well as improving the quality of the environment. For example, healthy parks increase property values and can be used as tools for tourism, economic and community development. Parks and other forms of green infrastructure provide for a cleaner environment and greater opportunities for outdoor activities and they improve the health of Buffalo's citizens which, subsequently, saves them and the government money on medical care costs.

### 3.2.3 Cultural Amenities

**The Arts:** Throughout the City of Buffalo's long and historic past, a large number of well-established arts and cultural institutions have emerged. The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy was founded 1862 and is the governing body of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, a world class art museum designed by the great Buffalo architect Edward B. Green and located on the edge of Delaware Park's Hoyt Lake. Kleinhans Music Hall is located in Olmsted's Symphony Circle and is considered an acoustical marvel to all musicians who have been privileged enough to perform there, such as members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra who call this grand concert hall home. Shea's Performing Arts Theater is in the heart of Buffalo's Theater District and regularly houses Broadway plays as well as other national and international acts. The Allentown Historic District, described by the Allentown Association as "simultaneously high society and bohemian," hosts the annual Allentown Arts Festival (now in its 51<sup>st</sup> year) which attracts thousands from across the region each June.<sup>19</sup>

**Education:** Buffalo has long taken pride in a strong educational system, although it has had its share of underperforming urban schools. The Buffalo Public School system boasts one of the highest performing high schools in New York State: City Honors. In order to support the continuation of this trend, Mayor Byron Brown is working alongside elected community leaders on a ten-year, \$1 billion Joint Schools Construction Project for infrastructure improvement to educational facilities in the Buffalo Public School District.

Buffalo is also a hub of higher education institutions and research activities in the Northeast. There are numerous colleges and universities both within and outside the city boundaries, including the University at Buffalo (SUNY), Buffalo State College (SUNY), Canisius College, D'Youville College, Medaille, and Erie Community College (SUNY). The University at Buffalo, the largest of Buffalo's institutions of higher education, is currently planning an expansion of more than 10,000 students, 1,000 faculty, and 2,500 staff by 2030, with an expected economic impact of more than \$2 billion.

The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) sits on 120 acres in downtown Buffalo. It was established in 2001 with support from the City of Buffalo, the County of Erie, the Allentown neighborhood and the Fruit Belt neighborhood.<sup>20</sup> BNMC, home to the region's

top clinical, research, and medical education institutions, is dedicated to vitalizing communities and improving the local economy.

### 3.3 Challenges

After having examined Buffalo's various assets in the previous sections, the following will address the corresponding needs, as well as their degree of severity and sense of urgency. Although Buffalo has enviable assets and amenities, its needs are just as numerous, far reaching, and undeniable. Growing amounts of vacant land, contamination issues, and poverty are just a few of the most significant needs facing the city. Immediately, we will see that certain areas of the city are extremely overburdened with these unmet needs that have already degraded both the community's quality of life and the "bones" of the urban infrastructure. As we will see later in the study, examining these challenges alongside community assets will allow us to identify areas of the city with great opportunities for infill development, green infrastructure enhancements, new land use policies and strategies, engaging community leaders and utilizing available sources of project funding.

**A Vacated City:** The deindustrialization and disinvestment in historic infrastructure and accompanying outmigration occurring in the city over the last half century has resulted in acres of vacant land. Just passing through many areas of the city, one can easily observe a tremendous number of undeveloped vacant parcels as well as abandoned and dilapidated buildings that pose safety and security threats to surrounding communities, and cost the city an overwhelming amount in taxpayer dollars. In fact,



Buffalo has large tracts of abandoned land and buildings, including this historic grain elevator on the Buffalo River.

according to the Office of the Mayor, "each abandoned house costs the city an average of \$20,060 over five years in lost taxes, debris removal, inspections and policing."<sup>21</sup> It was also reported by the Buffalo Fire Department that 41% of all fires in 2007, and more than 90% of all arson cases, involved abandoned buildings.

<sup>22</sup>

The amount of vacant land in Buffalo is likely to grow as abandoned housing units and other buildings fall to fire and demolition and are quickly converted to empty lots. In 1999, there were approximately 2,722 acres of vacant land in the City of Buffalo. In 2008, that amount reached over 3,222 acres, an increase of 500 acres and 15.5% over a nine year period.<sup>23</sup> In a national survey of vacant property in U.S. cities with a population of at least 250,000 people, each was ranked according to their percentage of vacant property. Between the years 1990 and 2000, Buffalo went from being ranked #55 with 10.2% of all housing units vacant, to being ranked #3 with 15.7%, trailing only Detroit and New Orleans.<sup>24</sup> As of 2007, Buffalo reached 21% with over 30,000 vacant housing units.<sup>25</sup>

The United States Postal Service can also help to determine the amount of vacancy in a city by tracking the addresses where mail is no longer deliverable. From 2006 to 2007 alone, United States Postal Service data reveals a decrease in active addresses of over 10% in some census tracts and a citywide decline of about 1.4%. Undeliverable rates in some neighborhoods are as high as 40%, and that does not account for the structures already demolished. After accounting for demolition activity, there were 1,162 more undeliverable addresses in the first quarter of 2007 than the same time in 2006.<sup>26</sup> These trends are continuing. In 2007, 18,411 addresses in the city were undeliverable. As of June 30, 2008, there were 19,691 undeliverable addresses in Buffalo, 14.3% of all addresses, up from 2007 totals.<sup>27</sup>

In August 2007, Mayor Byron Brown announced his highly ambitious “5 in 5” demolition plan, which calls for the demolition 5,000 vacant structures in five years.<sup>28</sup> In January 2008, the City of Buffalo was awarded a \$5.7 million state grant to demolish approximately 400 abandoned and vacant houses on the city's East Side.<sup>29</sup> With continued support such as this, the city is right “on track to tear down its first 1,000 homes this year.”<sup>30</sup> Yet, some members of the Buffalo Common Council have recently expressed their fears that the Mayor’s plan “places too much focus on demolitions, and not enough on rehabilitation” and that the voices of community leaders in these targeted areas are not being heard. According to committee Chairman Michael J. LoCurto of the Delaware District, “It is important for the nonprofit community, civic leaders and citizens to be part of this decision-making process”.<sup>31</sup> In response to this sentiment, in 2008 Mayor Brown announced plans to rehabilitated 500 vacant housing units over the next five years.<sup>32</sup>

It is estimated that by the end of this year, the city will own an estimated 7,000 to 8,000 properties, 60% of which are vacant lots.<sup>33</sup> While the maintenance of these vacant lots remains the city’s responsibility, the financial resources for dealing with this overwhelming problem are highly limited. In the meantime the real and perceived crime associated with vacant lots continues to drive people away from these areas, and furthers the ongoing trend of disinvestment in certain Buffalo neighborhoods.

**Incongruent and Inappropriate Land Uses:** As described earlier, Buffalo was designed and laid out by Joseph Ellicott to take advantage of the city's greatest natural resource: the water. Yet, the evidence of Ellicott's ingenious design in the City of Buffalo quickly became obscured by a number of incongruent developments, such as rapid industrial development along the waterfront. Before the 1800s, the eastern shoreline of Lake Erie where Buffalo now sits was the location of the largest cattail marsh on the Great Lakes, but now only small remnants of it exist in places like Tifft Farms Nature Preserve on the Outer Harbor. Wetlands like these helped to clean freshwater from pollutants, and provide habitat for breeding fish, birds, and other wildlife. The loss of these marshes, as well as over-fishing and invasive species, is what ultimately contributed to the decline of the Lake Erie commercial fishery.

While the industrial facilities which filled Buffalo's waterfront in the 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries may have once provided jobs for many of the city's residents, what remains today are brownfields and abandoned buildings. This feature has brought about real and perceived contamination concerns to anyone considering redeveloping these properties (as examined below), and also continues to threaten water quality and significantly limits public accessibility to much of the waterfront.

The most obvious form of inappropriate development is the transportation infrastructure, specifically the postwar highway systems which removed large swaths of flourishing urban land, degraded and isolated the waterfront, and divided once strong and united neighborhoods. When the New York State Thruway (I-190) was built directly along the east bank of the Niagara River in the bed of the former Erie Canal, it removed nearly all public access to the water. Similarly, Route NYS 5 and the Skyway Bridge have severed the Downtown and South Buffalo residents from the natural, recreational and cultural amenities of both the inner and outer harbors.

**A Neglected Parks System:** Poorly placed transportation infrastructure has also had devastating effects on the quality of Buffalo's parks system, as seen in the construction of the Kensington and the Scajaquada Expressways in 1964. While the Scajaquada Expressway cut directly through the heart of Olmsted's Delaware Park and Forest Lawn Cemetery, the Kensington Expressway completely destroyed the once grand promenade of Olmsted's Humboldt Parkway, removing hundreds of stately trees and carving a deep and dividing trench through Buffalo's East Side community. While the Olmsted parks were originally meant to be connected by a series of grand parkways, the loss of the 200 ft. wide Humboldt Parkway into a four-lane expressway disconnected Delaware Park from Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. In addition, Riverside Park on the northwest corner of the city was never connected to the other Olmsted parks as originally designed. In the same fashion, the southern Olmsted parks, South and Cazenovia Parks, were never connected to the northern Olmsted parks leaving the park system is highly disconnected.

Though Buffalo may be home to a historic and much loved park system, parts of the city are also severely 'under-parked' meaning that Buffalo has proportionally less parkland



than cities with similar population densities. Only 4.7% of Buffalo's total land is parkland compared to a national average of 8.8%; the national average of acres of parkland in cities of similar population densities is 9.3 acres per 1,000 residents, while Buffalo offers only 4.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.<sup>34</sup> There are only a few major parks on Buffalo's East Side and these are also isolated and disconnected from one another. Buffalo's park system has deteriorated over the last half century from a lack of proper maintenance and investment. The City of Buffalo spends only \$2 annually per resident on its parks, although with county and Olmsted support, the figure is closer to \$9 per resident. However, this must be compared with the average city expenditure of \$91 per resident on operating costs and capital improvements.<sup>35</sup>



The Olmsted designed Humboldt Parkway was demolished and replaced with an expressway.  
Image Source: The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

**A Legacy of Contamination:** Contamination from previous uses on currently vacant lots is also a serious concern. This includes contamination caused by decades of nearby industrial activity, household uses of lead paint and asbestos, and the many household and automotive chemicals for which these lots and structures become dumping grounds. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Buffalo “bears a disproportionate number of contaminated sites—more than 60 in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) and more than 20 on the New York State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites” and has “countless other properties” of concern.<sup>36</sup>

The Buffalo River and the Niagara River have both been declared Areas of Concern (AOC) by the International Joint Commission (IJC). AOCs are defined by the U.S.-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (Annex 2 of the 1987 Protocol) as "geographic areas that fail to meet the general or specific objectives of the agreement where such failure has caused or is likely to cause impairment of beneficial use of the area's ability to support aquatic life." Essentially, the rivers and surrounding sediments are severely degraded due to point source and non-point source pollution. Buffalo's industrial past has had negative impacts on the quality of its water resources and this is only beginning to be addressed through new regulatory structures such as stormwater requirements and through remediation of contaminated sediments.

Much of Scajaquada Creek and numerous other creeks and streams have been buried and incorporated into the city's sewer system, which, as a combined sewer system, is subject to overflows thereby contributing to Buffalo's water quality issues. The creek is also contaminated with Type C botulism, which is fatal to birds and other wildlife. When blockages occur in the bypass tunnels, in areas such as Forest Lawn Cemetery, these high concentrations of botulism and sewage build up in the water, causing high waterfowl mortality rates in the Scajaquada Creek corridor. In addition, runoff from the surrounding urban and industrial land uses has resulted in very high concentrations of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) as well as elevated levels of fertilizers and salts.

**Public Health Concerns:** Today, the long history of environmental contamination and air and water pollution has contributed to exceedingly poor health conditions in Buffalo. In fact, there are several types of cancers plaguing the area with rates higher than state and national averages including lung and breast cancer. In addition asthma rates are higher than state and national averages, especially in Buffalo. "One out of ten, or 9.6%, of Western New York adults suffered from asthma in 2004. This represents an increase from 1999 when 7% of adults in the region reported having this condition. The current region-wide prevalence is higher than statewide and national averages, which in 2003 stood at 7.6% and 7.7%, respectively."<sup>37</sup>

"A strong inverse correlation exists between asthma prevalence and socioeconomic status. Western New York adults who receive public assistance suffer from asthma at rates that are twice as high as non-recipients (18.1% vs. 9.0%). National data show a similar trend. Higher levels of indoor allergens and outdoor environmental pollutants associated with poorer housing conditions, particularly in urban settings, contribute to this disparity." (HMS Associates)



Unfortunately, according to the *Report on Mortality Rates for Erie County Communities*, the inequities in terms of the distribution of asthma sufferers in the area also occur among race and gender, with about 60% more women sufferers than men and about 8% more black sufferers than white.<sup>38</sup>

The city's lack of adequate parks contributes to the city's poor health conditions. The Center for Disease Control reports an increase of more than 25% of people exercising at least 3 times per week if they have outdoor space nearby. Research has shown that access to nature reduces hospital stays, promotes feelings of good health, and even decreases the symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder in young children. A lack of structured recreational spaces and unsafe neighborhood conditions combine to diminish physical activity amongst the urban poor.

Western New York currently has the highest rates of heart disease deaths in the state (352/100,000 people), which is itself far above the national average (305 statewide vs. 258/100,000 people nationwide). Heart disease and stroke affect more people in Western New York than anywhere else in the country and cardiovascular diseases claim more lives (especially in women) than the next seven causes of death combined.<sup>39</sup>

Scientists have proven that there exists a strong correlation between excess weight and the prevalence of diabetes and heart disease.<sup>40</sup> Three out of every five Western New York adults are overweight or obese, representing an increase from 1999. While the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the region varies significantly by race, ethnicity, gender and age, the overall rates of diabetes and obesity in Buffalo are significantly higher than state and national averages.<sup>41</sup>

Environmental contamination is also linked to high disease rates. Autoimmune disease clusters, including higher than normal rates of lupus, exist in Buffalo around known toxic waste sites.<sup>42</sup> According to the New York State Department of Health, several Buffalo ZIP codes were included among those with a high incidence of elevated blood lead levels among children. This includes most of the Near East Side (the focus area described later in this report).

**Socioeconomic Conditions:** The City of Buffalo faces significant challenges in regards to socioeconomic indicators. Based on new estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, Buffalo has been ranked the second poorest city of over 250,000 people in the United States, with approximately 30% of the population living below the poverty line.<sup>43</sup> Even more troubling is that the rate of Buffalo children living in poverty is even higher at 38.7%.<sup>44</sup>

According to the Buffalo School District, the city boasted an extremely low drop-out rate of 1.8% in 2002, which was less than half the rate of NYS overall.<sup>45</sup> However, other statistics show Buffalo's high school graduation rate to be extremely low, 46% in 2007, well below the state average of 68.6%.<sup>46</sup> In the 2006-2007 school year, 1,705 high-school students dropped out, while only 1,514 graduated.<sup>47</sup>

When comparing Buffalo to Erie County in terms of socioeconomic conditions (as seen in the table), we can see that the county outperforms the city in all the attributes below. This is a clear indication of more affluent suburban population with a disinvestment in the urban core, as is typical in many former industrial cities.

The following table is a summary comparison of Erie County with the City of Buffalo and includes vacant housing data and socioeconomic data from the 2000 US Census.

**Table 3-1: City/County Comparison**

Attributes	Buffalo	Erie County
Total Housing Units (2000)	145,574	415,868
Vacant Housing Units (2000)	22,854	34,995
Percentage Vacant (2000)	16%	8%
Population (2000)	292,648	950,265
Median Household Income (2000)	\$24,536	\$42,494
Educational Attainment (25+ years w/ HS diploma, 2000)	75%	83%
Unemployment Rate (2000)	13%	7%
Poverty Level (2000)	27%	12%
Transportation to Work – Automobile (2000)	80%	90%

Data Source: 2000 US Census <www.census.gov>

**Food Security:** Many city residents may have access to high quality and affordable food, but for many others this is not the case. Large portions of the city, generally those areas with higher levels of poverty and large minority populations, have limited food security. An area cannot be considered food secure unless it always has available food, everyone can access it, and it is nutritionally adequate.<sup>48</sup> There are only a handful of major grocery stores within the city limits, and most of those are not in predominantly minority neighborhoods. Smaller grocery stores tend to have higher prices and fewer fresh and healthy foods available. More affluent city residents can drive to suburban grocery stores, but people without private transportation find it much more difficult to access these stores. Although the city has a number of farmers markets, none of these operate outside of the growing and harvesting season. Rising food prices are also making it more difficult for less affluent residents to afford adequate and healthy food.

### 3.4 Opportunities

**A Large Supply of Vacant Land:** There are many forms of vacant land available for reuse in the City of Buffalo. In some parts of the city, such as the old industrial areas of South Buffalo, are large and contiguous parcels of former industrial land, also known as

brownfields. Although these properties contain both real and perceived contamination issues, much of this land is in the process of remediation and can be reused in various ways. In fact, the South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area initiative, covering approximately 1,800 acres along the Buffalo River, is an example of this type of available land. Current planning work is determining what types of uses would be most appropriate and beneficial, and how to attract those uses.

There are also thousands of smaller residential parcels of land scattered throughout the city, yet heavily concentrated on the East Side of Buffalo. These are mostly undeveloped parcels or remnants of abandoned homes and small businesses that have been or are scheduled to be demolished. When viewed as an opportunity, these properties have an enormous potential for reuse, including residential and commercial infill development, green infrastructure enhancements like community gardens and parks, and urban agriculture. One example of an organization which has utilized vacant parcels for this purpose is Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo, which has grown over 40 gardens on more than 75 vacant lots throughout Buffalo's East and West Side neighborhoods since 1992.<sup>49</sup>

**A Regeneration of the Urban Ecosystem:** In a world where global warming from greenhouse gas emissions is of widespread concern, the City of Buffalo could prove itself exemplary in reducing its carbon footprint. If the vacant parcel tree canopy in Buffalo were increased from 12% to 50% cover, an additional 66,837 pounds of air pollution and 208 tons of carbon would be sequestered annually. Over the lifetime of these potential trees, an additional 26,741 tons of carbon would be removed from the atmosphere.<sup>50</sup>



Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park was recently established on a former dumping ground along the Buffalo River in South Buffalo.

Re-greening Buffalo can also bring about solutions to major stormwater issues. Again, if the vacant parcel tree canopy in Buffalo were increased from 12% to 50% cover, then these potential trees would absorb 10,789,549 cubic feet of runoff water per storm before it enters the combined sewer system, thereby avoiding the contamination issues that come with combined sewer overflows. In addition to vacant lands with no immediate development pressure, riparian zones (or

land within a 1,000 foot buffer of a waterway) are some of the most ideal and effective areas for new tree planting. If the tree canopy of riparian zones in the cities of Buffalo

and Lackawanna was increased from 14% to 21% cover, then 47,415 pounds of air pollution would be removed annually. In addition, \$11,358,958 would be saved in annual stormwater storage costs.<sup>51</sup>

There are many opportunities for support in enhancing Buffalo's tree supply. In October of 2006, the trees of Buffalo and the surrounding region were devastated by an early and severe snow storm. Shortly after, the organization known as Re-Tree WNY was formed with the goal of planting 30,000 trees throughout WNY over the next five years. In addition, the City of Buffalo has agreed to allocate \$50,000 towards public reforestation efforts within the city limits this fall. This money will be used to purchase trees to be planted by community volunteers on public rights-of-way (between street and sidewalk) and in parks. City block clubs, faith groups, school groups, and community organizations are all eligible to receive trees to plant on public lands in their neighborhoods.

**An Emerging Capacity:** There are many organizations established for and dedicated to addressing Buffalo's challenges. They exist on a number of levels: from local block clubs, to nonprofit community-based organizations and environmental advocates, to federal and state government agencies. Many of the greening organizations in Buffalo have collaborated on the Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study, and have expressed interest in partnering with Groundwork Buffalo once it is established. The missions, geographic areas, and planning efforts of many of these organizations overlap and, therefore, have an immense opportunity for creating collaboration, leveraging common goals and building capacity through an umbrella organization like Groundwork Buffalo.

Research on existing organizations related to Groundwork Buffalo issues included interviews, Web searches, and an online survey. Their focus issues ranged from the environment, the economy, equity, land redevelopment, and the provision of services, among others. The majority of these organizations work throughout the entire city, while a small number work in specific neighborhoods. Most of these organizations have partnerships with other non-profits. Many organizations are willing to share resources and develop new partnerships with other types of organizations. The most commonly cited obstacles were funding and planning policies. A complete summary and analysis of the organization research can be found in Appendix: Organization Inventory.

**Buffalo Brownfield Program:** The City of Buffalo Brownfield Program aims at addressing large areas of vacant land that were contaminated by past industrial uses. The Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program is "made possible by the Superfund/Brownfield law (2003) which provides municipalities and community-based organizations with assistance, up to 90% of the eligible project costs, to complete revitalization plans and implementation strategies for areas or communities affected by the presence of brownfield sites."<sup>52</sup> There has been an influx of funds for addressing brownfield issues in the City of Buffalo, such as a significant grant received through the New York State Departments of State and Environmental Conservation Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program for a nomination study and master plan on 1,800 acres

in South Buffalo. An additional grant to the city and Riverkeeper will shortly be released to inventory and plan for the north side of the Buffalo River to complement the South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area. A third BOA, the Tonawanda Corridor BOA, is in the northern portion of the city.

The city also addresses brownfields at smaller scales. There are several scattered remediation sites in neighborhoods throughout the city, including a remediated site in the focus area known as Kingsley Park. Soil contamination is so likely throughout the city that it has a policy of removing the top two feet of soil and replacing it with clean fill on any new housing project involving city funds.

**Restorative Development:** As defined by Storm Cunningham in his 2002 book, *The Restoration Economy*, restorative development is “a mode of economic activity that returns property, structures or objects to an earlier condition, or replaces any unsalvageable structure without consuming more land.”<sup>53</sup> The restoration economy is composed of various restorative industries, which focus on restoring either the built or natural environment. According to Cunningham, these industries “have much more in common than both groups realize,” and “the various restorative professions need to recognize, celebrate and leverage what they have in common, for their mutual benefit.”<sup>54</sup>

It is within this concept that a Groundwork Trust poses the greatest opportunity for improving Buffalo’s current conditions. Even the most devastated areas of the city remain priceless and are reusable resources, around which groups of concerned citizens are quickly organizing. We have already seen successful examples of restorative development from organizations such as Buffalo ReUse, which has capitalized on salvaging the reusable resources of structures poised for demolition.

Whether historic resources as seen in the housing stock and historic buildings of the Broadway-Fillmore district or water resources as seen in the riparian zone of the Buffalo River at Seneca Bluffs, Buffalo’s unique resources hold an unlimited potential as tools for the economic, cultural and natural revitalization of the city. Yet, it is only through the collaboration of community leaders that this outcome can ultimately be achieved.

April 12, 2009

## **Chapter 4: Mid City -- Buffalo's Near East Side as the Focus Area**

### **4.1 Justification**

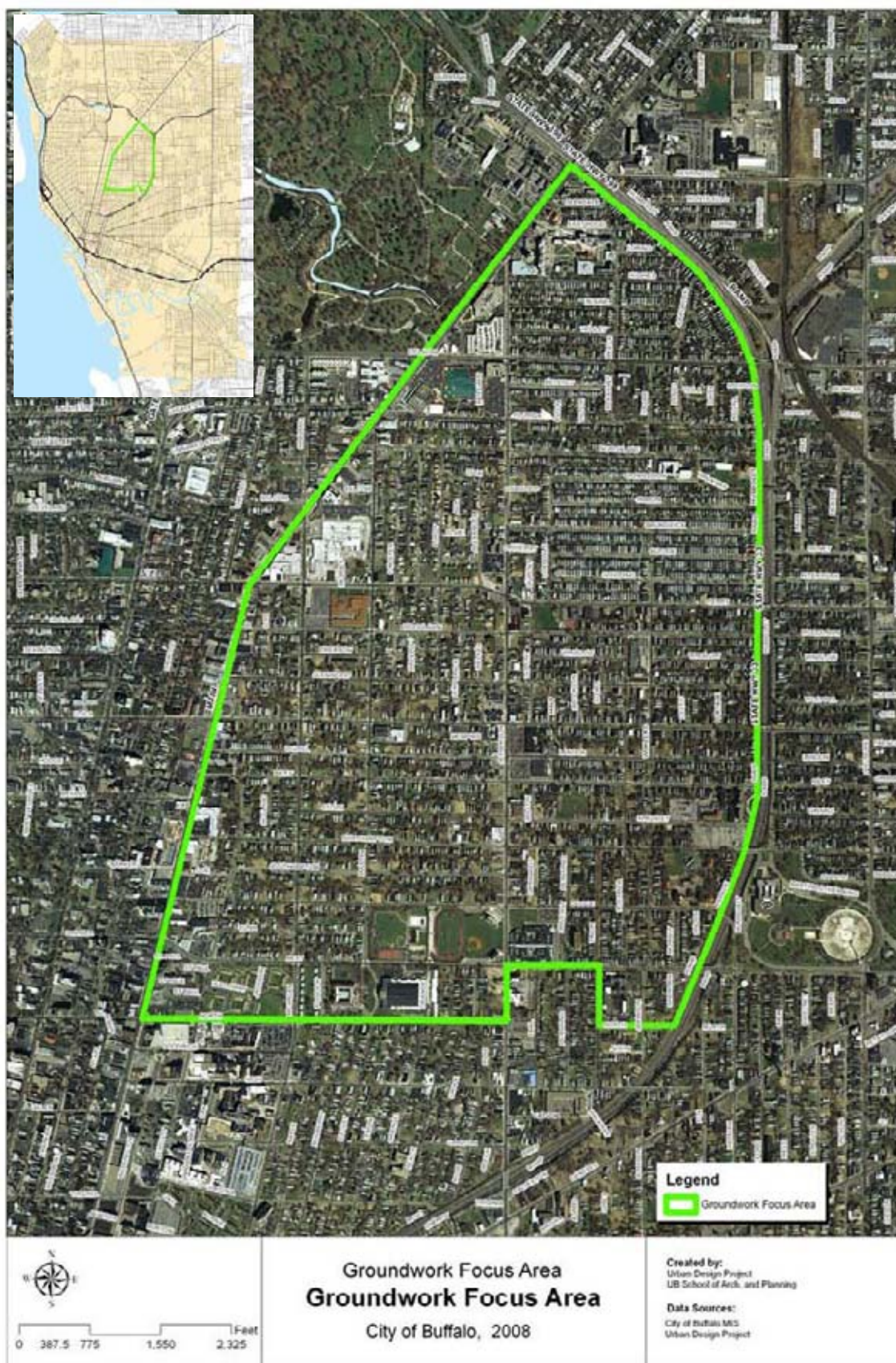
The proposed Groundwork Trust will target opportunities and challenges throughout the City of Buffalo. As part of a phased development plan, the trust can address a smaller focus area as part of its launching strategy. A more detailed Launching Strategy is in Chapter 8 of the Feasibility Study. The proposed focus area is located on the Near East Side of Buffalo. The 1,000 acre focus area is bound by the Scajaquada Expressway to the northeast, the Kensington Expressway to the east, East North Street to the south, and Main Street to the west. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 15,903 people living within the focus area in the year 2000, which was approximately 5.5% of the population of Buffalo overall.\*

The focus area was chosen after an extensive examination of city-wide characteristics, such as vacancy, green infrastructure and environmental quality, historic and cultural resources, planning framework, organizational mapping, demographics and other socioeconomic conditions. The focus area is a microcosm of the city as a whole – it faces the challenges of poverty, vacant land and brownfields, and a lack of formal green spaces. It has assets as well, including a strong history, numerous institutions and community groups, and recent public and private reinvestment. As we will examine below, the proposed focus area contains a large number of opportunities which can be explored and built upon through a Groundwork Trust.

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\* US Census statistics from 1990 and 2000 for the focus area include all of Census Tracts 32.01, 32.02, 33.01, 33.02, and 52.02.







## 4.2 Assets

**A History of Strong Neighborhoods:** The Near East Side focus area is comprised of several smaller neighborhoods. The southwest portion of the focus area is Cold Springs; the south is Masten Park; and the north is Hamlin Park. Much of this history still remains.

Cold Springs gets its name from a tavern called Cold Spring Tavern which was built on Main Street and East Ferry Street by 1808. In the basement of the tavern was access to a branch of the Jubilee Spring, a freshwater source.<sup>55</sup> In 1924 Offerman Stadium, built on the corner Masten Avenue and Woodlawn Avenue, was home to the Buffalo Bisons baseball team (demolished in 1960).<sup>56</sup> The site is now home to the Buffalo Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (BAVPA), a public high school.

The former Masten Park, where today's City Honors School is located, was once a potter's field, or cemetery for people who could not afford burial somewhere else. The cemetery was replaced by an Olmsted designed park called Masten Park, named after Joseph Masten, Buffalo's thirteenth mayor. This park was later replaced by a school called Fosdick-Masten Park School, which has burned down and been rebuilt. In the same neighborhood, the city's drinking water reservoir was filled in and replaced with a public park on one half and on the other, the War Memorial Stadium was built in 1937 as a WPA project. This stadium hosted the Buffalo Bison's baseball team and the Buffalo Bills football team until both franchises moved to newer stadiums elsewhere. War Memorial Stadium, known as "The Rockpile", was demolished and replaced with recreation facilities. The concrete gateways into the stadium have been preserved as part of these recreation facilities. The stadium is now a public recreation sports field known as Johnnie B. Wiley Stadium, and the adjacent park is called Masten Park although it is across the street from the original Olmsted-designed park.

The Hamlin Park neighborhood was once home to a horse driving park owned by Cicero J. Hamlin. In the early 1900s, the neighborhood was home to the city's first planned subdivision. Many of the American Foursquare, Homestead, Bungalow, and Colonial Revival style homes still exist today.<sup>57</sup> Since the 1950s, Hamlin Park has been a middle to upper class African American community, and home to some the city's most prominent African American figures. Hamlin Park was designated a local preservation district by the city in 1998.

**Pillars of the Community:** The communities in the Near East Side are held together by local institutions and organizations, both large and small. Educational institutions include Canisius College, a private college with approximately 5,000 students, two public high schools, two public elementary schools, and an early childhood education center. The Wellness Institute of Buffalo is currently working with students from the Hamlin Park public school on healthy lifestyle projects. There are close to forty religious organizations in the focus area. Most of these are churches, but some are faith-based organizations that provide community services such as education. The various

communities are well organized; there are close thirty block clubs throughout the focus area. There are also several community-based organizations working to improve the Near East Side, including organizations that provide education and crisis management, organizations maintaining community gardens and green space, and advocacy organizations.

**Green Spaces:** The focus area has over 80 acres of public greenspace. Most of this is at the southern edge of the focus area in Masten Park and Johnnie B. Wiley Stadium which includes a running track, a football field, and a baseball diamond. Approximately 8% of the total land in the focus area is green space, a higher ratio than in the rest of the city. Based upon 2000 population numbers, there are approximately five acres of parkland per thousand residents which is also higher than the rest of the city. This statistic may be skewed because of the high amount of vacant land that once housed a much larger population. The focus area is also adjacent to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, a 51-acre Olmsted-designed park, and Forest Lawn Cemetery, a large greenspace that connects to the Olmsted-designed Delaware Park. There are other smaller greenspaces as well, including community gardens, many of which are a part of Grassroots Gardens.

#### **Recent and Proposed Development:**

There has long been a divide in Buffalo along Main Street. For over half of a century, Main Street has been the boundary between the prosperous West Side and disinvestment on the East Side. The boundary still separates the city by race and income; less affluent African Americans tend to live on the east side of Main Street and more affluent whites tend to live on the other side of Main Street. While this divide still exists, it has begun to change with development downtown, in the Fruit Belt, and on the west side of Main Street. Two large, underused



The new Buffalo Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts high school can be a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization.

commercial buildings are being converted to mixed use spaces with commercial and residential spaces along the east side of Main Street in the focus area. These are now the Artspace Apartments and the Packard Apartments. The new BAVPA high school was completed in 2008, and expansion work on City Honors School is now underway. Several new housing units have been constructed recently, especially in the Masten Park neighborhood. A new commercial center is planned for the corner of Best Street and Jefferson Avenue. All of this new development benefits from its close location to the subway on Main Street, especially as private transportation becomes less affordable.

The focus area has seen recent city investment in housing. New infill housing units have been built in the Cold Springs neighborhood. An additional 55 infill housing units are

scheduled for construction, 100 owner-occupied homes will have some rehabilitation and lead abatement, and 10 homes will be rehabilitated for sale to low to moderate income households in partnership with Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) by the end of 2009. The city has a rent-to-own housing program, and has 29 units under this program in focus area, with approximately 50 more to come. Many demolitions coupled with new builds are scheduled for the focus area by the city.

Other upcoming city investments in the focus area include \$1 million of infrastructure improvements to streets in Hamlin Park. These include street pavement, curbs, sidewalks, and lighting. An additional \$1 million of infrastructure improvements are scheduled for the Masten Park area in 2009. Streets are targeted based upon their condition, time between repaving, and neighborhood complaints. Streets already targeted include Dodge, Purdy, Waverly, Chester, Woodlawn, Florida, and Oak Grove.

**Planning Framework:** Revitalization of the focus area has been addressed in several city planning documents recently. The Organic Revitalization plan for Midtown, an area that includes much of the western parts of the focus area, proposes reuse and restoration of historic buildings, infill development where possible, and new community greenspaces. The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy's Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century recommends replanting trees and widening the green buffer between the neighborhood and the Kensington Expressway on what remains of the Humboldt Parkway, and redesigning portions of Best Street and East North Street as Olmsted-like parkways. The plan also recommends covering portions of the Kensington Expressway by Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in order to reconnect the park to the focus area neighborhoods. The Masten District Neighborhood Plan encourages redevelopment of the Jefferson Avenue commercial strip, resettlement programs for Hamlin Park, and landscaping/streetscaping of major thoroughfares. The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), the region's Metropolitan Planning Council, has a few transportation improvement projects planned for the focus area, including improvements to the Humboldt Parkway above the Kensington Expressway, the reconstruction of a pedestrian bridge over the Kensington Expressway in Hamlin Park, and enhancements to Michigan Avenue.

**Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA)** -- The city has targeted parts of the focus area for reinvestment. The city has designated most of the focus area a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). This enables the city have more flexibility in spending Community Development Block Grants. This designation allows the income limits to be reduced so that 51% of projects/units are designated to benefit people of low-income, while the remainder of the funding can be used to create mixed-income incentives and programs.

**Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE)** -- The southern half of Jefferson Avenue in the focus area is within a Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE)

zone. The CARE program is a comprehensive program designed to rehabilitate and renovate retail and commercial properties.

***Hamlin Park Local Historic District*** -- Hamlin Park is designated a local historic district. This designation gives the City Preservation Board more power over properties within the district. The local historic district designation carries more authority than a national historic designation. The protection of the buildings and parks that are contained within the district can help increase property values and stabilize the neighborhood.

***Neighborhood of Choice*** -- The Hamlin Park neighborhood is designated a Neighborhood of Choice by the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning. This program aims to revitalize blighted houses in low income neighborhoods.

***Block-by-Block Program*** -- A Block-by-Block area extends from Northampton to Laurel between Jefferson and Masten within the focus area. The Block-by-Block program is a collaborative effort by the State, the City of Buffalo, and grassroots organizations to transform depressed communities. The program provides grants for home improvements and renovations.

***Livable Communities*** -- The Hamlin Park, Cold Springs, and Masten Park neighborhoods are with the Livable Communities programs. The purpose of the Livable Communities grant program is to provide funding to Block Clubs, civic/citizens associations for the implementation of innovative projects that will provide measurable visual and physical improvements in their neighborhoods. The program is administered by the city and funded through the City Of Buffalo, Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) and the Citizens' Bank Foundation.

***Empire Zones*** -- There are also Empire Zones located along Jefferson Avenue from Ferry Street to North Street. New York State's Empire Zone program was created to stimulate economic growth through a variety of State tax incentives designed to attract new businesses to New York State and to enable existing businesses to expand and create more jobs. Empire Zones provide tax and incentive credit to businesses located within them.

***Renewal Communities*** -- A Renewal Community (RC) designation stimulates economic development in eligible neighborhoods by offering Federal tax incentives to encourage businesses to locate or expand operations and to hire residents of the RC. Most of the focus area is within the Buffalo-Lackawanna Renewal Community boundaries. The only exception is Census Tract 32.01, bounded to the south by Ferry, the east by Jefferson, and the north by Delavan.

### 4.3 Challenges

**Vacated Neighborhoods:** Recent new physical development is overshadowed by years of deterioration. Of the 1,000 acres in the focus area, 158 acres are vacant or 15.8%.<sup>58</sup> Approximately 68 acres of this vacant land is owned by the city.<sup>59</sup> The amount of vacant land is likely to increase. There are 334 *in rem* properties, and 109 sites of demolition activity. Of the 7,894 housing units in 2000, 1,615 were vacant. This means that over 20% of the focus area's housing units were unoccupied in 2000. This was an increase from 1990 when 913 of the 8,138 housing units were vacant, or only 11 %. Population has decreased 13.1%, from 18,306 in 1990 to 15,903 in 2000. The Hamlin Park neighborhood has been relatively stable but is on the verge deterioration. There are few vacant lots, but there are many *in rem* properties and several homes targeted for demolition by the city.



Vacant lots like these are common throughout the focus area.

There are a few large and historic buildings that are completely abandoned. On the eastern side of the focus area, directly across the Kensington Expressway from Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, a large and historic Roman Catholic orphanage complex and grounds is abandoned and deteriorating. On the western side of the focus area, the former St. Vincent's female orphan asylum has been vacant since Erie Community College moved its campus downtown in the 1980s. There are three separate sets historic row houses in need of renovation as well. One of these is located on the corner of Woodlawn and Masten, another on Woodlawn and Michigan, and a third larger set of row houses on Emerson Place.

**Poverty and Unemployment:** Although Hamlin Park has long been a middle to upper class community, much of the focus area has high levels of poverty, unemployment, and an overall low median household income. In 2000, the unemployment rate was 24%, and 27.4% of individuals were living below the poverty line.<sup>60</sup> Both of these economic figures are worse than in the city as a whole. In 2000, city-wide unemployment was 12.6%, and the poverty rate for individuals was 26.6%. Poverty rates improved in the focus area from 1990, while unemployment increased

dramatically. The focus area unemployment rate was 10.5% and the poverty rate was 35% in 1990.

**Food Security:** Although there are enough food destinations throughout the City of Buffalo that there are no areas considered to be food deserts, there are large areas of the focus area with few available food destinations. Most of the block groups in the focus area have between zero and twenty-five food destinations per 10,000 persons, whereas there are locations in the city with over 100 food destinations per 10,000 persons.<sup>61</sup> Given that residents of the focus area have limited access to private vehicles (69% of people in the workforce used a car, truck or van as a means of transportation to work in 2000), it is more difficult for them to access fresh and affordable food year round.

**Green Space:** Even new development creates new challenges. In a city that has been declining for so long, and in a neighborhood that has been particularly hard hit, the predominant attitude is that any development is good development. Many vacant lots are potential green spaces, but may be turned into buildings and other hard-scapes like parking lots. Without a formal recognition of community gardens as a permanent land use by the city, and without adequate resources from community organizations to purchase and maintain vacant lots, new and existing green infrastructure is compromised.



This is one of Grassroots Gardens' community gardens in the focus area.

The history of this focus area tells us that even large formal green spaces are not safe from development. The 200-foot wide, tree lined, Olmsted-designed Humboldt Parkway was destroyed and converted into a below grade expressway in the 1960s. The expressway is the northern and eastern border of the focus area. This destruction turned what had been a green ribbon, connecting neighborhoods, parks, and people, into a deep barrier, separating communities from each other.

**Stormwater Infrastructure:** The entire city is burdened with an aging combined sewer and stormwater system. Stormwater and urban runoff enters the sewer system and goes to the Buffalo Sewage Treatment Plant. However, when there is too much water in the system as during a rain, the system discharges both sewage with stormwater into lakes, rivers, and streams. This happens on average 50 times per year in Buffalo. In the focus area, there is a storm sewer beneath Masten, and combined storm sewer overflows beneath Jefferson and Michigan.

As mentioned earlier, much of the natural freshwater systems of the focus area have also been destroyed. As is typical of urban development, the natural landscape of the focus area was completely altered in the late 1800s and early 1900s as rural areas became urbanized. Jubilee Spring and related streams, critical in Buffalo's early settlement of the area, have disappeared. The Scajaquada Creek, which formerly meandered through the northern part of the focus area, is also buried and a part of the city's sewer system. The small creek goes underground at the city's eastern border, is connected to the larger system underground, and does not surface again until it enters Forest Lawn Cemetery, just west of the focus area.

**Contamination:** The focus area has a history of contamination and some existing uses continue to contribute to contamination.

The following table is a summary comparison of the focus area and the City of Buffalo.\*

**Table 4-1: City / Mid City Focus Area Comparison**

Attributes	Buffalo	Focus Area
Total Area	26,072 acres	1,000 acres
Total Vacant Land	3,222 acres	158 acres
Percentage Vacant	12%	16%
City-owned Vacant Land	657 acres	68 acres
<i>In rem</i> Properties	4,488	334
Sites of Demolition Activity	1,536	109
Total Housing Units (2000)	145,574	7,894
Vacant Housing Units (2000)	22,854	1,615
Percentage Vacant (2000)	16%	20%
Public Green Space	1,459 acres	81 acres
Green Space Per 1000 People	5 acres	5 acres
Population (2000)	292,648	15,903
Educational Attainment (25+ years w/ HS diploma, 2000)	75%	68%
Unemployment Rate (2000)	13%	24%
Poverty Level (2000)	27%	27%
Transportation to Work – Car/Truck/Van (2000)	80%	69%

Data Source: City of Buffalo MIS and 2000 US Census <www.census.gov>

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\* US Census statistics from 1990 and 2000 for the focus area include all of Census Tracts 32.01, 32.02, 33.01, 33.02, and 52.02.



The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has remediated two hazardous waste sites in the focus area, while two additional hazardous waste sites remain in need of remediation, both of which are on the eastern side of Jefferson Avenue near West Utica Street. There are 20 existing hazardous waste generators in the focus area, most of which are located near Main Street.

There are also two stationary sources of air pollution near Jefferson Avenue, and another adjacent to the Kensington Expressway near Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Kingsley Playground on Kingsley Street off of Jefferson Avenue is an example of a remediated hazardous waste site within the focus area. The playground there today is in need of significant improvements. There is a second hazardous waste site near the Jefferson Public Library between Jefferson Avenue and Dupont Street in need of remediation.

Real and perceived brownfields exist throughout the focus area. Urban soils experience years of dumping of household chemicals, lead paint from demolished buildings, and other forms of contamination from airborne and water sources. Other uses such as gas stations often leave contamination, including underground tanks which require remediation. Some of this vacant land may have no contamination issues, but will require testing in order to eliminate the perception of contamination.

## 4.4 Opportunities

A new Groundwork Trust will have a myriad of project and programmatic opportunities in this focus area, bolstered by city efforts and resources for revitalization. These opportunities cover the spectrum of “greening,” youth training, education, and local economic development projects. The numerous assets and challenges in the focus area, including the large amount of vacant land and real and perceived brownfields, create great opportunities for revitalization.

### Neighborhood

**Regeneration:** The city has and will continue to devote resources into the focus area for revitalization efforts. There are opportunities for new housing throughout the focus area. This can be infill housing or restoration of abandoned or deteriorating housing. Restoration and adaptive reuse housing projects, including the Artspace and the Packard



Neighborhood regeneration will require the removal or rehabilitation of abandoned homes like this one.



Apartments, are examples of large and successful redevelopment projects. There are opportunities for programs that help people relocate into housing in the focus area as well. Immigrant populations and people from other more distressed neighborhoods in Buffalo can be targeted as potential new residents in the focus area with appropriate programs and incentives.

**Restoration Economy:** Restoration creates opportunities for innovative local economic development. The Squire Mansion of the of the former St. Vincent female orphan asylum complex of buildings was renovated and is fully occupied. The enormous former youth detention facility on Best Street was purchased by the Institute for Islamic Higher Education, with a boarding school planned for its reuse. Buffalo ReUse, a non-profit located in the focus area, offers deconstruction services. Rather than demolishing buildings and dumping all of the material in landfills, Buffalo ReUse deconstructs these buildings, salvaging building materials, and resells the materials. They provide jobs and training to community residents.

**Vacant Land and Brownfields to Green Spaces:** There are numerous opportunities for new green spaces of all kinds. New green spaces can be planned and protected in conjunction with new and restored residential, commercial, and other forms of physical development. These green spaces can be temporary, as a land-banking strategy, or permanent. They can include formal park and recreation spaces, as well as community gardens. They may also include ecological restoration, especially of historic freshwater resources in the focus area. Green spaces can provide valuable ecological services, including stormwater filtering and retention. Queen City Farm, an innovative organization that is proposing an urban agriculture project in the focus area, would



Vacant lots and potential brownfields like this are potential greenspaces.

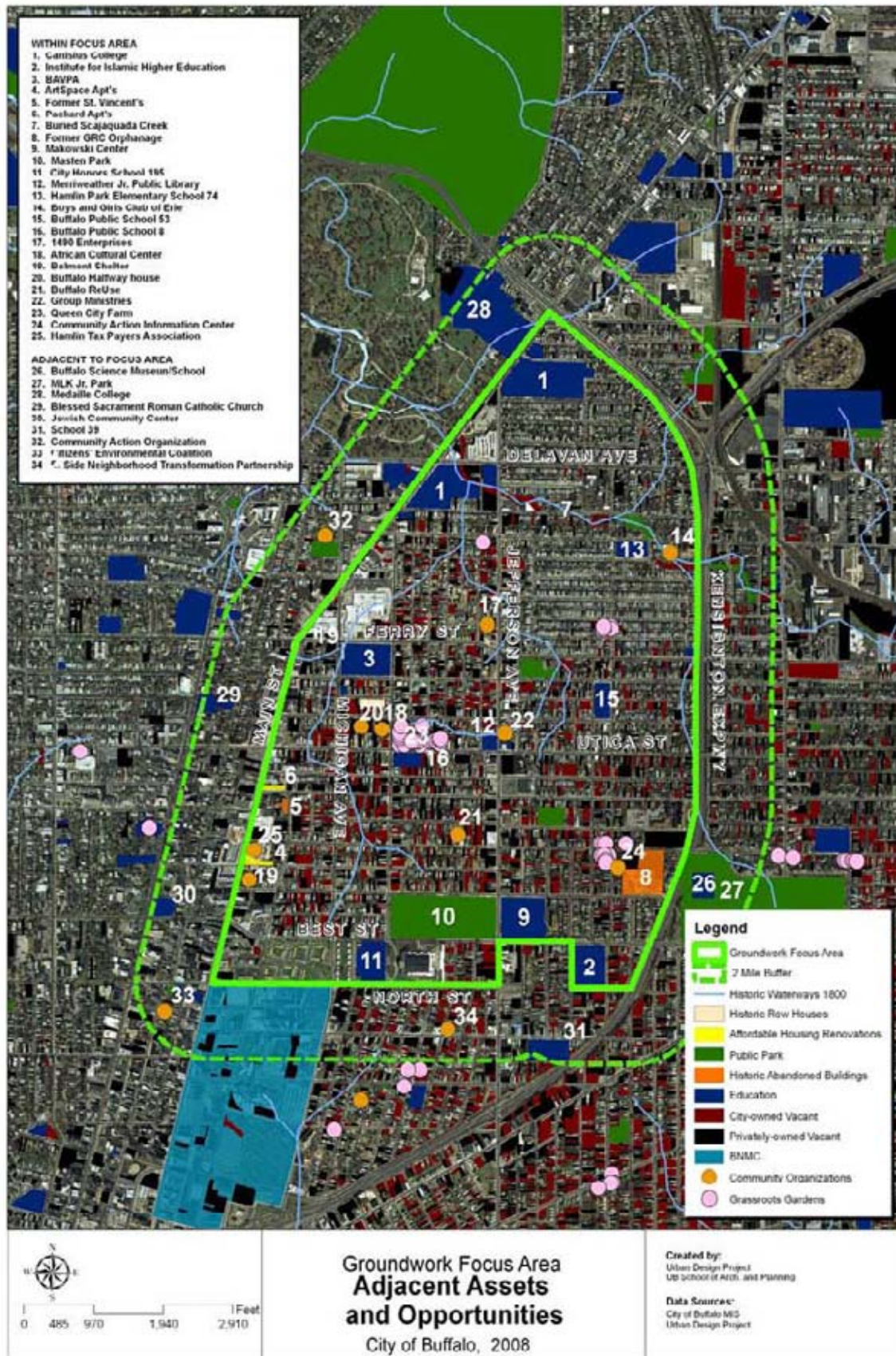
encompass most of a city block, restoring one of the vacant homes as an office, and cultivating the vacant land surrounding it. This project could provide a local fresh food source, as well as income to local residents working there.

**Public Streets:** There are opportunities for innovative thinking about the function of public streets. Current designs of streets allow for little else than automobile traffic. They are not pedestrian or bicycle friendly; they lack green infrastructure. Redesigning the streets could allow them to be green connections between existing assets, pedestrian and bicycle friendly, recreation and play space, and stormwater management tools. Redesigned public streets could connect the focus area to neighborhoods outside of its boundaries, including bridging the historic barrier between the East and West Sides across Main Street.

**Youth:** There are opportunities to work with local schools which can serve as centers of neighborhood revitalization. Students can gain knowledge and experience by working on greening projects and participate in the volunteer and service learning labor force necessary for the implementation of many Groundwork projects.

**Surrounding Communities:** The focus area should not be viewed in isolation from surrounding communities. The Near East Side is a good starting point for Groundwork Buffalo to focus its attention, but the Trust will ultimately have a role throughout the city. There are also opportunities in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding the focus area. Adjacent assets include large institutions such as the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Medaille College, and the Buffalo Museum of Science and school. Large green spaces include Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, and Forest Lawn Cemetery. There are also community organizations working in neighborhood surrounding the focus area. One of these, Community Action Organization (CAO), is located on Harvard Place a few blocks west of Main Street. CAO is beginning an urban agriculture project, a tree nursery, on Harvard Place. Groundwork Buffalo can work closely with these potential partners, possibly cooperating on projects just outside of the focus area boundaries. The Fruit Belt, just south of the focus area, also has a series of organizations devoted to neighborhood revitalization that include the Locust Street Community Art School and the East Side Neighborhood Transformation Partnership. Both of these organizations collaborate with the UB's Center for Urban Studies.

**Building Social Capital:** Ultimately, the social assets in the focus area create the greatest opportunities. Existing devoted institutions, community groups, and organizations are potential partners that a Groundwork Trust can add value to, and be supported by. A Groundwork Trust can build upon existing community relationships, and foster new cooperative efforts to improve the Near East Side focus area and neighborhoods surrounding it.



April 12, 2009



## Chapter 5: Projects and Programs

### 5.1 Groundwork Buffalo Goals and Vision

The proposed Groundwork Buffalo seeks to achieve the overarching goals of Groundwork, USA within the context of the Buffalo community. The organization will serve as a **convener, organizer, project identifier and implementer** within the focus area to highlight opportunities and challenges of underutilized and contaminated land and to transform those spaces into productive lands.

This chapter is organized into three sections: A review of goals and vision; the proposed initial project/program of vacant property reclamation; and concluding with a more comprehensive list of opportunities and projects appropriate for Groundwork Buffalo as it matures.

#### GOALS OF GROUNDWORK BUFFALO

- Increase the capacity of communities to improve and care for their local environment.
- Reclaim vacant and derelict lands for conservation, recreation and economic development.
- Clean up and care for neglected areas to signal community pride and rejuvenation.
- Return brownfields to economically productive uses while restoring currently blighted landscapes and replacing them with healthy environments.
- Integrate environmental education and job training into projects it undertakes.
- Engage business, government, nonprofits and communities to work together for sustainable environmental care and enhancement.
- Support business, nonprofit, government and community efforts to improve the local environment.
- Raise the profile of urban environmental improvements as part of a comprehensive approach to smart growth strategies and rejuvenation of inner city communities.
- Ensure projects look as good or better in five years as they do on the day of completion.

## **5.2 Groundwork Buffalo Initial Project Proposal: Vacant Property and Brownfield Conversions**

Buffalo needs someone who wakes up each day and says *these vacant lots and brownfields are my job!* Some have suggested that the entire city is a brownfield given the historic legacy of pollution – water, land and air. The city even has a policy of removing the top two feet of soil from any new housing project involving city funds because of lead contamination. In fact, there is so much vacant land and such a prevalence of brownfields in the City of Buffalo that it is sometimes hard to remember that solutions are not only strategic and require master planning, but also are very local and literally on the street.

The Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study proposes that the newly formed organization will **convene, organize, identify and implement projects and programs** related to vacant properties and brownfields in a specified area of Buffalo. The organization will highlight opportunities and challenges of underutilized and contaminated land and will transform selected spaces into productive lands.

Immediate action is proposed for a city-owned vacant lot (1070 Ellicott demolition site) adjacent to several privately owned vacant lots and next to the new Artspace project that could incorporate the residents of Artspace as well as other neighborhood groups. Minimum treatment will include ‘clean-up and greening’ but given the partners here, we anticipate that it will be more of a park-like setting with capacity for art work developed by the artists collaborative. This project is called ArtSpace Green.

### **5.2.1 The Task and the Place**

During the first phase, Groundwork Buffalo proposes to address a section of the city on the Near East Side referred to as Mid City beginning with the ArtSpace Green Project. Groundwork Buffalo staff will gather information of vacant properties in Mid City to determine existing conditions, make recommendations for each site, and subsequently implement the most viable options while setting the stage for the next set of transformation. The projects can vary by site, and include any of the greening projects, stormwater management, remediation when necessary, possible community gardens and other viable options. This process of identifying sites for ‘greening’ and using a holding strategy for sites slated for future development will test out this method of addressing brownfields in the city and suggestion a process for other areas in Buffalo.



The selected sub-area builds on existing stable resources. Groundwork Buffalo will be the on-the-ground expert/implementer of vacant residential properties (considered brownfields by the city) in the section of the focus area bordered to the west by Main Street, to the north by East Ferry Street, the east by Masten Avenue, and the south by East North Street. This area has many vacant properties and buildings, but also has institutional assets such as City Honors School, the Buffalo Academy of the Visual and Performing Arts, Belmont Shelter, and the African Cultural Center, and is bordered to the south by the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

Mid City lies within the City of Buffalo's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, a special designation by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development which allows for special program flexibility in order to foster comprehensive mixed-income regeneration. As such, this neighborhood will soon be the recipient of a large grant for 50 single family infill houses under the state's affordable housing tax credit program and will see nearly that number of existing homes rehabilitated under a New York State Affordable Housing Corporation Block-by-Block pilot program grant.

Addressing the vacant properties in the area has the potential to both stabilize and improve property values of these new and rehabilitated homes according to the experience in Philly Green which demonstrated that adjacent vacant land decreases property values by 20% while a cleaned up vacant adjacent property increases values by 17%.

### **5.2.2 Implementation**

*Potential Partners* – The City of Buffalo will be the primary partner as the properties under the initial project are all city owned. A contract between the city and Groundwork Buffalo will be negotiated for this work.

Local residents and neighborhood organizations, especially Artspace residents in the first project, will be part of the planning process for these vacant lots. Residents in this area have suggested that more green infrastructure, including community gardens, are desired. There are community organizations, schools and other institutions in this area that will be enlisted in deciding what the future uses may be and also be involved in future maintenance of the areas.

Collaboration with additional appropriate organization can be pursued depending on the type of projects recommended for each vacant lot. Where stormwater management techniques such as raingardens, bioretention areas, and bioswales make sense, Groundwork would partner with Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper and the Buffalo Sewer Authority. Other partnerships to be developed include NYSDEC and the EPA as part of brownfield remediation and also possibly the newly formed land conservancy, Greenspace Consortium and possibly the Trust for Public Land.



At the same time, Groundwork Buffalo will work with partners to develop the strategy for each property in the specific subarea and work to implement those strategies. It is critical to note that this strategy will identify temporary and permanent uses for sites given the future proposed use of much of the area. Once Groundwork Buffalo has begun operations, it will identify the overall plan for the vacant brownfields in the entire subarea.

*Implementation Steps for 2009* - It is likely that this process will include the following steps in addition to constituting a Board of Directors and hiring an executive director. This is a draft only and will need to be reviewed with the newly constituted board and director.

### *PHASE ONE*

1. Develop and execute an agreement with the city regarding the project.
2. Begin planning, community involvement, design and implementation for the Artspace Green vacant property transformation that will begin the neighborhood transformation.
3. Within the Mid City subarea, gather information on the existing conditions of each property selected for initial transformation. Depending on implementation grants, this will be a minimum of two and maximum of 15 lots in 2009. Information includes current condition, ownership, history, contamination, other proposals, etc. The first vacant lots to be transformed can be the Artspace Green project.



The Artspace Green project will be located at 1070 Ellicott St.

4. Work with the local community, the city, and various partners to decide what type of intervention is appropriate for each site. The primary strategy will be a relatively inexpensive “clean and green” project as most of the sites in this neighborhood are eventually slated for redevelopment. But there are opportunities for other temporary reuses such as a tree farm for ReTree Buffalo, leased Grassroots Gardens, and stormwater storage and treatment, and phytoremediation for lead contamination in the soil.
5. Design, develop and draft construction documents.
6. Enlist volunteers for appropriate aspects of the transformation, including youth from programs such as Buffalo ReUse, local schools and the Mayor’s Summer Youth Program.

7. Hire contractors for necessary work; organize volunteer workdays for other work.
8. Develop a maintenance plan.
9. Seek funding for the implementation of the second phase of vacant lot/brownfield transformation for 2010.
10. Develop a catalog of potential uses of vacant properties and brownfields depending on future proposed land uses. This can include temporary and long term changes. Green infrastructure can be used as the tool for immediate transformation and neighborhood impact.
11. Assess the 'success' of each intervention along various parameters to include cost, ease of maintenance, success of partnerships, and contribution to the city's sustainability.



The Artspace Green project can transform the vacant lot on 1070 Ellicott St., left, into a park, right.

In summary, the first year plan is to get the organization up and running, implement the Artspace Green as the initial demonstration project, put 2 to 15 other demonstration projects on the ground in the subarea of Mid City as funding permits, and initiate planning for year two. Phase two will be developed in year one and will likely focus on further transformation of city-owned vacant lots and brownfields.

Based on these early demonstrations, within three years we anticipate the development of a manual of best practices for vacant land reclamation in the City of Buffalo.

*Specific Funding Opportunities* – Funding for staff and operations will come from the National Park Service and the City of Buffalo commitments giving the organization \$30,000-\$35,000 from the federal agencies with additional funding to be applied for in the future, and \$25,000/year from the City for the development and early implementation

of the strategy for three years. As of December 2008, the Steering Committee for the Feasibility Study has requested an additional \$75,000 from the City of Buffalo to begin implementation in the summer of 2009.

Funds for implementation will be sought from local sources such as foundations, the Buffalo Green Fund, ReTree Buffalo, AmeriCorps, Buffalo Sewer Authority, the City of Buffalo Livable Communities, and from state agencies such as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Parks Grants, Department of State Environmental Protection Fund, New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, and federal US Brownfields Grants.

### **5.2.3 Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Management**

This aspect of vacant property and brownfield conversion is listed separately even though it is anticipated that many of the site transformations will include stormwater management. However, this treatment is not appropriate on all sites given the future development plans for some properties.

Green and sustainable stormwater management is a critical need in the City of Buffalo. Groundwork Buffalo in collaboration with the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, the Buffalo Sewer Authority and the City of Buffalo is seeking alternative stormwater management strategies. Like many older cities, the existing stormwater management infrastructure is failing; water contamination from untreated storm sewers and combined sewer overflows threatens our drinking water, our ability to swim and bathe in our streams, lakes and rivers, habitat essential to the survival wildlife, and ultimately our economy and quality of life. Although there are no simple solutions or single strategies that can solve these problems, alternative and green systems of stormwater management can be less costly and more effective at providing solutions to these problems given that 90% of the water in the system when there is an overflow is, actually, stormwater.

Because of federal clean water mandates, the Buffalo Sewer Authority (BSA) and the City of Buffalo have proposed improving its storm sewer system by separating storm sewers from sanitary sewers. Part of this process includes the treatment and storage of water within storm sewers and combined sewer overflows to increase water quality and reduce overflow events. Proposals have included large underground tanks, and large surface reservoirs. The total cost for the complete overhaul of the system as initially proposed would be close to \$500 million and both the sewer authority and the city are looking for less expensive ways to deal with these problems.

Strategies that use green infrastructure to deal with these problems can be less expensive than using traditional grey infrastructure. Green infrastructure, such as tree planting, rain gardens, bioswales, and constructed wetlands will reduce the total amount of stormwater entering storm drains and combined sewer overflows because of ground infiltration and

uptake from vegetation. This reduces the number of overflow events (currently 50 times per year), and can eliminate the need to separate stormwater from combined sewer overflow lines.

Groundwork Buffalo can help conceptualize and implement comprehensive, green, stormwater management solutions in the focus area. There are a myriad of solutions to stormwater management described in this report. They include rain barrels, green roofs, rain gardens and bioswales, and constructed wetlands. They can also include new parks, green streets, and urban forests. Groundwork Buffalo can propose a small number of high impact stormwater management projects that include a combination of green streets, rain gardens and bioswales, and constructed wetlands, that together can improve water quality, increase greenspace, recreation space and habitat, and provide education and training opportunities for youth and adults in the focus area. The impact of these strategies will be measured by Riverkeeper in order to develop a citywide plan for stormwater management. Groundwork Buffalo can play a significant role in its advocacy and transformation of vacant properties and former brownfields.

### **5.3 Other Opportunities for Future Groundwork Buffalo Projects**

This section of Chapter 5 outlines several potential project concepts based upon assets, needs, and opportunities in the focus area. Each project includes goals, an overview, potential sites, and potential partners. This list of opportunities provided the basis for the initial Groundwork Buffalo proposal. Each opportunity described represents possible future projects/programs for Groundwork Buffalo as capacity matures and the city experiences successes in the reuse of vacant lots, reclaiming neighborhoods, and supporting citizens.

There are a few criteria Groundwork Buffalo can use to determine what projects to undertake. Criteria can include:

- Projects that contribute to Groundwork Buffalo's Mission.
- Projects that have available funding.
- Projects that have a brownfield component.
- Projects in neighborhoods with elevated levels of vacant land and brownfields but retain enough community support to have an immediate impact.
- Projects that have support from other organizations and the community.
- Projects that need Groundwork Buffalo as a catalyst.
- Projects that build on existing community assets.

- Projects that promote community revitalization and regeneration.
- Projects that can be sustained in the long term.

### **5.3.1 Green Infrastructure**

#### ***New and Improved Parks***

*Justification* – The focus area, like the city, is in need of more park space. New and improved parks can provide youth and all neighborhood residents’ recreation and other programmatic opportunities. Parks, as well, can provide wildlife habitat and environmental education opportunities. Parks can be located on former brownfields, where real or perceived contamination prevents other forms of development.

*Overview* – Groundwork Buffalo can work to improve existing park spaces, and create new park spaces in the focus area as well as improve the basic user amenities in existing parks: recreation facilities, pathways, benches, lighting and plantings. New parks can range in size from small neighborhood parks located on corner lots to parks on entire neighborhood blocks. They can offer different recreational amenities, including structured recreation like basketball, and unstructured recreation like play fields. The safety of existing and new parks is important and Groundwork can help promote safe designs and coordinate surrounding communities to improve their safety.

*Potential Sites* – There are a couple of parks in the focus area in need of improvements. Masten Park, located across Best Street from City Honors School is in need of improvements. Its recreational facilities, including a baseball diamond, running track, basketball courts and swimming pool are deteriorating. The park, located on top of the city’s former reservoir, has a reputation for being dangerous in part because of poor visibility. It is elevated from street view and separated from the neighborhood by an overgrown rock wall. Groundwork can help attract investment for capital improvements, and also help coordinate neighborhood efforts to improve its safety. The park can be extended into adjacent blocks on available vacant land by way of green fingers of park space. Another focus area park, Kingsley Playground is smaller than Masten Park, but is still an important neighborhood park. It was built on the site of a remediated contamination site and will have to be monitored. It, too, is in need of reinvestment, including new playground equipment, reconstructed basketball courts, and tree plantings.

There are a few potential locations for new parks in the focus area. There are several corner lots that are vacant and could be converted into parks. Land surrounding BAVPA school is a good location for a new, small park, as currently there are no formal parks near the school. Another potential small park location is a contaminated site on Dupont Street off of Jefferson Avenue in need of remediation. The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy’s plan for the Olmsted Park System recommended “decking” the Kensington Expressway next to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, which would connect the



park to the focus area. The vacant and largely unused parking lot just south of Deaconess Hospital and just west of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park would be a good place to reuse as an active recreation park, alleviating some of the recreation pressures on Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

*Potential Partners* – Groundwork Buffalo will need to develop several partnerships in order to improve existing parks, create new parks, and maintain safety and security at both. Capital improvements to existing parks will require a partnership with the city and/or county Parks Department. The creation of new parks will require partnerships with the city, as well as local non-profits including the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and Buffalo Micro Parks. A local community organization, 50 Women with a Vision, is implementing the Jefferson Ave. Community Cultural Artpark and should be considered a potential partner. Remediation of brownfields contaminated sites will require partnerships with the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Trust for Public Land has many brownfield remediation programs and is a potential partner. Volunteer efforts from neighborhood residents, block clubs, schools, and service learning corps can help maintain the parks and improve their safety. Local business including Premium Services, Inc., a local landscape and construction firm, have expressed interest in partnering with Groundwork Buffalo and can help provide expertise and other resources in designing and developing park space.



With a small investment, Kinglsey Park, above, can be improved, below.

### ***Community Gardens***

*Justification* – The focus area, like the city, is in need of more green space. New community gardens can be a valuable reuse of small plots of vacant land for schools and neighborhoods. These types of green spaces need to be preserved before vacant land is no longer available.

Groundwork Buffalo, in concert with Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo, could work to create new community gardens throughout the focus area where there is vacant or underutilized land. Community gardens can be both ornamental as flower gardens and locations for small scale urban farming. Community gardens can be part of healthy lifestyle programs for youth and provide activities for all ages of neighborhood residents.

*Potential Sites* – Community gardens can be located on any small plot of vacant or underutilized land in the focus area to include unused space on or near schools. The Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts (BAVPA), City Honors and Hamlin Park School 74 are all good locations for community gardens. Vacant lots near assets including Artspace and other community organizations could also be considered for new community gardens. These potential locations could involve youth from the schools, as well as neighborhood residents.

*Potential Partners* – Groundwork Buffalo will need to develop several partnerships in order to create new community gardens. Potential partners include the City Parks Department, and local non-profits including the Grassroots Gardens, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and Buffalo Micro Parks. Buffalo ReUse and Grassroots Gardens are collaborating to begin eight new community gardens in the focus area in the upcoming year. Groundwork Buffalo can work within existing frameworks for collaboration like this, and help establish new ones.

The creation of community garden will also require partnerships with local schools and neighborhood block clubs. The Wellness Institute is currently working with the Hamlin Park School on several healthy lifestyle initiatives, and can also be considered as a potential partner. Local business including Premium Services, Inc., a business that has expressed interest in partnering with Groundwork Buffalo, can help provide expertise and other resources to designing and developing park space.

April 12, 2009



Vacant land, like the photo above, can be transformed into community gardens like the rendering below.



## ***Green Streets***

*Justification* – Most public streets are designed to serve only one function: the efficient movement of automobile traffic. This design does not benefit people who do not drive, including children and the elderly, and does not create safe neighborhoods. Traditional streets add to environmental degradation through stormwater runoff and air pollution. “Green” streets can help improve neighborhood quality of life and ecological functioning.

*Overview* – Groundwork Buffalo can help reconceptualize the function of public streets and promote projects that redesign them. The City of Buffalo and County of Erie recently recognized this need by passing Complete Streets legislation. Public streets can become accessible to multiple forms of transportation and to people of different ages and abilities. Sidewalks and crosswalks can be improved to increase pedestrian accessibility. Bulbouts and signage can improve safety at crosswalks. Other traffic calming features, including speed bumps or speed islands, on-street parking, and road narrowing can also improve safety. These types of designs can reduce the need to use automobiles. Pedestrian-scale lighting can improve safety. Handicap accessibility features can also be included in designs. Bicycle accessibility can be improved with designated bicycle lanes that connect to other streets with bicycle lanes. Bike racks can be located throughout the focus area.

Public streets can be redesigned to serve environmental functions: reduce stormwater, provide habitat, and reduce temperatures in the summer and provide windbreaks in the winter. Designs can also include ecological drainage systems on the sides of roads such as rain gardens and bioswales that reduce and clean stormwater that would normally flow quickly and untreated into storm sewers. These green streets can help connect other green assets together, similar to the Olmsted parkway system.

Streets have long been play spaces for children, especially in neighborhoods with few formal parks. Traffic calming and other pedestrian safety measures can help increase the safety of children using streets as play spaces. Play spaces can be designed along streets and on portions of streets than can be narrowed.

*Potential Sites* – The city has recently posted a bond for \$1 million for infrastructure improvements and streetscaping in the Hamlin Park neighborhood, and will post a bond for \$1 million of infrastructure improvements in the Masten Park neighborhood in 2009. Green street designs throughout the Hamlin Park and Masten Park neighborhoods can be considered. The Wellness Institute is working with Hamlin Park School 74 on several healthy living programs. One of these programs is from a Safe Routes to School Grant, and includes the reconstruction of three major intersection; Jefferson and Northland, Wohlers and East Ferry, and Wohlers and Northland. Designs for these intersections can include pedestrian and bicycle accessibility features as well as green design features such as trees, bioswales and rain gardens. The city has planned infrastructure improvements on Dodge, Purdy, Waverly, Chester, Woodlawn, Florida, and Oak Grove as well.



These two images show what a normal street can look like if it is redesigned to be a green street. The images show renderings of an intersection on Masten Avenue before and after proposed redesigns.

Other planning initiatives include ideas about where to redesign streets. The Artspace Organic Revitalization plan for Midtown recommended several streetscape improvements on streets, including street tree plantings. The plan also recommended constructing a play walk along Laurel by narrowing the roadway and designing formal play spaces for children on the broadened sidewalk area. The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy's plan for the restoration and management of the park system recommends streetscaping improvements to the Humboldt Parkway, including pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and new plantings. The plan also recommends connecting Martin Luther King Jr. Park to Porter Avenue (an Olmsted parkway) by way of Best Street and North Street. This would connect Masten Park to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park as well. This would involve redesigning the street as parkways.

*Potential Partners* – Redesigning streets will require many partners, especially those from the government. The city's Department of Public Works, the state Department of Transportation, the Buffalo Sewer Authority, and the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council will all need to be involved in redesigning streets. The Wellness Institute can be partnered with when working in the Hamlin Park neighborhood and the Hamlin Park schools because of the existing involvements there. Green Options Buffalo, a bike sharing organization, can be a partner on any bicycle accessibility projects.

### ***Connecting Linear Parks***

*Justification* – Connecting assets together through a network of linear parks and trails can increase accessibility to these assets, provide recreation opportunities, and create greenspaces out of former vacant land. Trails through city blocks increase safety by providing bicyclists and pedestrians opportunities to avoid automobile traffic altogether. Often, they provide safer, shorter and more enjoyable routes to and from significant destinations, such as schools.

*Overview* – Buffalo's Olmsted Park system is an historic example of a linear park. Parkways connect green spaces together, forming larger continuous networks of greenspaces and trails. They can include multi-modal pathways or separate pathways for bicyclists, pedestrians, joggers, and rollerbladers. Linear parks can be built on contiguous vacant land through city blocks, and can be connected along streets where necessary.

*Potential Sites* – There are assets in Mid City that would benefit from being connected by linear parks. The Queen City Farm area, Artspace, and Masten Park can be connected through a system of linear parks and trails. Vacant land between these assets can be reused, and streets can be redesigned as part of the linear park system.

An existing example of an underdeveloped connecting linear park is the land above the buried Scajaquada Creek in Hamlin Park. Pathways and non-defined linear greens connect Canisius College with Fillmore Avenue to the east of the focus area, and include parts of Florida Street, the Florida/Northland Playground, and the pedestrian bridge over the Kensington Expressway. Although long term plans may include day lighting the Scajaquada Creek, short term plans can include improving and better maintaining these connections.

*Potential Partners* – The city will need to be a partner when reusing vacant publicly owned land for linear parks. Local organizations that focus on park space can also be partnered with including the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and Buffalo Micro Parks. Volunteer efforts from neighborhood residents, block clubs, schools, and service learning corps can help maintain the parks and improve their safety.

### ***Urban Forests***

*Justification* – There are at least two different ways to think of urban forests. The term can refer to the increase in tree canopy in the city such as sequential street trees, and trees in parks and yards. Each tree contributes to water management, shading, soil creation and the benefits of clean air. It has been demonstrated that a healthy urban forest saves municipalities thousands of dollars in stormwater costs by taking up water that would otherwise go into the sewer system – providing uncounted environmental services.

An urban forest can also refer to more natural areas in urban environments beyond street trees and yard trees such as the natural area at Tifft Nature Preserve. A 'forest' in the city would include not only canopy but also an understory and ground cover that creates

habitat for wildlife in addition to a more natural setting within the urban fabric. These urban forests, or woods, need special attention to protect them and to protect the people regarding safety and security. However, the fact that such special precautions are necessary should not preclude their use as the benefits for people, especially children, are significant (see Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*). Urban forests provide opportunities for recreation, education, and youth programming.

*Overview* - Groundwork Buffalo can work to plant street trees throughout the focus area where they are needed. This can be encouraged during times of street maintenance or reconstruction. Groundwork Buffalo can also work with the Buffalo Green Fund and ReTree Buffalo to distribute tree saplings through local schools, and community gathering spaces including the Jefferson Public library for planting on private property.

Vacant properties can also be used as tree nurseries to grow saplings to transplant into a nearby area. ReTree Buffalo is seeking sites for this kind of effort and where appropriate, this is an excellent use of vacant properties that are eventually expected to be transformed into other uses. Tree farms and urban forests need to be designed, managed and maintained in order to change the perception that they are 'vacant.' This is an excellent opportunity for local youth and residents to be trained in managing and maintaining urban forests, and serve as tour guides who share knowledge about the urban forests with the public.

*Potential Sites* – Buffalo is in need of street trees after the devastating storm of October 2006 that destroyed at least 25% of the urban forest. We need street trees wherever there are large gaps in tree canopies. A targeted opportunity is to work in areas that already have proposed streetscape improvements. Michigan Avenue and the Humboldt Parkway above the Kensington Expressway will undergo reconstruction soon and are good locations to plant street trees. Streetscape improvements to Humboldt Parkway and Best Street/North Street were recommended by the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy long term plan for restoration and management of the Olmsted parks. The city will be investing \$1 million in streetscaping and infrastructure improvement in the Hamlin Park and Masten Park neighborhoods. Groundwork Buffalo can ensure that street trees are planted in the most advantageous locations.

Managed urban forest project locations can include large areas of vacant land. Although there are few large, contiguous tracts of publicly owned vacant land in the focus area, there are many smaller areas mixed with publicly and privately owned vacant land, including Jefferson at Best, Harwood and Jefferson, Utica and Jefferson, Utica between Purdy and Masten, Utica and Michigan, Roehrer and Riley, Landon and Wohlers, between Glenwood and Emerson, and on either side of Southampton between Ellicott and Masten. As properties become *in rem*, demolition activities can be used to add to tracts of land that can increase the size of the managed urban forests.

*Potential Partners* – Tree planting efforts have numerous partners. ReTree Western New York, the Wellness Institute, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, the Buffalo Green

Fund, Keep Western New York Beautiful, and the city, can all be considered as potential partners. The Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper currently has funding from a grant to work on urban forest projects related to stormwater management, and has expressed interest in working with Groundwork Buffalo in the focus area. The Trust for Public Land has many brownfield remediation programs and is a potential partner. Maintaining managed urban forests will also require partnerships with neighborhood residents, block clubs, schools and service corps organizations such as AmeriCorps.

### **5.3.2 Stormwater Management**

*Justification* –Stormwater management strategies can help reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff entering surface and groundwater systems. In Buffalo, outdated combined sewer overflows discharge untreated sewage and stormwater into local water bodies during rain events. Ecologically based stormwater management strategies can provide green spaces, wildlife habitat, and allow environmental education and training opportunities. These strategies can improve the health of all of the water bodies in our region's streams, wetlands, rivers and lakes. There are several types of stormwater management projects in the focus area that would benefit from the involvement of Groundwork Buffalo. These potential projects are described below.

#### ***Rain Barrels***

*Overview* - Rain barrels are a form of rain water collection. Rain barrels can be attached to the down spout of building gutters, preventing the rain water from entering the sewer system directly. Collected water can then be used for lawns and gardening at no cost to the user, reducing water bills. Groundwork Buffalo can coordinate the distribution of rain barrels throughout the focus area and train local youth and residents on installation and management of rain barrels.

*Potential Sites* – There are numerous potential sites for rain barrels in the focus area as they do not occupy much space. Community gardens, organizations and institutions including public schools with gardens and any interested private residence or business can be targeted for distribution.

*Potential Partners* - Groundwork Buffalo can work with the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper who is currently running a rain barrel distribution program throughout the city.

#### ***Green Roofs***

*Overview* – Green roofs are building roofs that are partially or fully covered with a growing medium, such as soil, vegetation, and a waterproofing membrane. They are used to absorb stormwater during rain events, preventing stormwater from flowing directly into storm sewers. They can reduce heating and cooling costs of buildings, save money by extending the lifespan of a roof, and provide habitat for wildlife.

Groundwork Buffalo anticipates the demonstration of green roof projects in Mid City in an effort to convince private developers of the value of green roof technology, including the cost saving potential. Green roofs are becoming increasingly common, and local youth and residents can gain valuable knowledge on how to design, construct, and maintain them.

*Potential Sites* – Public buildings, including schools and the Jefferson public library, are good sites for green roof demonstration projects. Groundwork Buffalo can also work with Canisius College to find appropriate sites for green roof demonstration projects.

*Potential Partners* – Potential partners for green roof technology include Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Buffalo Micro Parks, UB School of Architecture and Planning, local schools, institutions, and other public buildings appropriate for demonstration projects.

### ***Rain gardens and Bioswales***

*Overview* - Rain gardens and bioswales are landscapes comprised of native and other naturalized vegetation that collect water runoff before it enters a storm sewer drain. This prevents runoff from overloading the sewer system and introducing untreated contaminants into fresh water bodies. They are meant to help infiltrate water back into the soil, and recharge groundwater supplies. They can also help improve drainage problems. Groundwork Buffalo can aid in the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of rain gardens and bioswales. Local youth and residents can be trained in rain garden and bioswale design, construction, and maintenance.

*Potential Sites* - Rain garden project locations can include any public spaces including rights of way, streets, parks, and buildings. There are a few streets in the focus area that have been identified for potential “green” redesign, and bioswales can be a component of that redesign. There are several existing public parks in the focus area that could include rain gardens, such as Masten Park, Johnnie B. Wiley Stadium, Viola Park, and Florida/Northland Playground. All of the public schools in the area have available space for rain gardens, including Buffalo Academy Visual and Performing Arts, Hamlin Park School 74, City Honors School, and Makowski Early Childhood Center. As new public green spaces are created, Groundwork can advocate for rain gardens and bioswales as a part of the design. The recent Artspace development included a rain garden in its landscaping, using native plants to buffer the parking lot. This use of rain gardens can be emulated throughout the focus area on new developments.

*Potential Partners* – The Buffalo Sewer Authority and the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper can be included as a partner on any rain garden or bioswale project. Public street redesign projects can include the city’s Department of Public Works and the NYS Department of Transportation (for projects on state roads). The city’s Parks Department can also serve as a partner. Projects involving public schools can include the schools as partners, including the administration and parent associations. Partners can also include neighborhood organizations and residents, since their efforts will be needed to help

maintain these projects. Local businesses including Premium Services, Inc., a business that has expressed interest in partnering with Groundwork Buffalo, can help provide expertise and other resources to designing and developing rain gardens.

### ***Constructed Wetlands***

*Overview* - Wetlands are good storers and filterers of stormwater. Along with appropriate and native vegetation, they provide habitat for wildlife and recreation opportunities for people. Excess stormwater can be drained or pumped into the wetland during a rain event, preventing combined sewer overflows. Unlike rain gardens and bioswales, constructed wetlands require larger areas of land and a more constant source of water. Unfortunately, wetlands are often viewed negatively as swamps or waste areas; it will be important to adequately communicate the value and function of the constructed wetland to the public. At a minimum, signage can contribute to public education. More effective is the involvement of the community throughout a wetland construction. Local youth and residents can be trained in building, managing and maintaining wetlands, and they can also help interpret their benefits as tour guides for the public.

*Potential Sites* – Constructed wetlands need water from a group of homes, streets and/or parking lots, or they can be designed along storm sewer lines (not combined sewer overflow lines). In the focus area, there is a storm sewer line beneath Masten Avenue that connects with combined storm sewer overflow lines beneath Jefferson and Michigan. These underground pipes flow north from high ground along North Street at the southern border of the focus area. The further the constructed wetland is from the high ground, the more water it can collect. Larger areas of vacant land along these streets, including brownfields, can be locations for recreated wetlands.

*Potential Partners* – The creation of constructed wetlands will require partnerships with local organizations including the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, local government agencies including the city Department of Public Works, the Buffalo Sewer Authority, and state and federal agencies including the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency. It will require collaboration with neighborhood residents and block groups.



April 12, 2009



This large area of publicly owned vacant land on Masten Avenue and Eaton can be a stormwater management project and public greenspace. The photo above shows current conditions of the site, the middle rendering shows a proposed constructed wetland on the same site, and the bottom rendering shows a proposed rain garden.



### ***Daylighting Scajaquada Creek – Long Term Opportunity***

*Overview* - The Scajaquada Creek, like many urban waterways, has over the years been channelized and buried in pipes to make room for development and to prevent flooding. This small urban creek represents a very long term opportunity for daylighting, that is, uncovering a buried waterway. Daylighting the creek, along with shoreline restoration, will allow natural systems to treat stormwater and reduce the amount of stormwater entering storm sewers. The recreated natural buffer around the day lit creek will provide stormwater absorption, habitat, and recreation opportunities. Trails and bike paths can be considered when day lighting the creek.

*Potential Sites* – The Scajaquada Creek pipes flow beneath the Hamlin Park area. Daylighting the entire creek will require the removal of some structures, although much of the land above the creek is currently vacant, or occupied by easily removable parking lots.

*Potential Partners* – Daylighting the Scajaquada Creek will require partnerships with local organizations including the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, local government agencies including the city Department of Public Works, the Buffalo Sewer Authority, and state and federal agencies including the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Trust for Public Land has worked on other urban creek daylighting projects and is a potential partner. The Hamlin Park Taxpayers Association has expressed interest in daylighting the Scajaquada Creek and can be involved in the neighborhood organizing phase of the project.

## **5.4 Programs**

Groundwork Buffalo mission includes not only on-the-ground transformation of underutilized vacant urban land, but also the engagement of the community in the design, planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of these lands. It also focuses on possible job training for members of the community in order to make its projects successful, sustainable, and beneficial to the community. What follows is a series of potential programs for Groundwork Buffalo to analyze during the first year in order to discover the most effective and appropriate actions for Buffalo.

**Youth Programming:** Youth programming will be an important component of Groundwork Buffalo. Many Groundwork Trusts have “Green Teams” of youth and this model can be emulated by Groundwork Buffalo. One of our partners, Buffalo ReUse, is developing youth training programs and Groundwork Buffalo can work with this and other existing efforts. Youth programming can help fill a need that city budget cuts have created. It can include education programs, teaching children of all ages the importance of healthy lifestyle choices, and environmental education, such as the ecological function of all types of green spaces. Youth programming can give kids responsibilities and a

sense of community ownership, and can incorporate peer education programs. Youth programming can also be focused on training and Groundwork Buffalo projects will all have skill building components. Training programs related to these projects will give youth the skills needed to pursue careers in park management, ecological restoration, gardening, and many others. Youth enterprise programs will teach entrepreneurial skills and allow these children to start their own businesses in the neighborhood now and as adults. Groundwork Buffalo can work with local schools and community organizations to provide appropriate and much needed youth programs.



Collaboration with existing initiatives, like the Massachusetts Avenue Project's Growing Green youth program, will help Groundwork Buffalo accomplish its mission in the focus area.

**Training and Business Development:** Groundwork Buffalo can facilitate or provide training, as appropriate, to local adults in areas related to the various projects it implements or collaborates on. An important component of this training will include small business development education and programs, especially those opportunities related to green businesses. Adults can gain valuable experience in various trades and project management as well as increase their social capital by making connections with other people, organizations, and businesses. Habitat restoration, landscaping and building rehabilitation are other potential skills that neighborhood residents can learn from being involved in Groundwork projects. Groundwork can help connect these residents with employers searching for people with these skills.

Small business development is also an important component of what Groundwork can offer the community. Various training opportunities can give local residents skills they need to start their own related business. Groundwork can help facilitate small business

development through mechanisms such as business training, business incubators that provide needed small scale facilities including community kitchens, and even micro-loan programs.

Within the Mid City focus area, the Jeremiah Partnership, a faith-based initiative, constructed a small business incubator on Jefferson Avenue in the focus area. The incubator offers low-rent commercial space and access to on-site technical assistance to small businesses and micro-enterprises. MicroBiz Buffalo Network is an existing small business development program. Groundwork Buffalo can promote business development by collaborating with efforts like these.

**Volunteer Coordination:** Volunteers of all types will be essential to the success of project implementation and stewardship. Groundwork Buffalo can be a community effort that fosters relationships within the community. Projects that have a demonstrable impact on the community will make neighborhood residents will be more likely to volunteer. Local schools are sources of volunteers as many have service learning curricula and Canisius College also has service learning programs that place students with community organizations. Volunteers from the Groundwork Buffalo focus area can also tie into volunteer networks of the various organizations with which it collaborates. The maintenance of vacant lots will be considered a primary function of volunteer efforts.

**Leadership:** As a lead organization on vacant land and brownfield reclamation as a means of building community assets, a local Groundwork Trust would be in a position to provide leadership to several organizations that are already focused on separate aspects of land use and green infrastructure planning and maintenance, vacant land reclamation, and brownfields remediation. There are many community organizations, block clubs, religious groups, and institutions working on improving the focus area. Groundwork Buffalo can take on the role of leading, or at least, coordinating efforts of these organizations by fostering partnerships when organization have similar goals, and help reduce redundant work. Collaboration can improve effectiveness, increase capacity, and generate new opportunities for revitalization.

**Neighborhood Planning:** The City of Buffalo has a strong framework for community planning that includes the Office of Strategic Planning and the Good Neighbors Planning Alliances. The focus area is part of the Masten Good Neighbors Planning Alliance as well as the Mid City NRSA. Groundwork Buffalo can supplement those city efforts in a few key areas. Groundwork Buffalo can advocate for, and help develop, land use policies that create a legal framework for permanent and temporary green spaces including community gardens and forms of urban agriculture. This framework could include improved processes to transfer ownership rights of privately maintained community green spaces on publicly owned land.

**Brownfield Assessment:** The Groundwork Buffalo focus area, like many urban areas, has soil contamination issues. The DEC has remediated a small number of hazardous

April 12, 2009

waste sites in the focus area, but there may still be a few hazardous waste sites remaining. In any event, the city assumes all soils are contaminated with lead, and requires the removal of the first two feet of soil from any new housing project involving city funds. Urban soils have received years of air and water deposition, and lead paint from early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. The result is that there are many brownfields in the focus area, including those that are very small, but without a rigorous program of testing, there is no way to determine if all of the sites pose an actual risk. Groundwork Buffalo can develop a strategy and secure funding for testing as one of its initial programs.

April 12, 2009

## Chapter 6: Organization and Management

This section outlines the recommended organizational and management structure to best develop, promote, and manage the Groundwork Buffalo Trust.

### 6.1 Mission

The Groundwork Buffalo Trust shares the mission of Groundwork USA:

#### **The Mission of Groundwork Buffalo**

To bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the (City of Buffalo's) physical environment by developing community-based partnerships that empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic and social well-being.

### 6.2 Organizational Structure

Groundwork Buffalo will be a new, independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization devoted to the Groundwork USA Trust mission. This is the format of all Groundwork USA Trusts, and will allow Groundwork Buffalo to become one of the Groundwork USA member organizations.

**Independent Not-For-Profit 501(c)(3) Organization:** The decision to recommend an independent not-for-profit structure was based on the following factors:

- Control over programs and goals, priorities, and identity.
- Ability to solicit and accept both private and public funds.
- The EPA/NPS grant requirement that local Groundwork Trusts be independent organizations.
- EPA/NPS grant funds are essential to establishing the organization necessary to fulfill the mission. In addition, Groundwork USA in cooperation with EPA/NPS-RTCA will work to secure future federal funding to help sustain the operations of the Groundwork network.

- Groundwork USA also provides technical assistance and access to the network of other Groundwork offices that can share problem-solving strategies and experiences.

**Groundwork Buffalo:** Most Groundwork Trusts are led by a single-mission, not-for-profit organization with a Board of Directors and a small staff. As discussed above, this is also the organizational structure that is recommended in Buffalo to best serve the needs of the trust mission.

**Alternative Structures:** Several organizational scenarios have also been considered, including:

- The Trust mission would become a program or affiliate entity of an existing not-for-profit or public benefit entity active in the neighborhood;
- The Trust would fold into an existing but not functioning non-profit organization, altering that organization's mission to reflect Groundwork's own mission;
- The Trust mission would become a program of an existing city agency; or
- The Trust mission would become a direct and shared responsibility of the community-based organizations in the proposed trust service area through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding.

**Analysis of Alternative Structures:** In evaluating these alternatives, it is important to recognize that the intent is to establish and maintain a clearly outlined management structure that:

- Best fulfills the organization's responsibilities to its mission;
- Fosters public involvement;
- Facilitates coordination among groups; and
- Provides for checks and balances and self-evaluation.

***Program or Affiliate Entity of an Existing Not-for-Profit --*** This option is attractive because of the potential cost savings that might result from an agreement with an existing not-for-profit. However, none offer the range of services and programs being contemplated for Groundwork Buffalo, nor was there an interest in taking on the Groundwork mission.

***Transform an Existing Not-for-Profit --*** This option would allow Groundwork Buffalo to adopt an existing but not functioning non-profit organization. This strategy can help avoid going through the 501(c)(3) development process.

***Program of an Existing City Agency --*** The City of Buffalo strongly supports the Groundwork mission, however, funding is limited and it is not adding new programs.

***Shared Responsibility of Community-Based Organizations*** -- Shared responsibility has the advantage of utilizing the existing framework of community organizations and not creating new demand on community volunteer capacity. However, the team concludes that the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. The disadvantages include the fact that the Groundwork mission is not central to any one organization; with shared responsibility comes lack of control and accountability, the lack of a reliable funding stream, and conflicts over liability.

## **6.3 Board of Directors**

The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors serve to establish and support the vision of the Trust. At the onset, at a minimum, the group will be a working board, and as such, will assist in the planning and implementation process. Selected key responsibilities of the board in the early years of operation and beyond include:

- Adopt goals, objectives and strategies that ensure that Groundwork Buffalo's mission is addressed.
- Ensure Adequate Resources. The board will develop adequate financial and human resources for the organization to fulfill its mission. The board will be expected to make financial contributions to Groundwork Buffalo.
- Manage Resources Efficiently. The board will ensure the proper fiscal stewardship and will approve an annual budget for the organization.
- Develop Programs. The board will establish programs and monitor their effectiveness.
- Build the Organization's Public Image. The board will serve as the organization's primary link to the trust community by clearly communicating the Trust's mission and accomplishments in order to gain public support.
- Establish Working Subcommittees. Much of the work of the group will be accomplished by subcommittees focused on achieving specific goals of the Trust. These committees will be headed by members of the board and composed of staff and volunteers. Recommended committees include:
  - Financial and Legal
  - Fundraising
  - Organizational Development
  - Program/Project Committees
  - Neighborhood Committees
- Hire an executive director. Appointed by the Board of Directors, the executive director will assist the board in formulating the organization's strategic plans and policies, and have primary responsible for carrying them out to further the Trust's mission. A strong



advocate, the executive director will be a primary representative of the organization and will share fundraising responsibility with the Board of Directors. She or he will be the chief operating officer and will prepare the annual budget for board review and approval, and hire and manage staff. In addition, the executive director will lead program work until sufficient funds have been raised to hire staff.

### **Qualifications of the Executive Director**

The Executive Director for Groundwork Buffalo will be responsible for developing and implementing projects and programs, and successfully managing the Trust. Specific qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture and/or Urban Planning/Design or related field; master's degree preferred.
- Relevant experience in green space management, community development, public policy, planning, or smart growth.
- Proven ability to work in culturally diverse environments.
- Volunteer management experience.
- Project management experience.
- RFP development/ bid review experience.
- Demonstrated success in grant writing and funding development.
- Comfortable working with a board of directors and familiarity with a non-profit setting.
- Leadership skills and the ability to develop program vision.
- Demonstrated management experience, including staff supervision and financial management/reporting.
- Comfortable speaking in community forums and facilitating relationships among various sectors.
- Ability to manage multiple agendas.
- Strong interest in urban regeneration and green space management.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Proven capacity to work with senior level corporate, philanthropic and public sector officials.
- Good organizational abilities; ability to work independently.
- Proficiency with word processing, spreadsheets, PowerPoint, and Internet communications
- Preference will be giving to candidates with a familiarity of the City of Buffalo and local government/civic institutions.

- Staff as Funds Permit. Additional staffing to carry out specific projects is highly dependent on the organization's financial state. Therefore, employees of the Trust may often be hired on an "as needed" basis, or when funding allows. Qualifications for these employees will be based upon the specific projects or programs they will be needed for.

Also, appointed board and committee members can have qualities and abilities that are pursuant to the Trust mission, thereby alleviating the need for hired staff. Opportunities to hire AmeriCorps and Vista volunteers, student interns and participants of other service-learning programs should be pursued.

- **Manage a Strong Volunteer Base.** The use of voluntary strategies is extremely important to implementing and maintaining the Trust and its programs.

**Prospective Members of the Board of Directors:** Drawing on members of the Steering Committee, the board can reflect the diversity of the larger community and the breadth of community support for establishing a Groundwork Trust, including business, government, philanthropic, nonprofit, civic groups, church groups, community organizations and residents. In choosing a Board of Directors for the Trust, the Steering Committee can ensure that the board consists of a balanced distribution of members by program and neighborhood. Lastly, it is important to select board members who bring unique expertise or passion to the table with respect to some aspect of the Trust's mission; these individuals will be critical, especially during the early years. An initial list of potential Board members can be found in Appendix: Contacts.

It is recommended that the Board of Directors consist of approximately:

- Four representatives from the Steering Committee
- Four representatives from the focus area community.
- Four other representatives with technical expertise, representatives of the city, or representatives with access to large financial resources.

Some Steering Committee members may also be part of the two other groups of recommended Board of Directors.

## **6.4 Strategies for Implementation**

The successful implementation of the Groundwork Buffalo relies heavily on adopting strategies that will facilitate the Trust mission. These strategies will promote community involvement in maintaining and assessing the Trust, as well as promote coordination among the diverse organizations that support the Trust mission.

**Municipal Agreements:** It is important to obtain recognition for the relationship with the City of Buffalo through a resolution by the City Council in support of the local Groundwork Trust organization. The municipal resolution is a critical component of the organizational development process. The resolutions can indicate the city's willingness to participate and confirm that the program adheres to municipal goals and objectives. An important follow up strategy for implementing Groundwork Buffalo is formalizing an agreement between the Trust and the City of Buffalo in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will set the foundation for coordinating actions to ensure that they

correspond with the overall Trust vision by documenting shared goals and creating a framework for cooperation.

**Founding the Corporation:** As mentioned earlier in this section, it is recommended that Groundwork Buffalo incorporate in the form of a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. Attaining nonprofit status through the IRS is the standard practice of other local Groundwork Trusts nationwide. Assistance for this step may come from collaboration with the UB Community Development Law Clinic whose students regularly take on projects like this one. Groundwork USA can act as a fiduciary and 501(c)(3) umbrella for Groundwork Buffalo during the launching phase. The box below lists, in order, the seven steps towards securing not-for-profit status.

Creating a §501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Corporation

A not-for-profit corporation refers to any association that is operated solely for the purpose of social welfare, civic improvement, recreation, preservation, environmental protection or any other purpose except for profit. Groundwork Buffalo can be operated in such a way, due to its philanthropic mission. There are a number of steps that need to be taken in order to achieve not-for-profit corporation status.

- The organization must identify and define the purpose of the future corporation according to Section 201 of the NYS not-for-profit law. Groundwork Buffalo would fall under a Type B purpose for its charitable, educational, scientific and cultural attributes.
- The organization must establish the initial directors who will be responsible for signing the Certificate of Incorporation. NYS requires a minimum of three.
- A name must be decided upon, pursuant to the guidelines described in Section 301 of NYS not-for-profit law.
- The organization must complete and file the Certificate of Incorporation with the NYS Department of State, Division of Corporations, in accordance with Section 402. Upon corporate existence the initial directors must conduct a meeting at which by-laws are adopted and the Board of Directors is appointed, pursuant to Section 405.
- Pursuant to Section 603, the Board of Directors must hold at least one annual meeting to reaffirm the by-laws and board members.

April 12, 2009

## Chapter 7: Funding and Resource Development

### 7.1 Five-Year Budget

The Feasibility Study presents two different budgets. In December 2008, Groundwork Buffalo Steering Committee has asked the city for an additional \$75,000 for project implementation (10-15 vacant lot/brownfield projects) in the first year. Table 7-1 outlines the projected growth of Groundwork Buffalo over the first five years of the corporation, if this additional funding is approved.

Table 7-2 presents the projected growth of Groundwork Buffalo without this additional project funding. The preliminary pro forma outlines expected increases in philanthropic support of the Trust as well as both one-time and recurring expenses.

### 7.2 Projected Sources of Income

Potential sources of funding have been grouped into five categories: government, corporate, foundation, individual and in-kind contributions. No direct revenues from services or fees are assumed in the first five years. Only the funding from EPA and the city match for the first three years is guaranteed; the rest of the funding described will need to be secured through fundraising programs by Groundwork Buffalo. The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo are committed to assist Groundwork Buffalo in funding and resource development. Groundwork Buffalo will be seeking funding from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo for the first year.

**Government grants and contracts** will be the staple of Groundwork Buffalo providing consistent funding for at least the first five years. It is anticipated the National Park Service will provide \$30,000-35,000 to Groundwork Buffalo to launch. Additional funding may be available upon application from Groundwork Buffalo in future years. It is further anticipated that the city will provide annual funding of \$25,000 for the first three years. Additional grants for projects and programs will have to be secured by Groundwork Buffalo. (The Groundwork Steering Committee as of December 2008 has requested an additional \$75,000 from the city.)

**Corporate grants** represent funding collected from various commercial interests in the Trust service area. Corporate contributions are expected to be \$5,000 for the first year, increasing to over \$25,000 by the fifth year of operation.

**Foundation grants** will be sought from such regional sources as the Oishei Foundation, and will likely amount to \$10,000 to 15,000 for the first year, depending on the number of projects Groundwork Buffalo undertakes. The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, with representatives on the Steering Committee, has suggested a

willingness to help provide resources to Groundwork Buffalo. Grant requests are projected to secure \$50,000 by year five.

**Individual donations** are expected to be small and reach \$10,000 as the Trust develops appropriate fundraising drives and benefit functions.

**In-kind** support will come from various sources. In-kind contributions will be higher in the first year as Groundwork Buffalo will need more support getting started. Volunteers will be needed to provide much of the work for projects. Interns from local schools and universities will be needed to provide operational and programmatic support. Other partner organizations may be willing to provide resources, including office space, to Groundwork Buffalo. Local businesses, including Premium Services Inc. are interested in providing in-kind services for projects and programs benefiting the community.

### 7.3 Anticipated Expenses

There will be both one-time and recurring expenses which will accompany the development of Groundwork Buffalo. As the recognition of the Trust grows, budgetary needs will shift somewhat, from one-time expenses to recurring programmatic expenses.

**The onetime expenses**, appearing under year one and two of the pro forma, are certainly the most critical to achieving the mission of the Trust during startup. These expenses include \$9,500 over two years on equipment, materials, and supplies such as basic office supplies related to running the Trust.

**Recurring expenses** will consist of staff salary and benefits, office expenses, and promotional material. Initially, the full-time executive director will be the only paid staff position, along with AmeriCorps and Green Team interns. The executive director will likely not be hired immediately, and the first year projected expense is pro-rated accordingly. Starting in year one, it is anticipated that program staff will be hired on a part-time basis, moving to full time by year three. By the fifth year of business, a second part-time staff may be hired, and total salaries and fringe benefits should be about \$119,840. Development, production, and distribution of promotional materials for the Trust will account for most of the expenses under the headings 'postage and deliveries' and 'printing and copying'.

**Table 7-1: Buffalo Groundwork Trust 5-Year Pro Forma  
with City project funds**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>ANTICIPATED INCOME</b>					
<i>Government grants and contracts</i>					
National Park Service*	30,000	30,000	25,000	0	0
City of Buffalo	100,000	25,000	25,000	5,000	6,000
Buffalo Sewer Authority	0	10,000	10,000	20,000	20,000
County	0	0	0	0	0

April 12, 2009

State	0	20,000	20,000	50,000	50,000
Federal	0	20,000	20,000	40,000	40,000
Corporate grants	5,000	15,000	20,000	20,000	25,000
Foundation grants	15,000	30,000	40,000	50,000	50,000
Individual donations/ events	5,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
In kind contributions	25,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>	<b>\$205,000</b>	<b>\$211,000</b>
<b>ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES</b>					
<i>Salary and benefits</i>					
Executive director	30,000	40,000	40,000	42,000	42,000
Program director	10,000	15,000	30,000	30,000	45,000
Interns (Americorps/Green Team)	3,750	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Fringe (at 32% for FT)	12,800	17,600	22,400	23,040	27,840
<i>Operating</i>					
Facilities rental and utilities	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Equipment rental	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Materials and supplies	5,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Telephone, internet, and fax	3,500	3,750	4,000	4,250	4,500
Postage and deliveries	4,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Printing and copying	2,500	2,750	3,000	3,250	3,500
Travel	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,800
<i>Project/Program</i>					
Proposed initial projects	85,000	60,000	65,000	70,000	70,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$164,750</b>	<b>\$159,800</b>	<b>\$186,100</b>	<b>\$194,240</b>	<b>\$215,140</b>
OPERATING INCOME or (LOSS)	\$15,250	\$5,200	(\$6,100)	\$10,760	(\$4,140)
RESERVE FUND	15,250	20,450	14,350	25,110	20,970

**Table 7-2: Buffalo Groundwork Trust 5-Year Pro Forma**  
without City project funds

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>ANTICIPATED INCOME</b>					
<i>Government grants and contracts</i>					
National Park Service*	35,000	25,000	25,000	0	0
City of Buffalo	25,000	25,000	25,000	2,500	5,000
Buffalo Sewer Authority	0	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000
County	0	0	0	0	0



State	0	20,000	20,000	50,000	50,000
Federal	0	20,000	20,000	40,000	40,000
Corporate grants	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000
Foundation grants	10,000	20,000	30,000	40,000	50,000
Individual donations/ events	5,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
In kind contributions	20,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>	<b>\$187,500</b>	<b>\$210,000</b>
<b>ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES</b>					
<i>Salary and benefits</i>					
Executive director	30,000	40,000	40,000	42,000	42,000
Program director	10,000	15,000	30,000	30,000	45,000
Interns (Americorps/Green Team)	3,750	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Fringe (at 32%)	12,800	17,600	22,400	23,040	27,840
<i>Operating</i>					
Facilities rental and utilities	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Equipment rental	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Materials and supplies	5,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Telephone, internet, and fax	3,500	3,750	4,000	4,250	4,500
Postage and deliveries	4,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Printing and copying	2,500	2,750	3,000	3,250	3,500
Travel	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,800
<i>Project/Program</i>					
Proposed initial projects	10,000	30,000	50,000	65,000	65,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$89,750</b>	<b>\$129,800</b>	<b>\$171,100</b>	<b>\$189,240</b>	<b>\$210,140</b>
OPERATING INCOME or (LOSS)	\$10,250	\$10,200	(\$6,100)	(\$1,740)	(\$140)
RESERVE FUND	10,250	20,450	14,350	12,610	12,470

\*The National Park Service will provide Groundwork Buffalo with \$30,000 to \$35,000 for the first year upon launching. Additional funds will be allocated from the National Park Service upon their availability and Groundwork Buffalo's performance.

## 7.4 Additional Potential Funding Sources

Funding is critical to the successful implementation of the proposed Groundwork Buffalo. This section identifies a number of potential federal, state, and local public funding sources, non-profit funding sources, and local and national private foundations. It is important to note that multiple sources of funding leads to greater institutional stability. Table 7-2 lists grant programs which are particularly applicable to Groundwork Buffalo, as well as the purpose and type of assistance available through the program.

#### **7.4.1 Public Sources**

**Federal Agencies** -- As shown in Table 7-3, a number of other federal agencies have grant programs which offer potential sources of funds for the development and/or operation of Groundwork Buffalo. These agencies include the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the National Park Service.

**New York State** -- New York State grant programs potentially available for the project are administered through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). In addition to the agency-specific grant programs, state funds may be available through Local Initiatives grants provided on a year-to-year basis through local legislators.

**City of Buffalo** -- Support for capital or operating costs for the educational facility may be available through the City of Buffalo's capital budget or general fund. In addition, the city administers the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The city may also contract with Groundwork Buffalo to implement projects on vacant lots and maintain vacant lots.

Because of federal clean water mandates, the Buffalo Sewer Authority (BSA) and the City of Buffalo have proposed improving its storm sewer system. The Buffalo Sewer Authority is a potential source of funding for stormwater related projects, including rain gardens.

#### **7.4.2 Private Sources**

National and local foundations and private corporations offer another potential source of funds for the project. Table 4-1 provides a listing of foundations and corporations which are known for giving to programs like those of Groundwork Buffalo.

**Foundations** -- The largest private foundations in the Buffalo-Niagara region are the Oishei Foundation and the Wendt Foundation, both of which have a history of supporting similar projects. National foundations which have supported environmental/educational projects include the Charles S. Mott Foundation.

**Corporations** -- Local financial institutions, including HSBC Bank USA, M&T Bank, and others, are potential resources for obtaining financing for the construction of the center as well as for outright grants. In addition to outright grants, corporations are potential sources of in-kind contributions.

**Individuals** -- Individual donors should not be overlooked as an important source of funds. Major donors could include residents of Buffalo and the surrounding area who are interested in building the community.

**Table 7-3: Potential Funding Sources**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Funding Criteria</b>
<b>Federal</b>		
<b>United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfields Job Training Grant Program</b>	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>	Provides environmental job training projects that will facilitate the assessment, remediation, or preparation of brownfield sites. Eligible applicants must identify and propose to serve a community that currently receives, or has received, financial assistance (federal, state, or tribal) for brownfields.
<b>United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Sustainable Skyline Initiative</b>	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>	Non-profits are eligible to receive the award. It awards proposals that integrate transportation, energy, land use, and air quality into planning programs and projects that yield measurable air quality benefits.
<b>United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant</b>	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>	Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 to assess a site contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants (including hazardous substances commingled with petroleum) and up to \$200,000 to address a site contaminated by petroleum.
<b>United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfield Cleanup Grant</b>	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>	Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 per site.
<b>US Commerce Department: Economic Development Administration-Economic Development Assistance Programs</b>	<a href="http://www.eda.gov">www.eda.gov</a>	EDA advances economic growth by assisting communities and regions experiencing chronic high unemployment and low per capita income to create an environment that fosters innovation, promotes entrepreneurship, and attracts increased private capital investment.
<b>United States Department of Agriculture Community Food Projects</b>	<a href="http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/communityfoodprojects.cfm">http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/communityfoodprojects.cfm</a>	Community Food Projects should be designed to (1): (A) meet the food needs of low-income people; (B) increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs; and (C) promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues; and/or (2) meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agriculture needs for (A) infrastructure improvement and development; (B) planning for long-term solutions; or (C) the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers. Non-profits are eligible. Funding ranges from \$10,000 to \$300,000.
<b>United States Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program</b>	<a href="http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/sustainableagricultureresearchandeducation.cfm">http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/sustainableagricultureresearchandeducation.cfm</a>	SARE works to increase knowledge about - and help farmers and ranchers adopt - practices that are profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities. Several types of competitive grants are awarded by four regional administrative councils. Research and education grants, generally ranging from \$60,000 to \$150,000, fund projects that usually involve scientists, producers and others in an interdisciplinary approach. Non-profits are eligible.
<b>AmeriCorps State and National Program</b>	<a href="http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp">http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding/index.asp</a>	AmeriCorps grants are generally awarded to eligible organizations to recruit, train, and manage AmeriCorps members who address community needs.

<b>Land &amp; Water Conservation Fund (Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999)</b>	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/">http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/</a>	The LWCF program provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.
<b>Northeast Sustainable Agriculture, Research, and Education (SARE) Sustainable Community Grants</b>	<a href="http://nesare.org/get/">http://nesare.org/get/</a>	Sustainable Community Grants make a direct connection between community revitalization and farming. Projects must address specific key issues such as farm finance, marketing, land use, water use, enterprise development, value-added product development, or other delineated topic areas. To apply, you must be affiliated with Cooperative Extension, NRCS, a municipality, a state department of agriculture, a college or university, a community organization, or other institutional entity.
<b>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.nih.gov/grants">www.grants.nih.gov/grants</a>	
<b>National Science Foundation (NSF)</b>		NSF funds research and education in science and engineering through grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements.
<b>New York State</b>		
<b>Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: Historic Preservation Program</b>	<a href="http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/">http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/</a>	Projects to improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore properties on the State or National Register for use by all segments of the population for park, recreation, conservation, or preservation purposes.
<b>Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: Parks Program</b>	<a href="http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/">http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/</a>	A matching grant program for the acquisition or development of parks and recreational facilities for projects to preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures for park, recreation or conservation purposes. Funds may be awarded to municipalities or not-for-profits with an ownership interest, for indoor or outdoor projects and must reflect the priorities established in the NY Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).
<b>Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: Heritage Areas Program</b>	<a href="http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/">http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/</a>	A matching grant program for projects to preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures, identified in a management plan approved by the Commissioner. Projects must fall within a New York State Designated Heritage Area.
<b>Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: Acquisition Program</b>	<a href="http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/">http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/</a>	A matching grant program for the acquisition of a permanent easement or fee title to lands, waters or structures for use by all segments of the population for park, recreation, conservation or preservation purposes. To be used for all three program areas where acquisition is of more importance than development.
<b>Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: Recreational Trails Program</b>	<a href="http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/">http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/</a>	A matching grant program for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and trail-related projects. Funds are available to non-profit organizations, municipal, state and federal agencies, Indian tribal governments and other public agencies and authorities. Funded projects must be identified in, or further a specific goal of, the SCORP and must be available to the general public. Source of funds: Federal Highway Administration.
<b>Department of Environmental Conservation Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant Program</b>	<a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html</a>	Funding for projects that address exposure of communities to multiple environmental harms and risks.
<b>Department of Environmental Conservation Urban Forestry Grants</b>	<a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html</a>	Provides municipalities with funding for community forestry related projects.
<b>Empire State Development Corporation</b>	<a href="http://www.empire.state.ny.us">www.empire.state.ny.us</a>	Grants and loans for infrastructure planning and construction. Program is intended to facilitate the creation and/or retention of jobs and the increase in business activities in the state.

<b>New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Community Gardens</b>	<a href="http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AD/release.asp?ReleaseID=1736">http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AD/release.asp?ReleaseID=1736</a>	The Community Gardens Capacity Building Grants Program will improve access to fresh local produce, help New Yorkers reduce their food budgets, preserve open space, and provide a cleaner, healthier environment by supporting community gardens throughout New York State. The community garden grants will provide up to \$5,000 to existing community gardens and local garden coalitions that serve low-income people in urban areas. The funding is to be used to strengthen local community garden organizations
<b>New York State Pollution Prevention Institute: Community grants Program</b>	<a href="http://www.nysp2i.rit.edu/">http://www.nysp2i.rit.edu/</a>	The proposed goal of the program is to provide financial and technical support for projects that raise awareness and understanding and lead to implementation of practices and behaviors at the local level with the goal of improving the health, environmental quality and economic vitality of New York State communities. The grant amount is \$5,000 - \$20,000.
<b>"Stateside" -- Land &amp; Water Conservation Fund (Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999)</b>	See Land and Water Conservation Fund (CARA) under "Federal" above.	See, Land and Water conservation Fund (CARA) under "Federal" above.
<b>City of Buffalo</b>		
<b>Livable Communities Grant Program</b>	<a href="http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/Office_of_Strategic_Planning">http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/Office_of_Strategic_Planning</a>	The purpose of the Livable Communities Grant Program is to provide funding to Block Clubs, civic/citizens associations for the implementation of innovative projects that will provide measurable visual and physical improvements in their neighborhoods. Grants range from \$100 to \$5,000 (\$7,500 within the targeted 13 Livable Communities neighborhoods).
<b>US Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant(CDBG)</b>	<a href="http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/Office_of_Strategic_Planning">http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/Office_of_Strategic_Planning</a>	Loans, grants, loan guarantees to support community development for low/moderate income benefit.
<b>Private Foundations (National)</b>		
<b>Environmental Grantmakers Association</b>	<a href="http://www.ega.org/index.php">http://www.ega.org/index.php</a>	The Environmental Grantmakers Association is comprised of over 200 individual foundations that have grants for environmental work.
<b>The Ben and Jerry's Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.benjerry.com/foundation/index.html">http://www.benjerry.com/foundation/index.html</a>	The Mission of the Ben & Jerry's Foundation is to make the world a better place by empowering Ben & Jerry's employees to use available resources to support and encourage organizations that are working towards eliminating the underlying causes of environmental and social problems.
<b>Captain Planet Foundation</b>	<a href="http://captainplanetfoundation.org/">http://captainplanetfoundation.org/</a>	The mission of the Captain Planet Foundation is to fund and support hands-on environmental projects for children and youths. Our objective is to encourage innovative programs that empower children and youth around the world to work individually and collectively to solve environmental problems in their neighborhoods and communities.
<b>Environmental Support Center</b>	<a href="http://www.envsc.org/">http://www.envsc.org/</a>	The Environmental Support Center promotes the quality of the natural environment, human health and community sustainability by increasing the organizational effectiveness of local, state and regional organizations working on environmental issues and for environmental justice.
<b>Great Lakes Protection Fund</b>	<a href="http://www.glpf.org/">http://www.glpf.org/</a>	The fund seeks to lead to tangible improvements in the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem, promote the interdependence of healthy ecological and economic systems, and are innovative, creative, and venturesome.

<b>The Switzer Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.switzernetwork.org/">http://www.switzernetwork.org/</a>	The Robert & Patricia Switzer Foundation identifies and nurtures environmental leaders who have the ability and determination to make a significant impact, and supports initiatives that will have direct and measurable results to improve environmental quality.
<b>The National Environmental Education &amp; Training Foundation Competitive Challenge Grants</b>	Grants Coordinator, 202-261-6478.	The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation supports projects that help people make the connection between their health and environment. Interested in both correcting current problems and preventing new ones.
<b>Doris Duke Charitable Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.ddcf.org/">http://www.ddcf.org/</a>	Support research and training of public, private and non-profit leaders in sustainable land use planning and policy and training future leaders in sustainable resource management. Does not currently fund "toxics issues."
<b>Charles Stewart Mott Foundation: Environment Program</b>	<a href="http://www.mott.org">www.mott.org</a>	Environmental Program priorities are (1) Reform of International Finance and Trade; (2) Conservation of freshwater systems in North America; and (3) Special Initiatives
<b>The Surdna Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.surdna.org/">http://www.surdna.org/</a>	The foundation makes grants in the areas of environment, community revitalization, effective citizenry, the arts and the nonprofit sector, with annual grantmaking of approximately \$37 million.
<b>The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.rwjf.org/">http://www.rwjf.org/</a>	The mission of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is to improve the health and health care of all Americans. The foundation offers grants to non-profits in the following program areas: building human capital, childhood obesity, coverage, pioneer, public health, quality/equality, and vulnerable populations.
<b>Gannett Foundation</b>	<a href="http://www.gannettfoundation.org/">http://www.gannettfoundation.org/</a>	"Supports local organizations in communities where the Gannett Co. owns a newspaper or broadcast station. Each local Gannett operation establishes its own priorities depending upon local needs.
<b>Pew Charitable Trusts</b>	<a href="http://www.pewtrusts.com">www.pewtrusts.com</a>	Culture and environment grants.
<b>National Trust for Historic Preservation</b>	<a href="http://www.preservationnation.org/">http://www.preservationnation.org/</a>	Johanne Favrot Fund for marketing and educational programs.
<b>Private Foundations (Local)</b>		
<b>The John R. Oishei Foundation</b>	HSBC Center, Buffalo, NY 14203 716-856-9490, <a href="http://www.oisheifdt.org">http://www.oisheifdt.org</a> . Largest local charitable foundation.	
<b>The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation</b>	40 Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14202 716-855-2146. Second-largest local charitable foundation.	Broad-based group of past grant recipients.
<b>Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo</b>	712 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202 716-852-2857	Promoting effective and efficient grantmaking to serve the opportunities and needs of the community in such areas as...education, environment, health, social needs and community development.
<b>James H. Cummings Foundation</b>	1807 Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY 14207 716-874-0040.	Focus is on medical research for underprivileged children.
<b>Seymour H. Knox Foundation</b>	Jim Wendell 3750 Marine Midland Center, Buffalo, NY 14203 716-854-6811.	Funds environmental projects.
<b>The Baird Foundation</b>	Catherine Schweitzer PO Box 1210-Ellicott Station, Buffalo, NY 14205 716-883-2429.	N/A

April 12, 2009

<b>The Western New York Foundation</b>	Welles Moot, Jr. 237 Main Street Ste 1402 Buffalo, NY 14203 716-847-6440.	N/A
<b>Joy Family Foundation</b>	Marsha Joy Sullivan 5107-111 Goundry St, North Tonawanda, NY 14120 716-743-9735.	Focus similar to Cummings Foundation.
<b>William S. Hein Foundation</b>	William Hein 507 North Forest Road, Williamsville, NY 14221	No restrictions.
<b>Hahn Family Foundation</b>	Charles Hahn	Does fund environmental projects.
<b>Corporations</b>		
<b>HSBC Bank USA</b>	HSBC Bank USA, Public Affairs Office, 16 East 40th St, New York, NY 10016 212-525-8239.	Current priorities include funding environmentally-related matters/initiatives.
<b>M &amp; T Bank</b>	Debbie Pringle One M&T Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14203 716-848-3804.	Funds environmental projects.
<b>Key Bank of New York</b>	50 Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14202 800-539-2968.	N/A
<b>The Buffalo News</b>	Sanford Lipsey One News Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14240 716-849-4430.	N/A



April 12, 2009

## **Chapter 8: Launching Strategies**

### **Mid City: Establishing a Focus Area in the Near East Side**

The Feasibility Study demonstrates that there is a strong opportunity for a Groundwork Trust in the City of Buffalo. Given the extent of challenges, one of the most difficult decisions is figuring out where and how to start tackling the many challenges facing the city. The Mid City focus area gives Groundwork Buffalo a place to start. The Near East Side represents a microcosm of all of the city's challenges, as well as its opportunities. The amount of vacant land and abandoned housing, distressed socioeconomic conditions, and community, organizational, and city government support are coupled with recent and proposed reinvestment.

As Groundwork Buffalo becomes successful in the focus area, it can expand its scope of work throughout the city in other appropriate locations. The entire Buffalo-Niagara region faces the same problems as the focus area, and in the long run, nothing should preclude Groundwork Buffalo from becoming "Groundwork Buffalo-Niagara," like other Groundwork organizations have done in their own communities.

**Generating Community and City Support:** Groundwork Buffalo must develop and maintain support from the communities in which it will operate. It must also maintain good relationships with the city government. Groundwork Buffalo projects and programs cannot be sustainable without community and city buy-in and cooperation.

Groundwork Buffalo will develop and implement a communication and public outreach plan early in its development. Public meetings and meetings with local community leaders are an essential part of a public outreach. In Groundwork Buffalo's early years, its capacity to implement and maintain projects will rely upon its neighborhood base of support. Community leaders and volunteers, both young and old, will be needed to develop and support projects and programs, and maintain project sites when completed. One of the best ways to gain the confidence of a community is to work with its youth at local schools.

Partnership development will be important for Groundwork Buffalo early on. Nearby community organizations should be able to take ownership of projects, and Groundwork's positive relationship with these organizations will be essential to do this collaboratively. Groundwork Buffalo is and will continue to be a collaborative effort based in the local community.

Using the media wisely is an important part of successful public outreach strategy. Projects and programs can be promoted, successes can be celebrated, and public education and activism can be targeted and strategic. Press releases and press conferences can generate free media coverage. Positive media relationships can increase public and political awareness of Groundwork Buffalo. Groundwork Buffalo can also gain name

recognition in order increase attention, partnerships, and funding. Groundwork Buffalo can continue to sponsor community events, including those that are planning related and those that are recreational and fun such as community picnics.

The best way to maintain and increase support from both the community and the city government is to demonstrate success with projects starting with ArtSpace Green. The media, local government, and community need to be able to see it, touch it, use it, and it should improve the quality of neighborhood resident's day-to-day lives. Only this type of success will give Groundwork Buffalo the credibility and support it needs to move forward with more projects and programs.

**Initial Projects – Quick Success:** Groundwork Buffalo will complete ArtSpace Green and at least one other demonstration project in its first year of operation. If the city provides an addition \$75,000 for project implementation in the first year, Groundwork Buffalo can implement between 10 and 15 vacant lot and brownfield transformation projects in this same area.

By the end of the first year, a comprehensive plan for each city-owned vacant property in this part of the focus area can also be developed. This coordinated plan will include a diverse array of green space types depending on the community, the neighbors, the opportunities, and the purposes of each lot. Groundwork Buffalo will work with local institutions and neighborhood residents to develop and sustain these projects. In the years to come, similar planning work and resulting project implementation can be continued throughout the focus area, and eventually in other parts of the city where it is needed.

**Brownfields:** Groundwork Buffalo begins engaging brownfield related projects immediately as all City of Buffalo urban lands are considered brownfields. The full array of proposed project types can be implemented on these brownfields.

**Initial Funding Sources:** For the first three years, Groundwork Buffalo will have an adequate supply of operational funding to support an executive director, but must find other sources of funding to support projects, programs, additional staff, and other needed resources. The development of a volunteer program and the hiring of a volunteer coordinator will be an important initial project. Locating and accessing volunteer pools from the community, partnerships with other organizations, schools, and colleges will be important. Grants will be an important source of this funding as well, especially to implement projects and programs. Groundwork Buffalo will have more success winning grants if it is partnered with other organizations that have varying capacities. A more detailed outline of Groundwork Buffalo budget needs, including expected revenue sources and expenditures, is described in the Funding and Resource Development Chapter of this Feasibility Study.

**The Role of the Steering Committee:** After the Feasibility Study is complete and a new Groundwork Trust is approved for Buffalo, the Steering Committee will still have an important role. First the Steering Committee will select the Board of Directors for Groundwork Buffalo and transfer responsibilities for the organization. Some members of the Steering Committee may be ideal for positions on the Board of Directors, along with community leaders and people with access to funding opportunities.

The Steering Committee members who are not part of the board may become part of an advisory committee to Groundwork Buffalo after the Board of Directors is established. In

this way, interested Steering Committee members can continue their relationship with Groundwork, helping gain community and city support, developing partners, helping access funding sources, and generating new and exciting ideas for projects and programs.

**Benchmarks:** The following is an outline of benchmarks that Groundwork Buffalo can use to evaluate progress over its first three years.

***Beginning of Year 1***

- Begin establishment of 501(c)3 nonprofit status as an incorporated Groundwork Trust.
- Establish a fiscal agent before nonprofit status is granted.
- Begin developing a Community Advisory Committee.
- Establish a Board of Directors.
- Establish a board-approved budget.
- Hire an executive director.
- Hire a second staff person part-time.
- Prepare and sign an MOU with the City of Buffalo
- Establish a volunteer base.
- Hire AmeriCorps interns.
- Participate in the Groundwork USA network.
- Complete an outreach and communication plan.
- Complete vacant properties and brownfields conversion projects as funding allows (2-15 projects).
- Establish a fund raising strategy (update yearly).
- Apply for five to ten grants.
- Establish a Year 2 and 3 Plan with budget

***End of Year 1***

***Beginning of Year 2***

- Establish Board of Directors fundraising involvement
- Begin implementing Year Two Plan.
- Begin working with youth and establish a Green Team.
- Apply for five to ten grants.
- Finalize the business plan (revise annually).
- Where appropriate, formalize relationships with partners
- Increase the annual operating budget (at least ¼ of the budget should be from new sources)
- Complete at least five additional projects.

***End of Year 2***

***Beginning of Year 3***

- Hire a second staff person as a full-time position.
- Establish a Groundwork Buffalo listing on the GuideStar website.
- Undergo an audit review.
- Undergo the PAR (Groundwork USA peer review).
- Review the business plan, outreach plan, and fundraising strategy.
- Expand work into other Groundwork USA program areas.
- Apply for five to ten grants.
- Revise the business plan.

April 12, 2009

- Increase the annual operating budget to be self sustaining without the initial NPS and city funding.
- Complete five additional projects.

*End of Year 3*

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# **Appendix A:**

## **Groundwork Trust Case Studies**

### **Introduction**

This report is a background study about other Groundwork Trusts in the United States. Groundwork Trusts that have successfully gone through the process initial conception, completing a feasibility study, and successfully establishing and sustaining a Groundwork organization, can be the best source of useful information for burgeoning Groundwork Trusts. A few Groundwork Trusts working in communities similar to Buffalo were chosen as the basis for this precedent study. Interviews were conducted with the executive directors of each these organizations. The following questions were asked during the interviews:

#### ***General Background***

1. Where is the organization located?
2. What is its target area?
3. When was it founded?
4. Why was it founded?
5. We need contact information and feasibility studies.

#### ***Projects and Programming***

1. What projects and programs is the organization involved with?
2. Does it have its own programs and does it facilitate programs as an umbrella organization?
3. How does the organization involve the community?

#### ***Organization and Management***

1. What is the organization structure? (Board, Staff, Membership, Volunteers) And how many of each?
2. What local, community, regional, statewide, or national partners does the organization have?

#### ***Funding and Resources***

1. What is its approximate budget?
2. What are its funding sources?
3. What are its major expenses?

#### ***Launching Strategies***

1. What were initial challenges facing the organization?
2. What were initial projects?
3. What were initial funding sources?

#### ***Opportunities and Challenges***

1. What are current challenges facing the organization?
2. What are current opportunities for the organization?
3. What role will the organization play in the future?

## **Groundwork Yonkers, NY<sup>1</sup>**

**General Background:** Groundwork Yonkers is located on 6 Wells Avenue in Yonkers, NY. Yonkers is located just north of the New York City borough of the Bronx. The organizations target area was initially low income communities with high amounts of vacancy near downtown and along the waterfront. The organization is expanding its target area to include much of the Sawmill River Watershed which includes areas outside of Yonkers.

Groundwork Yonkers was officially incorporated as a Groundwork Trust in 2000, although the organization had been in operation since 1998. Like other Groundwork Trusts, it was founded in reaction to local vacant land problems, brownfields, and large communities of low income residents. When it was founded, there were no other “greening” programs or organizations in Yonkers. There was also a clear need to deal with urban streams that had been neglected for many years.

**Projects and Programming:** Groundwork Yonkers is a well established Groundwork Trust with more than 20 current projects and programs. There are many programs based upon improving local water resources, including water quality testing and river restoration. The organization works with the regional Sawmill River Watershed Coalition, and is working to daylight the Sawmill River in places that it is buried beneath ground. Other programs include tree plantings, creating murals for vacant lots, and anti litter campaigns. Many of these programs are facilitated directly by the trust, while other programs include the trust as part of a coalition of many involved organizations.

The trust involves the community in various creative ways. First the trust recognizes that to gain community support, you have to do something for them, “on their block.” If you don’t meet the community where they live, it will be difficult to find volunteers and sustain projects. The trust provides opportunities for people of all ages to have fun to help get more people involved. The “Tree Creature,” a mascot, is often used to get kids excited about environmental projects in their community.

**Organization and Management:** Groundwork Yonkers has a organizational structure that consists of 6 or 7 very active Board of Directors, 8 or 9 paid staff including an executive director, individual program managers, a grant writer, and a business manager. There are no members, but many volunteers that support the trust’s programs. The trust also takes advantage of a local high school mandate for students to complete community service programs. A community advisory board oversees the trust. Groundwork USA, the umbrella organization of all Groundwork Trusts in the U.S., is also run from the Groundwork Yonkers office, using the same staff.

Groundwork Yonkers has many partner organizations. These partners include local community groups and other non-profits that work with the trust on its various projects and programs. As part of the Sawmill River Watershed Coalition, it also has many regional partner organizations. It works closely with the city, county, and state agencies on many of its projects.

**Funding and Resources:** Groundwork Yonkers has an approximate annual operating budget of \$700,000. Approximately half of its funding comes from government sources, including grants for projects and programs. These government sources include city, county, state, and federal agencies. A

April 12, 2009

third of the trust's funding comes from foundation support. The Board of Directors raises about \$50,000 annually. The trust also gets fees for services provided from a local Business Improvement District. The trust's major expenses include payroll, which totals approximately \$300,000 annually, hiring outside consultants, purchasing project materials and supplies, and rent for the office and storage space for materials and a truck.

**Launching Strategies:** Groundwork Yonkers faced many initial challenges. Initial funding sources were the U.S Forest Service Urban and Community Fund, a local community foundation, and the matching funds supplied by the city. It was extremely difficult to find additional early funding sources. Fundraising was difficult with limited staff, and a lack of resources made it difficult to hire new staff and to sustain projects.

**Opportunities and Challenges:** The largest existing challenge facing Groundwork Yonkers is the difficulty maintaining funding. The maintenance and management of past project sites is extremely difficult with limited resources.

The trust also has several current opportunities that it can capitalize on. Climate change is major environmental issue that can help draw major funding sources. Green job growth is a concept that many communities are promoting, which ties environmental concerns with economic development. Health and access to food for low income communities is a focus area that needs to be addressed in Yonkers. The trust is also expanding regionally to deal with larger watershed based issues. It will soon be changing its name to Groundwork Hudson Valley.

## **Groundwork Milwaukee, NY<sup>2</sup>**

**General Background:** Groundwork Milwaukee is located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It currently has three different target neighborhoods, including the Kinnickinnic River, the Harambee community, and the South St. industrial corridor. It was founded in 2004, although not incorporated as a Groundwork Trust until 2006. It was founded to deal with the problems of concentrated poverty and vacant land in the inner city of Milwaukee. Eventually, it plans on reaching the seven county metropolitan region surrounding Milwaukee.

**Projects and Programming:** Groundwork Milwaukee's projects and program center largely on water resources and vacant lots. This includes advocating stewardship of water, water quality and stormwater projects such as developing rain gardens, and creating community gardens on vacant lots. The trust also assists with small brownfield redevelopment projects and phytoremediation of those sites. The trust has also helped develop hiking and biking trails along its urban rivers. The first few years of projects and programming have been closely aligned with the recommendations in the Feasibility Study.

**Organization and Management:** Groundwork Yonkers has a Board of Directors of 9 people, none of which were selected from the Feasibility Study Committee. There are two full time and one part time paid staff, including a full time executive director. Volunteers consist mostly of AmeriCorps and other service

April 12, 2009

corps. Because of its limited staff and volunteer base, collaboration with other organizations is necessary for all of its projects and programs. The trust is considering membership.....

Community partners include service corps groups, local non-profits focusing on water and brownfields including the local Waterkeeper, the Friends of the Milwaukee River, foundations, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and many local community development corporations. The federal Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service are also partners. The trust works heavily with the County Parks Department because that department has been so decimated by recent budget cuts.

**Funding and Resources:** The 2008 operating budget was approximately \$115,000, and is expected to increase to \$130,000 for 2009 because of excess funds from the year before. Because the trust is still within its first three years, it has \$60,000 per year from federal and local matches. The National Park Service provides \$30,000, which is matched locally with \$5,000 from the Housing Authority and \$25,000 from the community service corps. The rest of the funds come from fundraising from foundations, the state Environment and Natural Resources department, and many smaller grants from various sources such as the local sewer authority, Kodak, and the National Wildlife Federation. The trust has no office, and all of its expenses go towards its staff and project materials.

**Launching Strategies:** One of the major challenges facing Groundwork Milwaukee in the beginning was name recognition. It is difficult to gain support from the community and funders when they don't know who you are. Initial projects were based upon recommendations in the Feasibility Study. Initial projects included river revitalization projects that involved service corps groups. Initial funding sources included the National Park Service and the local match, although the local match was not from the county government.

**Opportunities and Challenges:** The biggest challenge currently facing Groundwork Milwaukee is ensuring that there is an adequate budget to bring on needed staff and to hire contract employees for individual grants. The quality of deliverables for these grants can be negatively affected by small budgets. The trust has difficulty gaining volunteers and members many community organizations do community work that might otherwise be appropriate for the trust.

The biggest opportunity the trust has is increasing its staff numbers. Recent staff additions, and proposed new staff, help increase the trust's presence on the community. Until recently, the executive director was the only paid staff person.

The role of the trust will likely remain the same in the short term. In the first year, the trust ran individual projects, with collaboration from other organizations. By its second year, the trust was able to cluster individual projects as programs, which helped increase funding opportunities. The trust was and still is a collaborator and convener of other organizations on all of its projects and programs. The trust considered a shift in focus to deal with more climate change issues, with projects that would include solar panel installations, but felt that there was too much of a learning curve and too big a leap for a new organization to make the shift.



## **Groundwork Lawrence, MA<sup>3</sup>**

**General Background:** Groundwork Lawrence is located in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Lawrence is located approximately thirty miles north of Boston. The city is a small, post-industrial, but densely populated city. Because of the city's small size, the target area of the trust is all of Lawrence. The feasibility study for the trust was started in 1999, and the trust was incorporated as a Groundwork in 2001. The trust was founded for several reasons. At the time, the population of Lawrence was shrinking due in large part to a struggling economy, and the amount of vacant housing was increasing. City demolitions had helped reduce overall vacant housing numbers, but had left vacant land. There were increasing levels poverty as well. Its industrial past had left numerous small brownfields, and the Environmental Protection Agency was investing twenty million dollars in the clean-up of one of these brownfields. These challenges and opportunities made Lawrence a suitable location for a new trust. Population has begun to rise again, and most of this increase is from immigrants. Today more than half of the city's population is Hispanic.

**Projects and Programming:** The trust has a large number of projects and programs. These are all guided by the goal of contributing wholly to a healthy community, and vary in their scope. Projects and programs include reclaiming brownfields as open space, planning and designing riverwalk trails, youth programs such as training and volunteering, coordinating a community garden program, promoting healthy habits at schools with school gardens, a farmers market, and a community supported agriculture program. Urban forestry is a major focus area. A state-wide ordinance allows the trust helps plant public trees on private land within twenty feet of a public right of way. All of these programs are managed by the trust.

To involve the community, the trust uses a neighborhood approach to planning, which helped gain community support early on. It does planning in an open and democratic way, involving the community in the decision making process through various forums and meetings. The trust is trying to get more people from the local community involved at all levels of the organization. The intent of some of the youth training programs is to cultivate the next generation Groundwork employees.

**Organization and Management:** Groundwork Lawrence has a nine person Board of Directors, four full time staff, and many interns from nearby universities. The trust works with AmeriCorps volunteers as well. The Lawrence Community Works, a community development corporation, has been one the trust's most active partners. Lawrence Community Works has always been focused on housing and homeownership, but has recently been expanding its focus to other community issues, including redeveloping vacant lots as parks. Other partners include the social service office that helped make it possible for the farmers market to accept WIC for payment. Groundwork Lawrence works very close with the city government. The trust is essentially an arm of the city government, doing much of the community development and planning for the city. The state is also a partner because of various grant opportunities.

**Funding and Resources:** The 2009 budget for Groundwork Lawrence will be \$875,000. Approximately 70% of the funding will come from city contracts supported by community development block grants. Foundations will contribute about 15%, mostly for specific programs. The rest will come

April 12, 2009

from small grants and private donations. The trust's major expenses include staff, with excellent benefit packages, and the cost of renting and operating an office.

**Launching Strategies:** The most significant initial challenge for Groundwork Lawrence was a lack of capacity; the only paid staff was a part time executive director. Partnerships were important because they helped the trust increase its capacity without having to increase its budget. Value was added both ways in these initial partnerships. The trust plans for neighborhoods as whole systems; great neighborhoods cannot be developed by only adding parks. Initial projects included a smart growth plan, and creating a park on a former brownfield. Initial funding came from the National Park Service and the city matching funds. Other funding came as grants from the Essex County Community Foundation, and from city contracts for park related projects.

**Opportunities and Challenges:** The biggest challenge for Groundwork Lawrence continues to be funding. Much of the trust's funding come from city contracts backed by community development block grants, which tend to be frozen occasionally. Many funding sources do not allow flexibility in how the money is spent. This restricts the trust's flexibility to do the types of projects and programs that may be most appropriate.

There are many opportunities for the trust. The trust is focusing more on programming for green spaces and parks that have already been built. There are also opportunities for increasing urban agriculture programs, and small business development based upon urban agriculture. There are always opportunities to develop new partnerships to become more effective. The support of these partners can help sustain organizations when are threatened. Corporate sponsorships and marketing opportunities exist because "green" is becoming a popularly supported concept.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Information Source: Personal interview with Rick Magder, the executive director of Groundwork Yonkers, on July 28, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Information Source: Personal interview with Mary Beth Driscoll, the executive director of Groundwork Milwaukee, on July 24, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Information Source: Personal interview with Kate O'Brien, the executive director of Groundwork Lawrence, on August 13, 2008.

# Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

## [Organization Inventory]

April 12, 2009

## Table of Contents

[Introduction and Analysis] .....	1
[Analysis: Types of Organizations].....	2
[Analysis: Focus] .....	3
[Analysis: Geographic Area].....	4
[Analysis: Target Audience] .....	5
[Organization Summaries].....	7
50 Women with a Vision.....	8
BRR Good Neighbor Planning Alliance .....	9
Buffalo Micro Parks .....	10
Buffalo Mural Arts Program.....	11
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper .....	12
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) .....	13
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation .....	14
Center for Sustainable Communities.....	15
Central Terminal Restoration Corporation (CTRC) .....	16
Coalition for Economic Justice.....	17
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo .....	18
County of Erie .....	19
Daemen College.....	20
East Side Neighborhood Transformation Partnership (UB) .....	21
Ellicott Neighborhood Advisory Council .....	22
Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA).....	23
First Hand Learning, Inc. ....	24
Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo .....	25
Great Lakes United .....	26
Green Options Buffalo .....	27
Harvard Farms .....	28
Heart of the City Neighborhoods (HCN) .....	29
Hispanics United of Buffalo, Inc.....	30
Keep Western New York Beautiful .....	31
Lasting Education for Women, Adults, and Children Associates of Western New York (LEWAC) .....	32
LISC of Buffalo.....	33
Massachusetts Avenue Project.....	34
Masten Block Club Coalition, Inc. ....	35

Premium Services Inc.....	36
PUSH Buffalo.....	37
Queen City Farm.....	38
Second Chance Ministries.....	39
Street Synergy.....	40
University at Buffalo, Planning Department and Center for Urban Studies .....	41
Valley Community Association .....	42
Voice-Buffalo .....	43
The Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo and Western New York, Inc. ....	44
West Side Community Collaborative .....	45

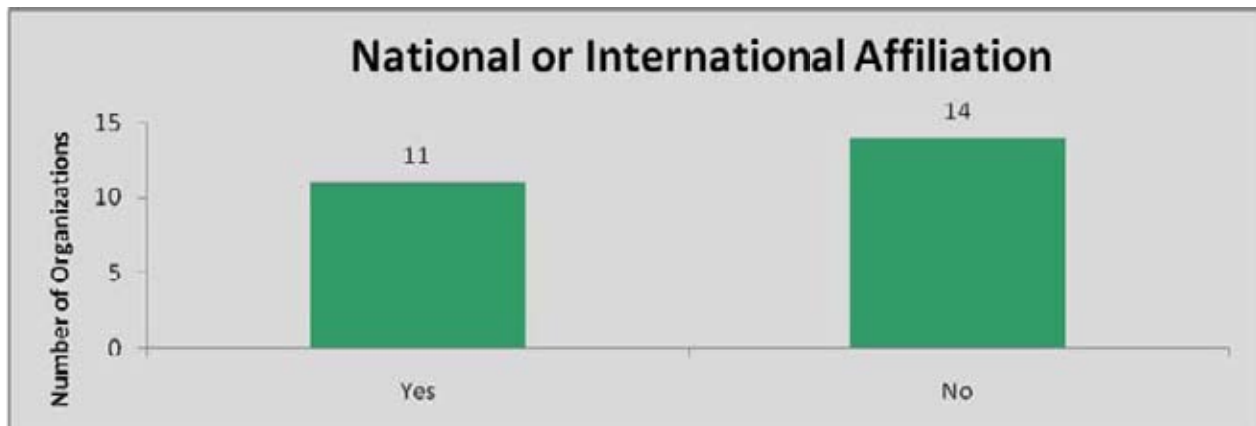
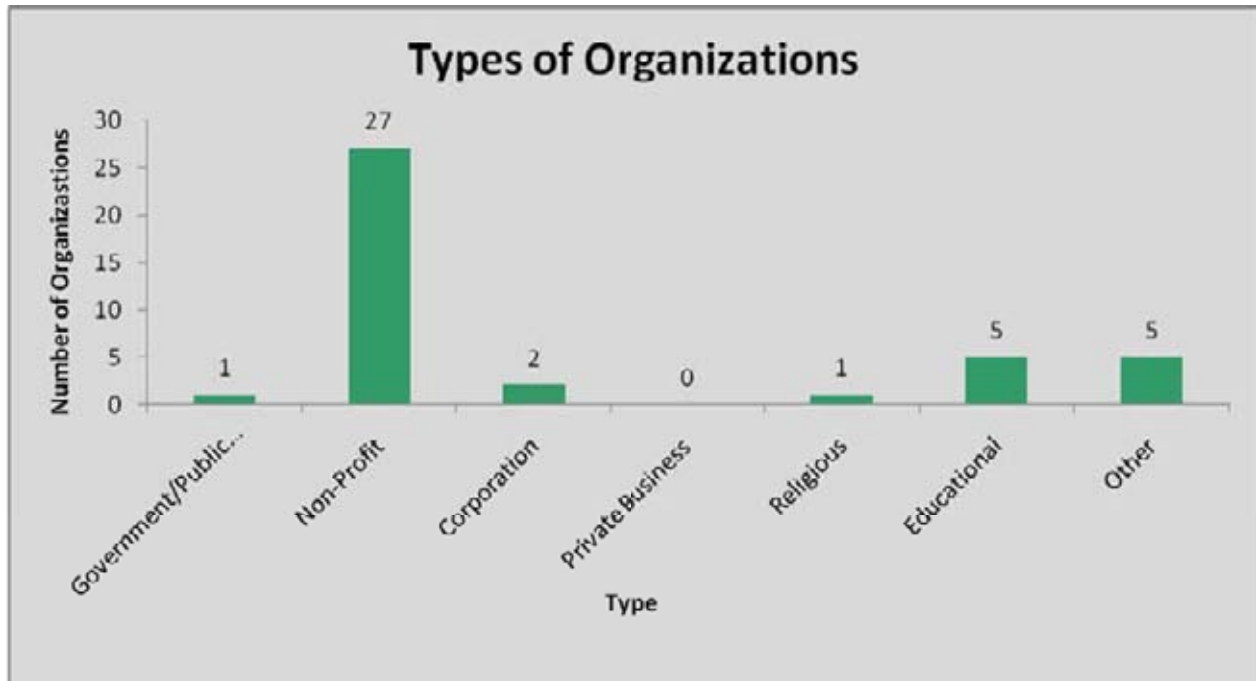
# [Introduction and Analysis]

Groundwork Buffalo seeks to build sustainable communities through environmental actions by revitalizing underutilized and vacant or brownfield properties for productive community uses. There are currently a number of individual Western New York organizations working on projects pertaining to Groundwork's overall focus. Groundwork aims to form a network between these organizations in order to broaden the capacity for what can be accomplished. The organizational data presented in this document was gathered through an online survey distributed by the Urban Design Project, University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning as part of their inventory work for the project.

Of the number of organizations given the online survey, thirty-eight responded; their responses have been included. Information from each organization was compiled and analyzed in order to summarize organizational roles, capacity, and opportunities for the group as a whole.

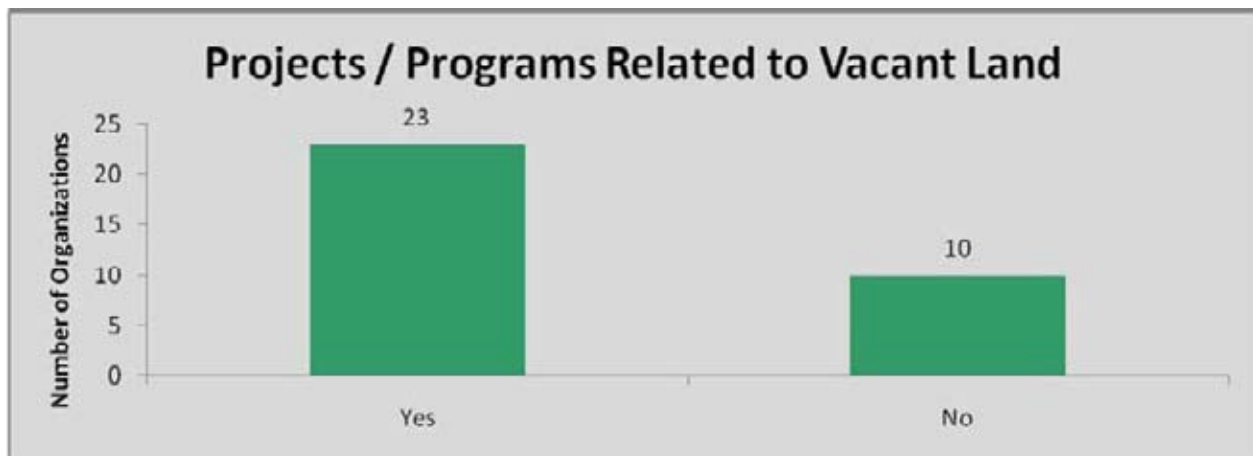
The organizations that responded to the survey had the capacity to do so – they had internet capability, the time to complete the survey, and the willingness to participate. Not all organizations were able to respond with information within the time available. We encourage all groups that have not yet responded to do so; learning about our interests and capacities increases our effectiveness to accomplish our shared goals.

## [Analysis: Types of Organizations]



66% of the organizations surveyed were local Non-Profit Organizations, while categories listed as other and educational, each individually collect 12% of the survey. The remainder of the organizations consisted of Corporations, Religious Organizations and Government Authorities encompass 5%, 2.5% and 2.5%, respectively. 54% of the organizations do not have a national or international affiliation.

## [Analysis: Focus]

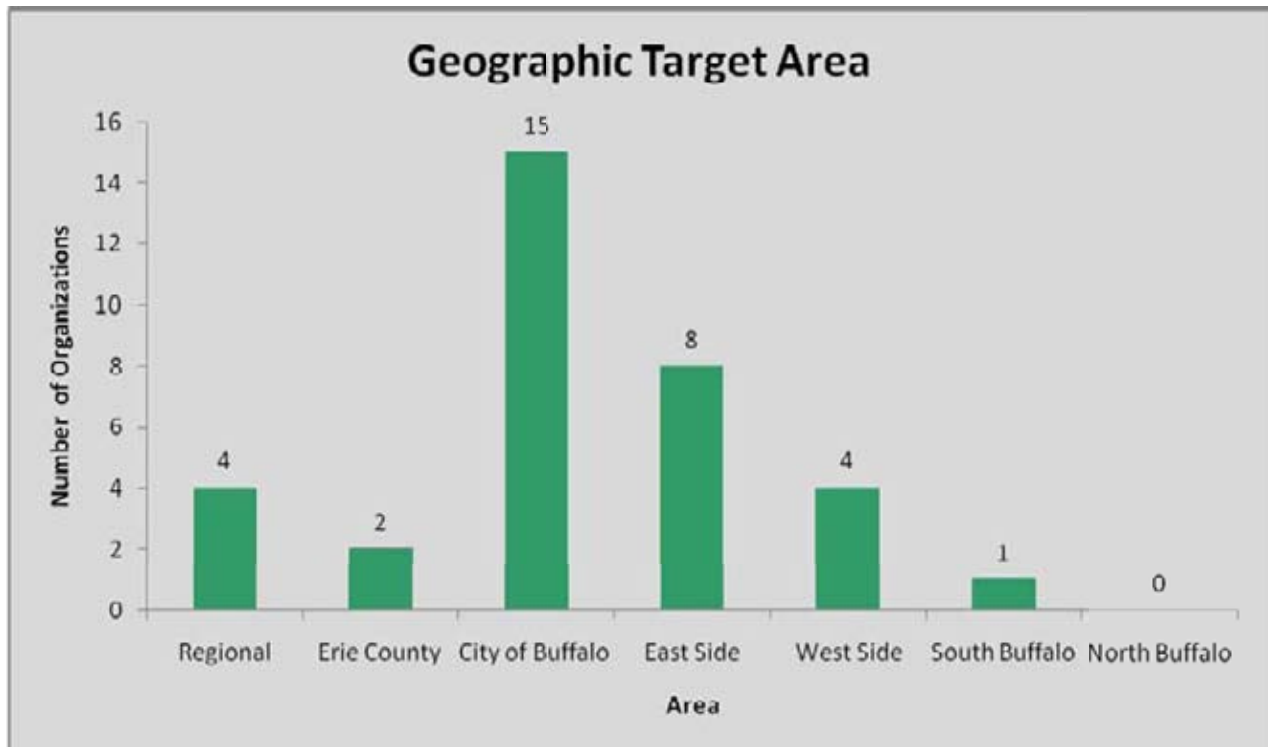


15% of the organizations demonstrated a strong concern for community organizing and advocacy. Focusing 13% on land redevelopment, 11% on community services, 10% on social and economic justice, 9% on community gardens, 9% on urban agriculture and 9% on food security. Other areas of focus included green infrastructure, 7%, historic resources, 6%, general planning and policy, 6%, and recreation at 4%. Only one organization has a focus on



transportation issues. 70% of all of the organization have developed programs or projects related to vacant or underutilized land.

## [Analysis: Geographic Area]



The organizations have a primary focus on the City of Buffalo, with 44% focusing on the City as a whole, 23% on the East Side, 12% on the West Side, and 3% on South Buffalo. 12% of the organizations have a regional focus and 6% have a target area of Erie County as a whole.

## [Analysis: Target Audience]



The target audiences of each organization were generally equally dispersed between organizations, any people, people based on location, and people based on demographics being the main audiences at 22%, 20%, 19%, and 17%, respectively. Government and other audiences were both 7%.

Project Name	Project Location	Project Type	Project Status	Project Manager	Project Budget	Project Timeline	Project Risk	Project Impact	Project Outcome
Project A	Location A	Type A	Status A	Manager A	Budget A	Timeline A	Risk A	Impact A	Outcome A
Project B	Location B	Type B	Status B	Manager B	Budget B	Timeline B	Risk B	Impact B	Outcome B
Project C	Location C	Type C	Status C	Manager C	Budget C	Timeline C	Risk C	Impact C	Outcome C
Project D	Location D	Type D	Status D	Manager D	Budget D	Timeline D	Risk D	Impact D	Outcome D
Project E	Location E	Type E	Status E	Manager E	Budget E	Timeline E	Risk E	Impact E	Outcome E
Project F	Location F	Type F	Status F	Manager F	Budget F	Timeline F	Risk F	Impact F	Outcome F
Project G	Location G	Type G	Status G	Manager G	Budget G	Timeline G	Risk G	Impact G	Outcome G
Project H	Location H	Type H	Status H	Manager H	Budget H	Timeline H	Risk H	Impact H	Outcome H
Project I	Location I	Type I	Status I	Manager I	Budget I	Timeline I	Risk I	Impact I	Outcome I
Project J	Location J	Type J	Status J	Manager J	Budget J	Timeline J	Risk J	Impact J	Outcome J
Project K	Location K	Type K	Status K	Manager K	Budget K	Timeline K	Risk K	Impact K	Outcome K
Project L	Location L	Type L	Status L	Manager L	Budget L	Timeline L	Risk L	Impact L	Outcome L
Project M	Location M	Type M	Status M	Manager M	Budget M	Timeline M	Risk M	Impact M	Outcome M
Project N	Location N	Type N	Status N	Manager N	Budget N	Timeline N	Risk N	Impact N	Outcome N
Project O	Location O	Type O	Status O	Manager O	Budget O	Timeline O	Risk O	Impact O	Outcome O
Project P	Location P	Type P	Status P	Manager P	Budget P	Timeline P	Risk P	Impact P	Outcome P
Project Q	Location Q	Type Q	Status Q	Manager Q	Budget Q	Timeline Q	Risk Q	Impact Q	Outcome Q
Project R	Location R	Type R	Status R	Manager R	Budget R	Timeline R	Risk R	Impact R	Outcome R
Project S	Location S	Type S	Status S	Manager S	Budget S	Timeline S	Risk S	Impact S	Outcome S
Project T	Location T	Type T	Status T	Manager T	Budget T	Timeline T	Risk T	Impact T	Outcome T
Project U	Location U	Type U	Status U	Manager U	Budget U	Timeline U	Risk U	Impact U	Outcome U
Project V	Location V	Type V	Status V	Manager V	Budget V	Timeline V	Risk V	Impact V	Outcome V
Project W	Location W	Type W	Status W	Manager W	Budget W	Timeline W	Risk W	Impact W	Outcome W
Project X	Location X	Type X	Status X	Manager X	Budget X	Timeline X	Risk X	Impact X	Outcome X
Project Y	Location Y	Type Y	Status Y	Manager Y	Budget Y	Timeline Y	Risk Y	Impact Y	Outcome Y
Project Z	Location Z	Type Z	Status Z	Manager Z	Budget Z	Timeline Z	Risk Z	Impact Z	Outcome Z

April 12, 2009

# [Organization Summaries]

## ***50 Women with a Vision***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 1333 Jefferson Ave. Buffalo, NY, 14208  
Phone: 716-883-4367  
Website: [www.50womenwithavision.org](http://www.50womenwithavision.org)  
Contact Person: Michelle Boyd, V. President  
Email:

### **Founded**

- 1995

### **Type of Organization**

- 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit

### **Focus**

- Restoration of Jefferson Ave. area.
- Green Infrastructure and Recreation.
- Community Organizing and Advocacy.

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Jefferson Avenue and the surrounding community.

### **Target Audience**

- City government, block clubs, and associations within Buffalo, NY.

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Jefferson Ave. Community Cultural Artpark

### **Projects Related to Underutilized Land**

- Jefferson Ave. Community Cultural Artpark

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://www.50womenwithavision.org>  
Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

## ***BRR Good Neighbor Planning Alliance***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 215 Military Road, Buffalo, NY, 14207  
 Phone: (716) 877-8400  
 Website:  
 Contact Person: Richard Mack  
 Email: rich@buffaloreview.com

### **Founded in**

- 2002

### **Type of Organization**

- Non-profit

### **Affiliations**

- City of Buffalo GNPA

### **Mission**

- To improve the quality of life for residents in Black Rock/Riverside

### **Focus**

- Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)
- Community Services (health, safety, education, etc...)
- Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc...)
- Green Infrastructure and Recreation (parks, urban forestry, stormwater, bike paths, etc...)
- Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- General Planning and Policy Making

### **Geographic Target Area**

- 14207 Zip Code

### **Target Audience**

- All

### **Programs/Projects related to**

### **Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- Black Rock Housing Initiative
- Community Gardens

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 11
- Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 1
- Volunteers – 120

### **Funding Sources**

- Donations

### **Approximate Budget**

- \$5,000

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b>Buffalo Micro Parks</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 43 Revere Place, Buffalo, NY 14214 Phone: 716-830-0774 Website: Contact Person: Jay McCarthy Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 18</li> <li>• Volunteers- 10</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-kind services and Donations at present.</li> </ul> <b>Annual Operating Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100k-targeted</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regional coalition of like-minded groups would help familiarity and collaboration.</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two major projects and ideas for numerous high-impact sites on Buffalo's waterfront.</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very difficult to secure City of Buffalo collaboration in securing vacant sites for improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2007</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To transform abandoned/underutilized areas of the Buffalo waterfront into public parks.</li> <li>• Promote commitment and investment in Buffalo's waterfront.</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> <li>• Community Services</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure and Recreation</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• Historic and Cultural Resources</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo waterfront.</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents of Greater Buffalo, and workers, patrons and visitors to the Greater Buffalo waterfront.</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skyway Skate Plaza</li> <li>• Broderick Park</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution of an efficient process for securing a site for public use.</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide framework for process.</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

<b>Buffalo Mural Arts Program</b>	
<p><b>Contact Information</b>  Address: 31 Miller Ave. Buffalo, NY, 14206  Phone: 716-572-7026  Website:  Contact Person: Kimberley Moore  Email:</p>	<p><b>Organization Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 5</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 1</li> <li>• Volunteers – 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding and private contributions</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dick Blick Art Supplies</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Shared Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff, office space, building/land agreements</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassroots Gardens</li> </ul> <p><b>Future Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden cultivation in the Fillmore District</li> <li>• Designing and building a playground at Paderewski St.</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles or Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funding, community interest</li> </ul>
<p><b>Founded in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2007</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Profit</li> </ul> <p><b>Affiliations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B.E.S.T. Community Association</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use volunteer effort and the mural process to promote community engagement, beautify neighborhoods, remediate blight, and demonstrate civic pride</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy Community Services</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• Historic and Cultural Resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Geographic Target Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fillmore District in 2008. Target area changed by season</li> </ul> <p><b>Target Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Programs or Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree planting and garden cultivation</li> <li>• Mural painting</li> </ul> <p><b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All. Projects are meant to beautify areas suffering blight from vacant properties and their conditions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Significant Target Area Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of community garden space for residents</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain products/services for future projects and assist in connections and partnerships between organizations</li> </ul>
<p><b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b>  Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study</p>	



## ***Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 1250 Niagara St. Buffalo, NY, 14213  
 Phone: 716-852-7483  
 Website: <http://bnriverkeeper.org>  
 Contact Person: Julie Barrett O'Neill  
 Email:

### **Founded in**

- 1988

### **Type of Organization**

- 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit

### **Affiliations**

- Waterkeeper Alliance

### **Focus**

- Protect and restore the Buffalo and Niagara Rivers with emphasis on restoring ecological health and public access for passive and water-dependent recreation.
- Social and Economic Justice
- Green Infrastructure and Recreation
- Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security

### **Geographic Target Area**

- The Niagara River Watershed

### **Target Audience**

- Impacted neighborhoods, general public, government agencies, elected leaders, water consumers, regulated entities.

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- NYPA Relicensing.
- Waterfront Conference Initiate/Local Waterfront Development Planning.
- River Restoration
- Communications/Marketing

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- Urban stormwater projects, ecotours, etc...

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 15
- Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 2
- Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 10
- Volunteers – 85

### **Funding Sources**

- Government grants.
- Foundation grants.
- Large donors.
- Corporations
- Earned Income

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- \$850k

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
- Erie County Environmental Management Commission
- Great Lakes Healing Our Waters Coalition
- Waterkeeper Alliance

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- Conference, office, storage space, copying equipment.
- Professional experience on watershed issues.

### **Potential Partnerships**

- Strategic stormwater retention/Great Lakes recharge system that would consolidate land and property ownership.

### **Future Goals**

- 1-2 large scale projects completed by 2012.

### **Significant Target Area Needs**

- Strategic, focused demolition, land ownership clarification, rejection of below ground engineering solutions.

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

## ***Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC)***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 84 Parkside Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
Phone: 716-838-1249 x33  
Website: <http://buffaloolmstedparks.org>  
Contact Person: Brian Dold  
Email:

### **Founded in**

- 1978

### **Type of Organization**

- 501 (c) (3) Non-profit, Public charity

### **Focus**

- To promote, preserve, restore, enhance & ensure maintenance of Olmsted Parks & Parkways in the greater Buffalo area.
- Green Infrastructure and Recreation
- Historic and Cultural Resources

### **Geographic Target Area**

- The Buffalo Olmsted Park System

### **Target Audience**

- Buffalo residents and tourists

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- The System Plan – 2008

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Trustees (36 people) – David Colligan, Chair
- Staff (15 people) – Thomas Herrera Mishler, CEO
- Volunteers
- Advisory Council
- Members – 10,000+

### **Funding Sources**

- Direct Public Support
- Gov Contributions
- Program Revenue
- Membership Dues

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- 2006 Revenue - \$2,449,194
- 2006 Total Expenses – \$1,714,504
- 2006 Net Assets – \$1,112,128

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- National Association of Olmsted Parks
- Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society
- Parkside Community Association
- Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens
- Forest Lawn Cemetery
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension
- Shakespeare in Delaware Park
- Niagara River Greenway Commission
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House Complex
- New York State Office of Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://buffaloolmstedparks.org>  
Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

## ***Buffalo Urban Development Corporation***

### **Contact Information**

Address: ECIDA, 275 Oak Street, Suite 150, Buffalo, NY 14203  
 Phone: (716)856-6525  
 Website: <http://budc.ecidany.com/>  
 Contact Person:  
 Email:

### **Type of Organization**

- Non-profit 501 (c) (4)

### **Focus**

- Redeveloping vacant land

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Buffalo

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Land ownership and redevelopment
- Owns Buffalo lakeside Commerce Park and Steelfields

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- (see Key programs or projects)
- Assembling small vacant parcels into large tracts of land for economic development purposes

### **Organization Structure**

- 17 person Board of Directors – Mayor Byron Brown, Chair
- 2 person staff

### **Funding Sources**

- Land sales and grants for infrastructure

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- 2008 Total Revenue -\$10,593,254
- 2008 Total expenses - \$720,985
- 2006 Management and Other Expenses - \$333,709

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- BUDC is housed in the ECIDA
- Other economic development agencies, the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corp., Empire State Development Corp., Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- Office space

### **Obstacles or Barriers**

- Lack of resources
- Many disconnected small tracts of vacant land make large scale redevelopment difficult

### **Significant Target Area Needs**

- Infill development, neighborhood stabilization
- Strategic plan for vacant land

### **Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Reusing small parcels of vacant land in the interim before they can be assembled into larger tracts for redevelopment

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://www.budc.ecidany.com/>

Interview: Personal Interview with David Stebbins. 8-17-08.

<b><i>Center for Sustainable Communities</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 4380 Main St., Daemen College, Amherst, NY, 14228 Phone: 716-839-8489 Website: <a href="http://www.daemen.edu/sites/CSCCE/">http://www.daemen.edu/sites/CSCCE/</a> Contact Person: Cheryl Bird Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director</li> <li>• Director</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daemen College</li> <li>• Various community grants</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of WNY Service Learning Coalition</li> <li>• MAP</li> <li>• Apollo Alliance</li> <li>• MicroBiz Buffalo</li> <li>• Coalition for Economic Justice</li> <li>• Self Sufficiency Coalition</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2002</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Educational Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote civic responsibility.</li> <li>• Social and Economic Justice</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> <li>• Community Services</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seneca Babcock</li> <li>• The Fruit Belt</li> <li>• Buffalo West Side</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underserved communities and their residents, students, faculty, and volunteers</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Environmental Summit</li> <li>• WNY Earth Day Family Expo</li> <li>• Westside Ministries housing rehab program</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacant properties</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Website: <a href="http://www.daemen.edu/sites/CSCCE/">http://www.daemen.edu/sites/CSCCE/</a> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study.	

## ***Central Terminal Restoration Corporation (CTRC)***

### **Contact Information**

Address: PO Box 1330  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120  
Phone:  
Website: <http://buffalocentralterminal.org>  
Contact Person: Sara Etten  
Email: [webmaster@buffalocentralterminal.org](mailto:webmaster@buffalocentralterminal.org)

### **Founded in:**

- 1997

### **Type of Organization**

- 501(c) 3 Non-Profit

### **Focus**

- To preserve and facilitate the restoration of the Buffalo Central Terminal
- To coordinate and cooperate with others seeking to restore the neighborhood and city around the Central Terminal
- Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc..)
- Historic and Cultural Resources

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Broadway Fillmore District at 495 Paderewski Drive

### **Target Audience**

- all ages, all groups

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- The stabilization and restoration of Buffalo Central Terminal (including: debris removal, asbestos abatement, roof repair/reconstruction etc..)

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 6
- Volunteers – 30
- President - Michael Miller - unpaid
- Vice President - Mark Lewandowski - unpaid
- Secretary- Sara Etten- unpaid
- Treasurer - Mark Lewandowski – unpaid

### **Funding Sources**

- City block grant money
- Corporation fundraisers and events
- Private donations
- Some county grants

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- \$30,000

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- planning advice
- space to hold events
- volunteers

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://buffalocentralterminal.org>  
Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b><i>Coalition for Economic Justice</i></b>	
<p><b>Contact Information</b>  Address: 2123 Bailey Avenue, Buffalo, NY, 14211  Phone: (716) 892-5877  Website:  Contact Person: Micaela Shapiro-Shellaby  Email: michaelajaine@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>Funding Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations Membership</li> <li>• Individual and Institutional Fundraisers</li> </ul> <p><b>Approximate Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$120,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Labor Alliances</li> <li>• University at Buffalo</li> <li>• Buffalo State</li> <li>• Canisius</li> <li>• Partnersip for the Public Good</li> </ul>
<p><b>Founded in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1986</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit 501(c)3</li> </ul> <p><b>Affiliations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs with Justice</li> <li>• New York State Labor Religion Coalition</li> </ul> <p><b>Mission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic, Social, and Racial Justice in WNY</li> <li>• Increased Rights for Workers</li> <li>• Increased Civic Engagement in Impoverished Areas</li> <li>• Enforcement/Expansion of Living Wage Policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc...)</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)</li> <li>• General Planning and Policy Making</li> </ul> <p><b>Geographic Target Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lovejoy District – East Side</li> <li>• Changes Every Year</li> </ul> <p><b>Target Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith, Labor, and Community based groups</li> <li>• Low wage workers</li> <li>• People of color</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Programs or Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial Development Agency Reform</li> <li>• Universal Health Care Expansion</li> </ul>	<p><b>Significant Target Area Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for Community Space</li> </ul>
<p><b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b>  Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study.</p>	

## ***Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 712 Main St. Buffalo, NY, 14202  
 Phone: 716-852-2857  
 Website: <http://www.cfgb.org>  
 Contact Person: Cara Stillman  
 Email:

### **Founded in**

- 1919

### **Type of Organization**

- Foundation

### **Focus**

- To connect people, ideas, and resources to improve lives in WNY.
- Social and Economic Justice
- Community Services
- Green Infrastructure and Recreation
- Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security
- Historic and Cultural Resources

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Counties of WNY

### **Target Audience**

- High net worth individuals for philanthropy & Not-for-profit organizations working in our focus areas (economic self-sufficiency, racial & social disparities, environment & architecture, arts & culture)

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Grantmaking
- Creating a regional agenda for the environment.
- Reducing lead poisoning.

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- Buffalo Reuse, Grassroots Gardens, etc...

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 17
- Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 16
- Volunteers – 35

### **Funding Sources**

- Individuals, Corporations, Foundations, Investment Income, Federal Grants, State Grants.

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- \$1.7 million

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- WNY Grantmakers
- WNY Women's Fund
- Good Schools for All
- Coalition for a Lead Safe Community
- WNY Environmental Plan
- Coalition for Early Learning
- Read to Succeed

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- Grant funds.

### **Potential Partnerships**

- Information on the issues and quality proposals concerning the 5 in 5 demolition plan.

### **Obstacles or Barriers**

- Lack of support from city government.

### **Significant Target Area Needs**

- Protecting and encouraging community gardens, public green space, micro parks, etc...

### **Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Create a planning process that would focus the city on ways to create the most common good from vacant and underutilized land.

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study.

<b>County of Erie</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 95 Franklin St. Phone: (716) 858-2950 Website: Contact Person: Chris Pawenski Email: pawenskc@erie.gov	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 22</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Un-cooperative private ownership</li> <li>• Property that has its tax liens sold by local municipalities</li> </ul>
<b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governmental/Public Authority</li> </ul> <b>Mission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Government</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc...)</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure and Recreation (parks, urban forestry, stormwater, bike paths, etc...)</li> <li>• General Planning and Policy Making</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public control</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study.	



April 12, 2009

<b><i>Daemen College</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 4380 Main Street, Amherst, NY, 14226 Phone: 716-839-8483 Website: Contact Person: Danielle Woodman Email: dwoodman@daemen.edu	
<b>Founded in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1948</li></ul>	
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

<b><i>East Side Neighborhood Transformation Partnership (UB)</i></b>	
<p><b>Contact Information</b>  Address: 326 High St. Buffalo, NY, 14204  Phone: 716-887-9466  Website: <a href="http://www.ub-esntp.com">http://www.ub-esntp.com</a>  Contact Person: Jacqueline Hall- project director  Email:</p>	<p><b>Organization Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff - 6</li> <li>• Advisory Board - 25</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University at Buffalo, Center for Urban Studies</li> <li>• Futures Academy</li> <li>• Urban Community Corporation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Founded in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2006</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HUD funded grant-Community Outreach Partnership Center</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build a university-assisted approach to the regeneration of the Fruit Belt and Martin Luther King, Jr. communities</li> <li>• Social and Economic Justice</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• General Planning and Policy Making</li> </ul> <p><b>Geographic Target Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit Belt and Martin L. King neighborhoods</li> </ul> <p><b>Target Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community residents, block clubs, non-profit organizations and local government</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Programs or Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Futures Cities Computer Modeling, Futures Garden Project, the Neighborhood Clean-A-Thon, and the Community Public Art Project.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.ub-esntp.com">http://www.ub-esntp.com</a>  Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study</p>	

## ***Ellicott Neighborhood Advisory Council***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 203 Adams St. Buffalo, NY, 14206  
 Phone: 716-852-4460  
 Website:  
 Contact Person: Roberta Cates  
 Email:

### **Founded in**

- 1966

### **Type of Organization**

- Non-Profit

### **Focus**

- To ensure relief for poverty stricken residents and businesses in the Federal Ellicott Targeted Area.
- Social and Economic Justice
- Community Organizing and Advocacy
- Community Services
- Land Redevelopment
- General Planning and Policy Making

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Federal Ellicott Targeted Area

### **Target Audience**

- Neighborhood organizations, churches, businesses, schools, and residents in the community.

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Pratt Willert Housing
- Sherman L. Walker Community Center William Emslie YMCA
- Participated in the development of the Home O-Zone

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- Redevelopment of Ellicott Mall

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 9
- Volunteers - 32

### **Funding Sources**

- Donations

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- 0-\$1000

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- Most all of the organizations in the area.

### **Future Goals**

- Work to build community gardens in vacant lots.

### **Obstacles or Barriers**

- Federal legislation concerning vacant properties
- False perception of the overall condition of vacant housing stock
- Medicaid laws that allow medical providers to obtain homes without guidelines for proper maintenance

### **Significant Target Area Needs**

- A homesteading program that could save houses and lots

### **Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Develop programs that maintain neighborhoods and their housing stock with minimal demolition

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study.

<b>Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA)</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 275 Oak Street Buffalo, NY 14203 Phone: 716-856-6525 Fax: 716-856-6754 Website: <a href="http://www.ecidany.com">http://www.ecidany.com</a> Contact Person: Email: <a href="mailto:info@ecidany">info@ecidany</a>	<b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-funded, 90% of budget from fees.</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo Niagara Enterprise</li> <li>• Amherst Industrial Development Agency</li> <li>• City of Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation</li> <li>• Town of Cheektowaga</li> <li>• Clarence Industrial Development Agency</li> <li>• Town of Eden</li> <li>• Erie County Office of Economic Development</li> <li>• Hamburg Industrial Development Agency</li> <li>• Lackawanna Community Development Corp.</li> <li>• Lancaster Industrial Development Agency</li> <li>• Orchard Park Economic Development Committee</li> <li>• City of Tonawanda</li> <li>• Town of Tonawanda Development Corp.</li> <li>• West Seneca Development Corp.</li> <li>• World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara</li> </ul> <b>Potential Shared Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative agreements with affiliated non-profits and public and private organizations.</li> <li>• Research into business/industrial conditions in Erie County</li> <li>• Tax abatement</li> </ul>
<b>Founded In:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1970</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public benefit corporation</li> </ul> <b>Affiliations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im)</li> <li>• Small Business Administration (SBA)</li> <li>• Economic Development Administration (EDA).</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote/assist private sector industrial/business development.</li> <li>• Projects from \$5,000 to \$500 million</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erie County</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private sector businesses in Erie County</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility / Brownfield Development</li> <li>• removal of abandoned industrial facilities</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic plan for vacant and ex-industrial land.</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify brown-fields to add to local tax rolls.</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Website: <a href="http://www.ecidany.com">http://www.ecidany.com</a>	

<b><i>First Hand Learning, Inc.</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 2495 Main St. Suite 559, Buffalo, NY, 14214 Phone: (716) 831-8722 Website: Contact Person: Bill Rogers Email: billroger@gmail.com	<b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring phytoremediation on vacant lots to allow community center activities to focus on agricultural and gardening education</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1998</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-profit Educational</li> </ul> <b>Mission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote learning from direct experience (First Hand Learning, instead of a teacher or a classroom)</li> <li>To promote learning to think scientifically</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Services (health, safety, education, etc...)</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buffalo</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Centers</li> <li>Youth</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science Firsthand – Partners in Discovery</li> </ul>	
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

<b><i>Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 208 North Street, Buffalo, NY, 14201 Phone: (716) 851-4647 Website: Contact Person: Kirk Laubenstein Email: KirkL81@yahoo.com	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 12</li> <li>• Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 1</li> <li>• Volunteers – 75</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants</li> <li>• Fundraisers</li> <li>• Membership Drives</li> </ul> <b>Approximate Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$25,000</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo ReUse</li> <li>• Massachusetts Avenue Project</li> <li>• Urban Roots Joint Grant Application</li> </ul> <b>Potential Shared Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening Expertise</li> <li>• Insurance Options for Community Gardens</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships and Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable Office Space</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand in to low intensity green space management on city demolished properties</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Term Access to the Land</li> <li>• Need More Support from City Hall</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1994</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit Educational</li> </ul> <b>Mission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create vegetable and flower gardens through sustainable gardening projects at the grassroots level</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc...)</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East and West Sides of Buffalo</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Groups</li> <li>• Block Groups</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 40 community gardens in Buffalo, primarily on city owned vacant property</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Owned Property – Green Space/Garden Development</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolished lots need to be cleaned, graded, and seeded with grass seed</li> <li>• Topsoil should Be used so that things can grow</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

April 12, 2009

***Great Lakes United***

**Contact Information**

Address: 195 St. James Place Apt 2, Buffalo, NY,  
14222

Phone: 716-673-6612

Website:

Contact Person: Nate Drag

Email: natedrag@hotmail.com

**The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b>Green Options Buffalo</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: City Hall, 65 Niagara Square, rm. 607, Buffalo NY 14202 Phone: (716)851-4052 Website: <a href="http://www.greenoptionsbuffalo.org">http://www.greenoptionsbuffalo.org</a> Contact Person: Justin Booth Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 15 people</li> <li>• Staff – 2 people</li> <li>• Volunteers – 100s</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweat equity</li> <li>• Member dues</li> <li>• Safe Walk to School grant</li> <li>• DOS Bike Transit and Access Plan</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellness Institute for Greater Buffalo and Western New York</li> <li>• Governors Traffic Safety Commission</li> </ul> <b>Potential Shared Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bikes</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of programs</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources</li> <li>• Car dominated culture</li> <li>• Sprawl and increasing vacant land</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2000</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit 501 (c) (3)</li> </ul> <b>Affiliations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housed in the Wellness Institute for Greater Buffalo and Western New York</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative transportation options</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ages of people</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike recycling/training</li> <li>• Buffalo Blue Bike – bike sharing</li> <li>• Bike valet at special events</li> <li>• Bike parking ordinance</li> <li>• Complete Streets ordinance</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike recycling facility</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no community garden zoning category</li> <li>• There is no process for permanently acquiring vacant land for community gardens</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and convene “green” groups in Buffalo</li> <li>• Increase collaboration and reduce overlap amongst organizations</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Interview: Personal Interview with Justin Booth. 6-20-08.	



April 12, 2009

<b><i>Harvard Farms</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 114 Hickory Street, Buffalo, NY, 14204 Phone: 716-332-4554 Website: Contact Person: Melanie Nowicki Email: melanienowicki@gmail.com	
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2006</li></ul>	
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

## ***Heart of the City Neighborhoods (HCN)***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 42 Plymouth Ave.

Buffalo, NY 14201

Phone: 716-882-7661

Website: <http://hocn.org>

Contact Person: Stephanie J. Simeon

Email:

### **Founded in:**

- 1998

### **Type of Organization**

- 501 (C) 3 Non-Profit

### **Focus**

- To stabilize Buffalo's core communities through redevelopment, neighborhood stabilization, and housing developments that people can afford.
- Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc..)
- Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc..)

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Residential areas south of Porter Avenue including Michigan Avenue to the east, Lake Erie to the south, the Niagara River to the west, and Porter Avenue to the north

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Hudson Street Initiative
- Creative Work-force Project
- Acquisition Rehab/Resale Project

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- The Hudson Street Project (apartment buildings on a currently vacant site).

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 12
- Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 2
- Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 1
- Volunteers - 6

### **Funding Sources**

- Publicly funded: State Department of Housing and Community Renewal

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- \$107,000

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- West Side NHS - Community Business Partner
- West Side Good Neighbors Planning Alliance - Housing Co Chair
- Partnership for the Public Good - Community Partner
- Lower West Side Partnership - Neighborhood Block Club Participant
- Kleinhans Community Association - Neighborhood Block Club Participant
- Hispanic United of Buffalo- Community Business Partner

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- Assisting private developers, neighborhood advocates, the City of Buffalo, and non-profit orgs. in developing feasible residential and mixed-use projects for the neighborhoods in the HCN Service area.

### **Potential Partnerships**

- Identify buildable vacant lots with GIS technology.

### **Future Goals**

- Completion of Hudson Street Newbuild Project
- Purchase and beautify 259 Hudson (vacant lot)

### **Obstacles or Barriers**

- City of Buffalo homesteading process for city-owned vacant-lots.
- Building codes and chemical remediation costs.

### **Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Community outreach.
- Pool private development funds.

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://hocn.org>

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility

## ***Hispanics United of Buffalo, Inc.***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 254 Virginia St. Buffalo, NY. 14201

Phone: 716-856-7110

Website:

Contact Person: Lourdes T. Iglesias

Email:

### **Founded in**

- 1988

### **Type of Organization**

- 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit

### **Focus**

- Respond to economic, social, educational, and cultural needs of Hispanic/Latinos in Western New York with bilingual, bicultural services that promote self-sufficiency and improve quality life.
- Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc..)
- Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, etc...)
- Community Services (health, safety, education, etc..)

### **Geographic Target Area**

- Erie County

### **Target Audience**

- Low-income Latinos/Hispanics

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b><i>Keep Western New York Beautiful</i></b>	
<p><b>Contact Information</b>  Address: 144 Heritage Rd, Tonawanda, NY, 14150  Phone:  Website:  Contact Person: Jim Pavel  Email: jpavel@verizon.net</p>	<p><b>Organization Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 10</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff (Paid) - 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-kind contributions</li> <li>• Government contracts</li> <li>• Keep America Beautiful</li> <li>• Donations</li> </ul> <p><b>Approximate Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$400,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal, State, and Local Governments</li> <li>• Community Organizations</li> <li>• Non-Profit Organizations</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Block Clubs and Social Groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Shared Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garbage Bags</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many</li> </ul> <p><b>Future Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great American Cleanup Phytoremediation Grant</li> </ul>
<p><b>Founded in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1992</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit 501(c)3</li> </ul> <p><b>Affiliations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep America Beautiful</li> </ul> <p><b>Mission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage participation in community service projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc...)</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure and Recreation (parks, urban forestry, stormwater, bike paths, etc...)</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> </ul> <p><b>Geographic Target Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western New York</li> </ul> <p><b>Target Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any group volunteering to make WNY “Cleaner and Greener”</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Programs or Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great American Cleanup</li> <li>• Re-Tree</li> <li>• Electronic Recycling</li> <li>• Graffiti Hurts</li> </ul> <p><b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Council Districts in the City of Buffalo</li> </ul>	<p><b>Significant Target Area Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean Green Space</li> <li>• Community Adoption</li> <li>• Homesteading</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassroots Gardens should be funded by local government or done within government</li> </ul>
<p><b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b>  Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility</p>	

***Lasting Education for Women, Adults, and Children Associates of Western New York (LEWAC)***

**Contact Information**

Address: 135 Grant Street, Buffalo NY 14213  
 Phone: (716)881-6111  
 Website:  
 Contact Person: Catherine Lewis-Smith  
 Email: hwellness@aol.com

**Founded in**

- 1991

**Type of Organization**

- Non-profit 501 (c) 3

**Focus**

- Health education for underserved populations

**Geographic Target Area**

- East Side and West Side

**Target Audience**

- African Americans and Hispanics

**Key Programs or Projects**

- Breast Cancer
- Asthma

**Organization Structure**

- 3 Officers
- 3 person Board of Directors
- 6 person Advisory Council
- Staff – Catherine Lewis-Smith, Ex. Dir.
- Volunteers

**Funding Sources**

- The John R. Oishei Foundation
- The NYS DOH

**Partnerships and Coalitions**

- Various churches and community centers

**Potential Partnerships**

- There is a need for more collaboration

**Future Goals**

- Reaching underserved male populations

**Obstacles or Barriers**

- Limited financial resources prevent collaboration between competing organizations

**Significant Target Area Needs**

- Accurate measurements of contamination

**Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Research – documenting the history of sites and measuring contamination levels

**The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://www.lewac.com/>

Interview: Catherine Lewis-Smith, CEO and Executive Director. 6-11-08

<b>LISC of Buffalo</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 700 Main St. Buffalo, NY, 14202 Phone: 716-853-1136 Website: <a href="http://www.lisc.org/buffalo">http://www.lisc.org/buffalo</a> Contact Person: Anthony Armstrong Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 13</li> <li>• Full-Time Staff (Paid) - 3</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LISC national match with local bank, corporation, and foundation funding</li> <li>• Federal pass-through grants</li> </ul> <b>Annual Operating Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$350k</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo</li> <li>• Homefront, Inc.</li> <li>• Massachusetts Avenue Project</li> <li>• MicroBiz- Buffalo</li> <li>• Old First Ward Community Association</li> <li>• PUSH- Buffalo</li> <li>• West Side Community Collaborative</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional cooperation from City government on vacant property policy</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Hall real estate department is very frustrating to deal with and lacks reliable processes or guidelines for acquiring or disposing of vacant land</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1998</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Affiliations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National LISC</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help resident-led, community-based development organizations rehabilitate distressed communities and neighborhoods</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment</li> <li>• General Planning and Policy Making</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Buffalo, focusing on Near East and West sides.</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community development corporations, foundations, and local and state government.</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacant Property reclamation and revitalization strategy</li> <li>• Technical Assistance and Organizational Development</li> <li>• Community Development strategy</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of regional data system and a county-wide land bank to hold, manage and sell vacant and abandoned properties.</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable data and property information,</li> <li>• Long-term vision for neighborhoods experiencing large-scale vacancy.</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and project prioritization amongst existing green organizations</li> <li>• Phased planning for cohesive tracts of land</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Website: <a href="http://www.lisc.org/buffalo">http://www.lisc.org/buffalo</a> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

## ***Massachusetts Avenue Project***

### **Contact Information**

Address: 271 Grant St

Buffalo, NY 14213

Phone: 716-882-5327

Website:

Contact Person: Erin Sharkey

Email: sharkey@mass-ave.org

### **Founded in:**

- 1998

### **Type of Organization**

- Non-Profit

### **Mission**

- To promote local economic opportunities, access affordable and nutritious food, and provide social change education.

### **Focus**

- Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc...)
- Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)
- Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc...)

### **Geographic Target Area**

- West Side of Buffalo

### **Target Audience**

- Low-income at risk youth

### **Key Programs or Projects**

- Growing Green
- Be Vocal, Eat Local Week
- Eat Up! Conference
- Growing Green Works
- Food Ventures
- Mobile Market
- Youth Dinner Co-ops

### **Programs/Projects related to Vacant/ Underutilized Land**

- Growing Green urban garden

### **Organization Structure**

- Board of Directors – 12
- Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 8
- Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 20
- Volunteers - 200

### **Funding Sources**

- USDA Community Food Project Grant
- Private Donors
- Other Local Foundations

### **Annual Operating Budget**

- \$300,000

### **Partnerships and Coalitions**

- Partnership for the Public Good
- People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH)
- Grassroots Garden
- Urban Gardens
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
- Peace Center
- MicroBiz Buffalo
- Buffalo First

### **Potential Shared Resources**

- Office Space with PUSH
- Public Programs

### **Potential Partnerships and Opportunities**

- Community gardening task force with the City of Buffalo
- Different labeling on city maps to help people locate green spaces in their area
- Partnerships with other local corporations

### **Future Goals**

- To further develop the urban garden to be used as a training and teaching farm site
- To use the garden as a model of a urban sustainable green space

### **Obstacles or Barriers**

- City land distinction between green space and vacant space
- Limited funding
- Community perception of gardening
- Community perception of youth program

### **Significant Target Area Needs**

- Proper land distinction
- Funding
- Local organizations working together

### **Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo**

- Provide the area with more resources and a best practice model
- Initiate more collaborative efforts

### **The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b><i>Masten Block Club Coalition, Inc.</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 56 Courtland Ave. Buffalo, NY, 14215 Phone: 716-316-2063 Website: Contact Person: Ada Hopon-Clemons Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 16</li> <li>• Volunteers - 20</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Block Clubs of Buffalo &amp; Erie County</li> <li>• Community Action Organization</li> <li>• United Neighborhoods</li> <li>• Hamlin Park Community Taxpayers Association</li> <li>• Delavan Grider Block Club Council</li> <li>• Trinidad Neighborhood Association</li> </ul> <b>Potential Shared Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer labor</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community foundation</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build gardens on E. Utica and Masten with Queen City Gardens</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land ownership and regulations</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1978</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Affiliations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New York State Crime Prevention Association</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build the community through block clubs</li> <li>• Giving residents the ability to upgrade, sustain, and preserve.</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masten district, Buffalo, NY</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local homeowners, renters, businesses, churches, and youth</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood Crime Watch</li> <li>• Community Beautification</li> <li>• Disaster Preparedness</li> <li>• Block Club Organizing and Mentoring</li> <li>• National Night Out</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects funded specifically by Community Grants and Crime Watch Grants</li> <li>• Community Gardens</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earth/debris removal</li> <li>• Acquiring properties</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	



<b>Premium Services Inc.</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 254 Fenton St. Buffalo, NY, 14206 Phone: 716-432-2960 Website: Contact Person: Dave Majewski Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 5</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff (Paid) - 3</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer work and resources.</li> <li>• Private contributions.</li> </ul> <b>Annual Operating Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$400k</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grass Roots</li> <li>• BNR</li> <li>• MLK</li> <li>• MAP</li> <li>• Green Gold Dev Corp</li> </ul> <b>Potential Shared Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design experience.</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop every vacant lot in Buffalo.</li> <li>• Design edible community landscapes.</li> <li>• Find better solutions for landscape management.</li> <li>• Design greener parking lots.</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal codes, rules, and regulations.</li> <li>• Funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1995</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporation</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Sustainable Horticulture</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure and Recreation</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• Historic and Cultural Resources</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo, NY</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several Urban Sustainable commercial projects/designs.</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conn St MLK Block Club South District</li> <li>• Mickey Kearns Lovejoy District</li> <li>• Fontana Grass Roots Gardening</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development, construction, and management after design and investment.</li> <li>• Proper horticultural care/maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

April 12, 2009

***PUSH Buffalo***

**Contact Information**

Address: 271 Grant St., Buffalo, NY, 14213

Phone: 716-5731041

Website:

Contact Person: Kristin Rose

Email: kristinrose88@gmail.com

**The information regarding this organization is from:**

Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b>Queen City Farm</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Contact Information Address: 195 Glenwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14208 Phone: 716-207-9327 Website: <a href="http://www.queencityfarm.org">http://www.queencityfarm.org</a> Contact Person: Rod McCallum Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 5</li> <li>• Volunteers – 50</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual contributions</li> </ul> <b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massachusetts Avenue Project</li> <li>• Buffalo ReUse</li> <li>• CAO Environmental Justice Center</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide meaningful labor for a variety of populations including individuals in recovery and individuals with chronic illnesses.</li> <li>• Partner with families to provide space and instruction for food production.</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2007</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate sustainable communities.</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masten Park Neighborhood - E. Ferry to Best, Main to Jefferson</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, Families, Seniors and under-employed individuals</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizing vacant property for food production.</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All programs.</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To demonstrate that vacant property is an asset to the community and the redevelopment of the community.</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing agency that coordinates the utilization of vacant property throughout the community.</li> <li>• Promote open spaces as assets and resources for the community.</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Website: <a href="http://www.queencityfarm.org">http://www.queencityfarm.org</a> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

<b><i>Second Chance Ministries</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 381 E. Ferry St. Buffalo NY, 14208 Phone: 716-563-4256 Website: Contact Person: Ava White Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 1</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 2</li> <li>• Volunteers - 20</li> </ul> <b>Funding Sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donations</li> </ul> <b>Potential Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area churches</li> <li>• Block clubs</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1999</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit, Public Charity</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help build community.</li> <li>• Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Services (health, safety, education, etc..)</li> <li>• Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14208</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The African American community</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOICE Buffalo</li> <li>• GROUP Ministries Block Club</li> </ul>	<b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/securing funds</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

<b><i>Street Synergy</i></b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 410 Minnesota Ave. Buffalo, NY, 14215 Phone: 716-833-4238 Website: <a href="http://www.streetsynergy.org">http://www.streetsynergy.org</a> Contact Person: Katie Sullivan Email:	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors- 8</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2001</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University District from Bailey Ave. to Eggert Ave.</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All</li> </ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and Secure, which maintains strong communications with local police and trash pickup.</li> <li>• Better on Bailey, which aims to develop the Bailey commercial strip.</li> <li>• Urban Discovery, which encourages and facilitates homeownership within the community.</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/ Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better on Bailey's plans for an urban garden at 3259 Bailey Ave.</li> </ul>	
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Website: <a href="http://www.streetsynergy.org">http://www.streetsynergy.org</a> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

***University at Buffalo, Planning Department and Center for Urban Studies***

**Contact Information**

Address: 3435 Main St.  
 201k Hayes Hall  
 Buffalo, NY 14214  
 Phone: 716-829-2133  
 Website: <http://www.ap.buffalo.edu/planning>  
 Contact Person: Robert Silverman  
 Email:

**Founded in**

- 1987

**Type of Organization**

- Educational

**Affiliations**

- ESNTF is HUD funded.

**Focus**

- Seeks solutions to the problems facing central cities and metropolitan regions.
- Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc..)
- Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, etc...)
- Community Services (health, safety, education, etc..)
- Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc..)
- Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security

**Geographic Target Area**

- Martin Luther King Jr. and Fruit Belt neighborhoods. Census tracts 31 and 35.

**Target Audience**

- residents, low-income, minority, youth

**Programs/Projects related to Vacant/Underutilized Land**

- Housing and neighborhood revitalization activities.
- Community gardens.

**The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: <http://www.ap.buffalo.edu/planning>  
 Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

<b>Valley Community Association</b>	
<p><b>Contact Information</b>  Address: 93 Leddy St. Buffalo, NY 14210  Phone: 716-823-4707  Website: <a href="http://www.thevalleycenter.com">http://www.thevalleycenter.com</a>  Contact Person: Peg Overdorf  Email:</p>	<p><b>Organization Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – 21</li> <li>• Full-Time Staff (Paid) – 20</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff (Paid) – 30</li> <li>• Volunteers – 100</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding Sources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State</li> <li>• County</li> <li>• City</li> <li>• Foundations</li> <li>• Corporate</li> <li>• United Way</li> <li>• Contributions</li> <li>• Fund Raising</li> <li>• Membership</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual Operating Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1,300,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships and Coalitions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City View Properties-operate their child care center; collaborations within the youth program.</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential Shared Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer lab and meeting space.</li> </ul> <p><b>Future Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of the buffalo river historic district park with expected completion in Dec, 2009.</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles or Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of taking ownership due to environmental concerns.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Founded in</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1968</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Services (health, safety, education, etc..)</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure and Recreation (parks,urban forestry, stormwater, bike paths, etc..)</li> </ul> <p><b>Geographic Target Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Buffalo River community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Target Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ages.</li> </ul> <p><b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/ Underutilized Land</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo River Historic District Park.</li> <li>• Valley Nature Park and Habitat Trail.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.thevalleycenter.com">http://www.thevalleycenter.com</a>  Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study</p>	

<b>Voice-Buffalo</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 345 Franklin St., Buffalo, NY, 14202 Phone: 716-842-6571 Website: Contact Person: Pat Burke Email: voice-buffalo@excite.com	
<b>Founded in</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1996</li></ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Other</li></ul> <b>Affiliations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gamaliel Foundation</li></ul> <b>Mission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To improve the public life of citizens in Buffalo and Erie County</li></ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc...)</li><li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc...)</li></ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City of Buffalo and Surrounding Suburbs</li></ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Churches</li><li>• Community Organizations</li></ul> <b>Key Programs or Projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transportation and Sprawl</li><li>• West Side Safety</li><li>• Universal Health Care</li><li>• Jobs for the Underprivileged Youth</li></ul>	
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	



***The Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo and Western New York, Inc.***

**Contact Information**

Address: City Hall, 65 Niagara Square, Room 607,  
Buffalo NY 14202  
Phone: (716)851-4052  
Website:  
[http://www.nysphysicalactivity.org/site\\_wellness/  
welcome/index.php](http://www.nysphysicalactivity.org/site_wellness/welcome/index.php)  
Contact Person:  
Email:

**Organization Structure**

- Staff - Philip L. Haberstro, Executive Director

**Approximate Budget**

- 2006 Total expenses - \$275,292

**Type of Organization**

- Non-profit 501 (c) (3)

**Focus**

- Encourage choosing positive health behaviors

**Geographic Target Area**

- Erie and Niagara Counties

**Key Programs or Projects**

- Solution Partnership – Working with local government to provide creative solutions to health issues
- Youth Action Program – Recreation and character building exercises
- All America City Program
- Safe Routes to School

**The information regarding this organization is from:**

Website: [http://www.nysphysicalactivity.org/site\\_wellness/welcome/index.php](http://www.nysphysicalactivity.org/site_wellness/welcome/index.php)

<b>West Side Community Collaborative</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b> Address: 414 Richmond Ave. Buffalo, NY 14222 Phone: 716-603-9762 Website: Contact Person: Harvey Garrett Email: harveygarrett@gmail.com	<b>Organization Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director - unpaid</li> <li>• Board of Directors – 35</li> <li>• Volunteers – 1000</li> </ul> <b>Future Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease vacancies in the area</li> </ul> <b>Obstacles or Barriers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of planning at City Hall ( city not selling property when they get offers, etc..)</li> <li>• Lack of properties</li> <li>• Owners being prosecuted</li> </ul>
<b>Founded in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2002</li> </ul> <b>Type of Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Profit</li> </ul> <b>Focus</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the West Side of Buffalo</li> <li>• Social and Economic Justice (poverty, youth, job training, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Organizing and Advocacy (block clubs, neighborhood groups, special interest, etc..)</li> <li>• Community Services (health, safety, education, etc..)</li> <li>• Land Redevelopment (infill, vacant properties, brownfields, etc..)</li> <li>• Historic and Cultural Resources</li> <li>• General Planning and Policy Making</li> </ul> <b>Geographic Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richmond Ave west to the River between West Ferry / Hampshire and Porter Ave.</li> </ul> <b>Target Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area residents</li> </ul> <b>Programs/Projects related to Vacant/ Underutilized Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitating vacant houses and</li> <li>• Greening vacant lots</li> </ul>	<b>Significant Target Area Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Land trust</li> <li>• Prosecuting owners, etc..</li> </ul> <b>Potential Role of Groundwork Buffalo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a land trust</li> <li>• Comprehensive plan</li> </ul>
<b>The information regarding this organization is from:</b> Survey: Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study	

# Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

## [Selected Citywide Planning Inventory]

April 12, 2009

## Table of Contents

[Overview Map] .....	1
[Regional Plans] .....	2
Niagara Frontier Bicycle Master Plan .....	3
Niagara National Heritage Area Study .....	4
The Niagara River Greenway Master Plan.....	5
Niagara River AOC Habitat Inventory and Assessment .....	6
Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) .....	7
[Erie County Plans] .....	8
Erie County Parks System Master Plan: A 2020 Vision.....	9
[City of Buffalo Plans] .....	10
Blueprint Buffalo .....	11
Buffalo: City as a Park .....	12
Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan.....	13
Developing a GIS-Based Model and an Interactive Web Site for a City-wide Recreational Bikeway Network.....	14
East Buffalo Good Neighbors' Planning Alliance Neighborhood Plan.....	15
Food for Growth: A Community Food System Plan for Buffalo's West Side.....	16
Greening Buffalo: What Local Governments Can Do .....	17
Historic Resources Intensive Level Survey, Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood .....	18
Larkin District Plan.....	19
Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan.....	20
The Masten District Neighborhood Plan .....	21
Organic Revitalization: Artspace Buffalo .....	22
Scajaquada Creek Watershed Management Plan .....	23
Selections from Queen City in the 21st Century, the City of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan .....	24

South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area .....	25
The Olmsted City: The Buffalo Olmsted Park System, Plan for the 21st Century .....	26
Urban Ecosystem Analysis .....	27
Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Action Plan.....	28
Vacant Property Asset Management Strategy .....	29



# [Regional Plans]



## ***Niagara Frontier Bicycle Master Plan***

**Date:**

1998

**Geographic Area:**

Erie and Niagara  
Counties region of  
Western New York

**Focus Areas:**

- Air
- Parks and  
Greenspace
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

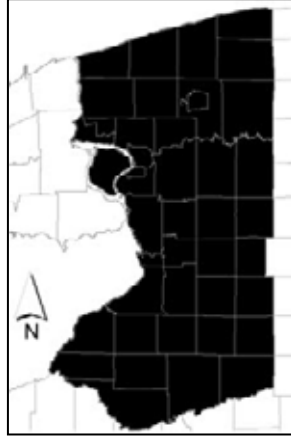
- Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation  
Council

**Prepared By:**

Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation  
Council  
(formerly the Niagara Frontier Transportation  
Committee)

**Participants:**

- Bicycle Subcommittee, a citizen advisory group
- Citizens, bicycle users, local officials, and planners



**Summary:**

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 required that the Long Range Plan of all Metropolitan Planning Organizations, such as the GBNRTC, include a bicycle transportation component. Beyond meeting the requirements of federal legislation, this plan was initiated to meet the growing need and desire for improved bicycle transportation in the region. The Plan represents an important element of the region's long-range transportation planning strategy to achieve regional and national mobility, safety, congestion, and air quality objectives.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Provide Bicycle Accessibility
- Increase Bicycle Trips and Lower Pollution Levels
- Improve the Comfort and Safety of Bicyclists
- Coordinate Planning and Design Activities

**Recommendations:**

- An interconnected regional bikeway network
- Provide bicycle parking and storage facilities at major destination areas
- Improve intermodal connections with transit
- Provide locker and shower facilities at major employment centers
- Promote regional bicycling facilities and resources
- Update a regional bicycle route guide
- Enforce traffic laws
- Initiate a Mandatory Bicycle Registration Program
- Improve the maintenance of bicycle facilities
- Improve data analysis of bicycle travel
- Incorporate bicycles in all transportation projects

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Regional Bikeway Implementation Plan (RBIP), was undertaken. The objectives were to first determine how well the current transportation system was accommodating bicyclists and secondly, to determine what low-cost roadway treatments could be implemented, if any, that would improve the comfort level of bicyclists using a given facility.

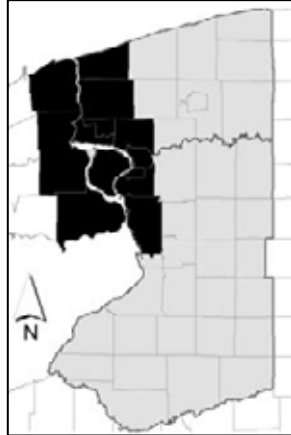


## ***Niagara National Heritage Area Study***

**Date:**  
2005

**Geographic Area:**

Study Area includes the lands in Niagara County along the Niagara River. The context area includes the Canadian side of the Niagara River, and the City of Buffalo and Town of Tonawanda in Erie County.



**Focus Areas:**

- Parks and Greenspaces
- Restoration Economy

**Sponsored By:**

- National Park Service
- U.S. Department of the Interior

**Prepared By:**

National Park Service

**Participants:**

Local stakeholders (e.g. local officials, community groups, and other interested organizations and institutions).

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

U.S. Department of the Interior

**Summary:**

In October 2002, Congress passed the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Study Act, (Public Law 107-256) directing the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing a Niagara Falls National Heritage Area. At that time, an array of local leaders met with National Park Service officials to discuss the concept as a way to heighten appreciation of the region, better preserve its natural and historic resources, improve coordination among existing programs and sites, and improve the quality of life and economy of the area.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Improving the visitor experience;
- Strengthening the region's identity;
- Increasing public awareness of local history and the need for preservation;
- Encouraging research on local history;
- And improving the local economy.

The study identifies four heritage themes in assessing the feasibility of a heritage area designation of the region:

- Natural Phenomenon
- Tourism and Recreation
- Power and Industry
- Border Land/ Border Crossing

**Recommendations:**

Three management alternatives are proposed:

- Continuation of Current Practices
- National Heritage Area—Niagara Falls and Lower Niagara River
- National Heritage Area—Niagara Falls and Network of Thematically Related Sites.

Three possible models for the national heritage area management entity are a state agency, a regional nonprofit organization or a federal commission.

**Current Status / Implementation:**

President Bush signed Public Law 110-229, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, into law on May 8th 2008, officially designating the Niagara National Heritage Area.

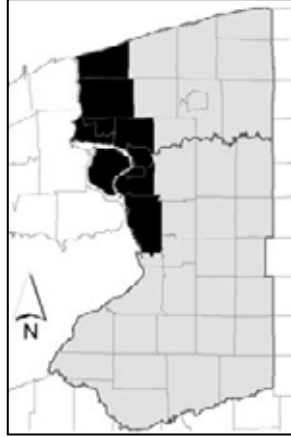
## ***The Niagara River Greenway Master Plan***

**Date:**

December 2003

**Geographic Area:**

13 municipalities, including Erie and Niagara Counties, fall within the Niagara River Greenway boundary

**Sponsored By:**

Niagara River Greenway Commission

**Prepared By:**

Friends of the Buffalo Niagara Rivers, Inc. (now know as the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers)

**Participants:**

- Public officials and citizens of 13 municipalities
- 8 Federal and State agencies
- 4 Not-for-profit stakeholders

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

The DOS Quality Community Grant program awarded the commission with a \$150,000 grant coupled with \$400,000 allocated by the OPRHP

**Summary:**

Niagara River Greenway Commission was established by NYS legislation put forth by former Governor George Pataki. The vision of the Niagara River Greenway is a world-class corridor of places, parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and heritage resources and provides access to and connections between these important resources.

**Issues Addressed:**

- To improve access to and take advantage of the full range of resources and activities along the River.
- To forge better connections between destinations and communities across the region.
- To protect and restore the environmental systems of the region
- To celebrate and share the region's history and heritage with the world
- To promote the long term sustainability of the region's existing resources and assets
- To extend Frederick Law Olmsted's legacy and vision for the Niagara River

**Recommendations:**

- Transition gateways that celebrate a transition from one distinct place to another(lake-to-lake, destination, transition, aquatic)
- Connect to the River in a variety of ways (scenic overlooks, water access points, water-based trails, parks)
- Restore, preserve and enhance critical elements of the Niagara River ecosystem (upland, floodplains, habitat)
- Promoting heritage tourism and economic revitalization (revitalize urban centers, promote cultural heritage centers)

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The Niagara River Greenway Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement was delivered to the Commissioner of the OPRHP on March 20, 2007 after obtaining approval, by way of resolutions, from the thirteen municipalities within the Greenway boundary as required by legislation.

## ***Niagara River AOC Habitat Inventory and Assessment***

**Date:**

July, 2008

**Geographic Area:**

1 mile radius of the  
Niagara River

**Focus:**

- Water
- Fish
- Wildlife
- Food and Agriculture
- Brownfields
- Active Waste Facilities

**Sponsored By:**

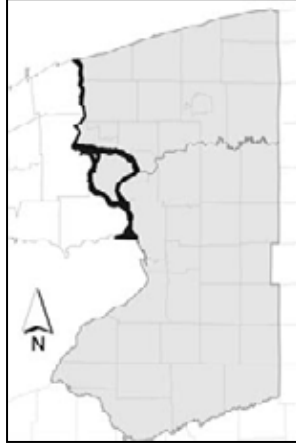
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper

**Prepared By:**

Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper

**Participants:**

- Technical advisory group

**Summary:**

This assessment builds off of the Niagara River RAP and focuses primarily on issues pertaining to habitat impairment and restoration within the geographic boundaries. It outlines and analyzes major concerns and offers recommendations on how to combat these issues.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Industrial uses along the Niagara River have impaired and reduced fish and wildlife habitats
- Many shallow water sites have become disposal sites for hazardous wastes
- Some remediation sites may hinder or benefit habitat restoration policies
- Shorelines are hardening due to contamination
- Marine development is reducing the amount of natural habitat space
- Water diversions have destabilized habitats along the river
- Water fluctuations related to water diversions have created barriers for fish and aquatic species

**Recommendations:**

- Remaining hazardous waste sites should be fully remediated
- AOC sources of contaminants infecting wildlife should be eliminated
- Opportunities for expanding and protecting habitats should be fully implemented
- A minimum of 50% of the shoreline should be natural
- There should be no net loss of common gulls within the area
- Fish populations should approximate expected conditions after remediation

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Impacts of the assessment will lead to the reduction of hazardous waste sites in and around the Niagara River. Wildlife habitats will be protected and restored, and remediation sites will provide more space for such restoration. Sources of contaminants are expected to decrease drastically.

## ***Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP)***

**Date:**

1994

**Geographic Area:**

Niagara River  
Watershed

**Focus Areas:**

- Soil
- Water
- Fish and Wildlife
- Habitat
- Brownfields
- Food and Agriculture

**Sponsored By:**

- Environment Canada
- New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)
- U.S. EPA

**Prepared By:**

Niagara River Action Committee

**Participants include:**

- Environment Canada
- NYSDEC
- U.S. EPA



**Summary:**

This RAP has been mandated by the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. It aims to create a sustainable plan to restore the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Niagara River ecosystem.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Improve water quality
- Removal of contaminants in soil
- Protection of wildlife habitat
- Creation of sustainable development
- Extend education and outreach

**Recommendations:**

- Address/eliminate toxic discharges
- Improve sediment quality
- Reduce nutrient and bacterial loadings
- Restore wildlife habitat
- Improve water quality
- Invest in recreational amenities within the area
- Extend outreach to the public

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Activities to clean up seeping hazardous wastes have led to a reduction in contaminant levels in Niagara River water approaching 60 percent. The work to construct isolation barriers has now been completed at 16 of 26 sites identified for remediation.

April 12, 2009

# **[Erie County Plans]**



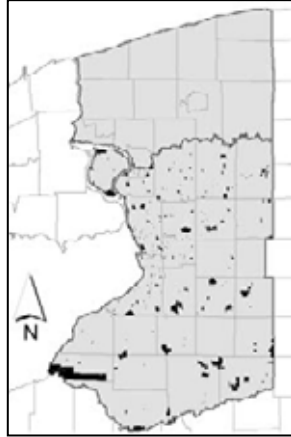
## ***Erie County Parks System Master Plan: A 2020 Vision***

**Date:**  
2002

**Geographic Area:**  
11,000 acres among 38 sites which compose the Erie County Parks System

**Focus Areas:**

- Parks and Greenspace



### **Summary:**

This update of the Parks System Master Plan was the first component of a full update of the Erie County Comprehensive Plan. The ECPSMP serves as the basis for development of the County Parks System for the next 15- 20 years and strives to enhance not only the Parks' facilities, but also recreational options and service delivery. The document is the result of months of intense research utilizing a wide range of talent and opinion from professional planners, landscape architects, and parks personnel to private citizens, recreational and fraternal organizations and the business community.

**Sponsored By:**  
Erie County, NY

**Prepared By:**  
Erie County Team:

- County Executive, Joel A. Giambra
- Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry
- Department of Environment and Planning

Consultants Team:

- Wendel Duchscherer, - Architects & Engineers
- Parsons - Engineers, Planners & Landscape Architects
- Envision - Environmental Specialists
- Paradigm Consulting - Strategic Planners

**Participants:**

- Park users and stakeholders

### **Issues Addressed:**

- Developing an Inventory and assessment of existing facilities and conditions
- Reviewing and updating existing park plans
- Examining the recreational trails element
- Developing a strategy for waterfront recreational opportunities
- Assessing consolidation and management opportunities

### **Recommendations:**

The future focus of park operations and management should be on:

- Preservation and restoration of cultural heritage features.
- Preservation and restoration of the natural systems.
- Parks improvements to address safety & liability issues upgrade park appearances, and enhance park user experience.
- Environmentally responsible parks management.
- Seeking partnerships amongst local municipalities, supporting agencies, and nongovernment organizations.
- Identifying zones for Nature Reserve, Recreation (Active and Passive) Heritage, and Services
- Creating over 88 miles of individual trail segments

### **Current Status / Implementation:**

The plan, and individual plans for each component of the system, is expected to be implemented over at least a twenty year time frame with an implementation strategy which includes priorities for capital improvements. Many of the individual plans for parks reviewed within this plan are already underway.

# [City of Buffalo Plans]



## ***Blueprint Buffalo***

**Date:**

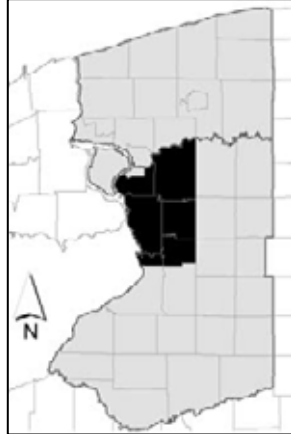
2006

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo and first-tier suburbs

**Focus Area:**

- Vacant Properties
- Brownfields



**Sponsored By:**

- National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVPC)
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation-Buffalo (LISC-Buffalo)
- University at Buffalo's Regional Institute
- Town of Amherst Industrial Development Agency (IDA)

**Prepared By:**

- Virginia Tech Metropolitan Institute
- USEPA Smart Growth Program
- Community Advocacy Clinic at Cleveland State University
- Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania
- New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

The Surdna Foundation

**Summary:**

*Blueprint Buffalo* was the flagship project of the National Vacant Properties Campaign's (NVPC) 2005-2006 Technical Assistance Demonstration Program. It was a collaborative effort of researchers and planners representing various institutions and agencies from across the country. The *Blueprint Buffalo* assessment team identified various strategies for effective vacant property initiatives.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Out-migration and job loss in the City of Buffalo and first-tier suburbs (leaving approximately 39,000 vacant parcels)
- Buffalo's vacancy rate exceeds those of other Rust Belt cities (15.7 percent of all housing units were vacant with 43.7 percent classified as "other")
- Vacant properties involve 20 or more city actions and cost taxpayers nearly \$12,000 over a five-year period
- Mortgages are increasingly going to investors who are "flipping" properties without improving them


**Recommendations:**


- Develop Regional Real Property Information Systems (RPIS)
- Establish a comprehensive approach to coordinating code enforcement
- Address the challenge of right-sizing Buffalo with land-banking and green infrastructure approaches
- Develop joint strategies that streamline existing economic development programs and more closely link greyfields and brownfields redevelopment strategies
- Launch a citywide vacant properties initiative
- Develop of a suburban vacant property agenda
- Create an Erie-Buffalo Vacant Properties Coordinating Council
- Establish Buffalo-Niagara as a Vacant Property Living Laboratory

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The *Blueprint Buffalo* campaign continues to offer strategic guidance during the critical transition of transforming from recommendations to action.



<b>Buffalo: City as a Park</b>	
<p><b>Date:</b> 2007</p> <p><b>Geographic Area:</b> City of Buffalo</p> <p><b>Focus Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat</li> <li>• Parks and Greenspace</li> <li>• Vacant Properties</li> <li>• Brownfields</li> </ul> <p><b>Sponsored By:</b> Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo</p> <p><b>Prepared By:</b> The plan was prepared as a Fall 2007 Masters of Urban planning Studio in the School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo, State University of New York under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UB Professor G. William Page</li> <li>• UB Professor Niraj Verma</li> </ul> <p><b>Participants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee of the Green and Growing Coalition</li> <li>• The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)</li> <li>• Faculty and Students at the Institut für Grundlagen der Planung at the University of Stuttgart</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Funding for the Plan:</b> Primary funding for the plan came from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and the UB School of Architecture and Planning</p>	 <p><b>Summary:</b> City as a Park provides a plan for establishing a cohesive green infrastructure system in Buffalo. The plan does several things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an extensive review of the literature on the benefits of green infrastructure economically, socially, and mentally</li> <li>• Use examples of greening projects in Buffalo, to show how such changes can be initiated and sustained for benefiting the city</li> <li>• Creates one cohesive plan that efforts of existing plans and local initiatives into a larger master plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Issues Addressed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting People – Bringing diverse groups together to achieve common goals.</li> <li>• Connecting Institutions – Including city governments, NGOs, and private businesses.</li> <li>• Connecting Green Infrastructure – Greenway connections to existing and proposed green infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging the public – An advertising campaign, an education greening organization, annual city-wide greening educational event, strengthening existing initiatives.</li> <li>• Improving Leadership – Educating council members on Greening Goals, increased collaboration, change laws that hinder greening efforts (vacant land use laws, zoning laws, parking lot requirements).</li> <li>• Reimagining the city – A signage and network plan, updated maps, expanding green linkage system.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Current Status / Implementation:</b> The report is a valuable resource and should be considered by public officials who are planning for Buffalo's sustainable future and identifying opportunities for improving the overall environmental quality of the City. Yet, it currently means of enforcement.</p>	

<b>Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan</b>	
<p><b>Date:</b> 2008</p> <p><b>Geographic Area:</b> City of Buffalo</p> <p><b>Focus Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Fish and Wildlife</li> <li>• Habitat</li> <li>• Brownfields</li> </ul> <p><b>Prepared By:</b> Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper</p> <p><b>Participants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper</li> <li>• USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office</li> <li>• Remedial Advisory Committee</li> <li>• NYSDEC</li> <li>• US EPA</li> <li>• USACE</li> <li>• Buffalo River Improvement Corporation</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Funding for the Plan:</b> \$390,000 grant from the City of Buffalo for Buffalo Niagara Greenway Implementation</p>	<div>  </div> <p><b>Summary:</b> The Buffalo River has been highly polluted by industrial and municipal discharge. The natural ecosystem has been damaged by such pollutants and by human alterations to the shoreline. The Buffalo River RAP documents these issues and offers strategies on how to remediate/improve them.</p> <p><b>Issues Addressed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve water quality</li> <li>• Removal of contaminated bottom sediments</li> <li>• Remediation of inactive hazardous waste sites</li> <li>• Improve municipal/industrial wastewater facilities</li> <li>• Restoration of fish and wildlife habitat</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate bottom sediments and create a strategy to remediate sediments where needed</li> <li>• Continue the remedial work in the Buffalo River drainage area to prevent pollutants from entering water.</li> <li>• Monitor and enforce proper discharge practices for municipal and industrial areas along the River</li> <li>• Design new sewer overflow system</li> <li>• Develop a habitat improvement plan</li> <li>• Acquire necessary land to carry out habitat restoration</li> <li>• Implement projects to preserve open/green space</li> <li>• Address failing septic systems</li> </ul>
<p><b>Current Status / Implementation:</b> The latest status report was published in 2008 and outlines general improvements/accomplishments that have taken place over the years. These include among others: Site Assessments, Buffalo Sewer Authority LTCP, Development of Buffalo River Improvement Corporation, Contaminant Removal Implementations and Strategies, and Habitat Restoration at Specific Sites.</p>	

## ***Developing a GIS-Based Model and an Interactive Web Site for a City-wide Recreational Bikeway Network***

**Date:**

June, 2001

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo

**Focus Areas:**

- Air
- Parks and Greenspace
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

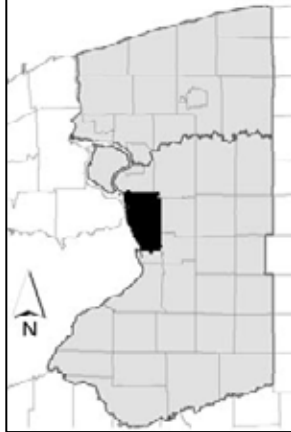
University at Buffalo, Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning

**Prepared By:**

Md. Mahbubur Rabb Meenar  
(M.U.P thesis)

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

The study was performed in-kind and in partial fulfillment of a Master of Urban Planning degree from UB

**Summary:**

The purpose of this thesis is to develop a GIS based model for designing a bikeway network, mainly for recreation and tourism, for Buffalo and to develop an interactive web site for that network...by blending GIS technology with Urban Planning and Landscape Design.

**Issues Addressed:**

- To address the City of Buffalo's lack of a comprehensive bikeway network and related internet-based resources.
- To perform a qualitative assessment of recreational bikeway attractions in Buffalo.
- To construct a digital database using projection changing, digitizing, geocoding, and geoprocessing.
- To develop a GIS-based bikeway design.

**Recommendations:**

Future works for this project should include:

- the consideration of vegetation, trees, wetlands, and slope for a more detail off-road design;
- going through segment-by-segment of the primary network to face different planning issues;
- studying the degree of difficulty of the network for the bikers;
- 3D simulation and landscape design inside the parks.

**Current Status / Implementation:**

An interactive web site is on the way to develop based on the proposed as well as the existing bikeway network of Buffalo. Five main themes have been selected for the web site. These themes are: park to park, besides the river, abandoned rail track, historical and architectural tour. Around 300 pictures have been taken throughout different attractive places of Buffalo.

## ***East Buffalo Good Neighbors' Planning Alliance Neighborhood Plan***

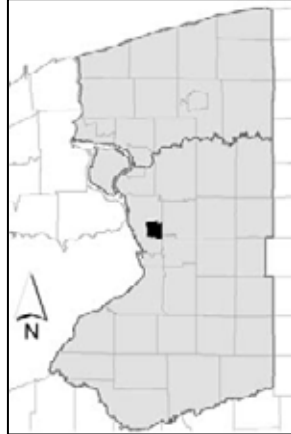
**Date:**

July, 2007

**Geographic area:**

Buffalo's Eastside  
Neighborhoods of:

- Broadway-Fillmore
- Emerson
- Lovejoy
- Babcock
- Kaisertown



**Focus Areas:**

- Restoration Economy
- Vacant Properties
- Transportation

**Prepared By:**

East Buffalo Good Neighbors' Planning Alliance as a  
Component of *The Queen City in the 21st Century:*  
*Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan*

**Participants include:**

- East Buffalo GNPA Community Planning Committee
- The International Center for Studies in Creativity, Buffalo State College
- BERC Business Development
- Operations Impact
- Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
- The Regional Institute, University at Buffalo
- BEST Community
- Eastside PRIDE
- Office of Strategic Planning
- Ulinski Center
- Broadway Fillmore NHS
- Sobieski Block Club
- Kaisertown Coalition
- Neighborhood Information Center, Inc.

**Summary:**

The East Buffalo Good Neighbors' Planning Alliance is one of eleven GNPA communities with a vision of renewal for East Buffalo. Mayor Anthony Masiello approved the GNPA initiative in August 2001, allowing the area's diverse citizens to become actively involved in the creation of action plans for their communities.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Include diverse individuals and groups in the process of improving the community;
- Establish new partnerships within the community;
- Improve conditions of the built environment such as housing, education, and recreation;
- Improve public policies and services that impact the community; and
- Improve the quality of life for all.

**Recommendations / Strategies include:**

- Increase presence and visibility of police officers.
- Maintain and improve East Buffalo's thirteen existing parks and promote them as historical and regional assets.
- Identify locations for green parkway system and improve existing open green spaces.
- Better regulate businesses classified as junkyards.
- Maintain and improve existing infrastructure pertaining to streets, lighting and sanitation.
- Encourage residential recycling
- Attract and retain businesses in East Buffalo's commercial areas that provide a wide range of services.
- Update, repair, and expand existing public schools
- Build neighborhoods around schools.
- Redevelop East Buffalo's housing stock and increase housing options.
- Increase homeownership and owner occupancy.
- Eliminate predatory lending and smart-target demolition.
- Maintain and upgrade transportation in East Buffalo.
- Improve and expand public transportation.

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The plan has been the basis of grant applications which have been approved for funding, bringing new community programs like the Department of Justice's Lower East Side Weed & Seed program to the area; it has been used to improve the St. Stanislaus Gardens and Crescent Village infill housing development proposals; it was the basis of an effort to keep School 43 from closing.

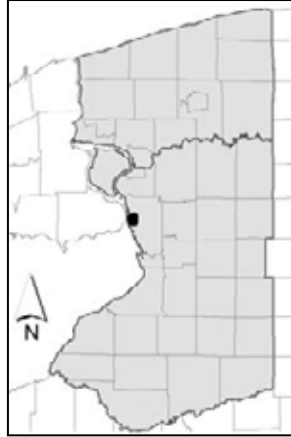
## ***Food for Growth: A Community Food System Plan for Buffalo's West Side***

### **Date:**

Fall 2003

### **Geographic Area:**

This area is bounded by Richmond Avenue to the east, Porter Avenue to the south, Fargo Avenue to the southwest, New Hampshire street to the northwest and West Ferry street to the north.



### **Focus Areas:**

- Food and Agriculture
- Vacant Properties
- Education

### **Sponsored By:**

Massachusetts Avenue Project

### **Prepared By:**

- Massachusetts Avenue Project
- Professor Samina Raja, UB
- And graduate students of the University at Buffalo Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

### **Additional Funding for the Plan:**

- Primary funding for the plan came from the Massachusetts Avenue Project, and the UB School of Architecture and Planning.
- Funding for printing came from the Weed and Seed Program.

### **Summary:**

To guide MAP's future work in the area of community food system building, this report presents recommendations based on an assessment of food security in the West Side and a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities and shortcomings in the local food system. This plan is also an example of how planning can be used to improve food security within an urban neighborhood.

### **Issues Addressed:**

- Enhancing local food production through land use planning
- Promoting food-based economic development
- Increasing transportation access to food
- Promoting food-based youth development through food-based projects

### **Recommendations:**

Local food production should be enhanced within the region as well as within the West Side neighborhood:

- CSAs, farmers markets
- Community gardens on vacant lots
- The city should recognize and protect community gardens and agriculture

Promote food based economic development:

- Expanded MAP micro-enterprise development program

Improving transportation access to food:

- Adequate NFTA bus service
- public safety on streets
- Transportation options for seniors

Educate and involve youth in promotion of food security:

- Growing Green program

### **Current Status / Implementation:**

Current hunger prevention efforts attempt to alleviate the problem of hunger on a short-term basis. By building and strengthening its community food system, the West Side can work toward long-term change and complement the short-term immediate relief that the emergency food system provides to people who are experiencing hunger.

## Greening Buffalo: What Local Governments Can Do

**Date:**

May 2, 2008

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo

**Focus Areas:**

- Parks and Greenspace
- Restoration Economy
- Vacant Property
- Brownfields
- Sprawl
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

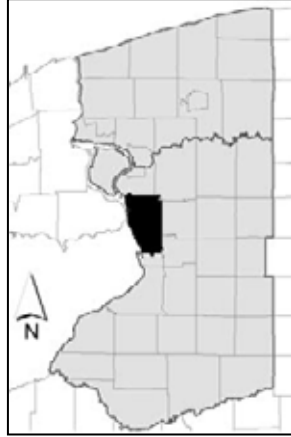
Partnership for the Public Good

**Prepared By:**

Sam Magavern (Professor, University at Buffalo Law School) with the assistance of UB Law School students.

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

The report was funded in-kind by members of the UB Law School.



**Summary:**

The *Greening Buffalo* report examines Buffalo's current and potential positions in dealing with both local and global environmental issues. It recognizes that while the potential for becoming a truly green city is remarkable, Buffalo underutilizes its natural and cultural resources and struggles to attract new residents. In addition, *Greening Buffalo* emphasizes that the City's environmental imperative overlaps nearly perfectly with the urban imperative.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Unhealthy ozone and particulate pollution
- Water quality deficiencies
- Brownfields
- Low recycling rates
- Food policies
- Sprawling development
- Aging infrastructure

**Recommendations:**

- Create sustainability officers and plans with indicators.
- Develop carbon-reduction and long-range efficiency plans
- Promptly implement the Regional Framework
- Take up aggressive anti-sprawl measures and policies
- Increase the number of regional government functions
- Fuel efficiency and emissions polices for govt. vehicles
- Use vacant lots to create parks and paths
- Extend the NFTA light rail to UB North
- Develop a comprehensive water-source control program
- Develop water conservation programs
- Continue comprehensive tree planting efforts
- Advocate for state brownfield subsidy reforms
- Work with universities on brownfield projects
- Any new buildings that receive govt. subsidies should be LEED Silver certified
- Create a revolving fund for efficiency improvements
- Support community gardens and urban farms

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The report is a valuable resource and should be considered by public officials who are planning for Buffalo's sustainable future and identifying opportunities for improving the overall environmental quality of the City and minimizing its impacts on the global climate and community.

## ***Historic Resources Intensive Level Survey, Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood***

**Date:**

August, 2004

**Geographic area:**

Broadway / Fillmore neighborhood on Buffalo's Eastside

**Focus Areas:**

- Restoration Economy
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency  
Buffalo Preservation Board  
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

**Prepared By:**

Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc

**Summary:**

The report begins with a project methodology; followed by an historical and architectural overview, an architectural summary and an annotated list of properties. The survey documents 474 buildings, comprising 14 percent of the neighborhood's estimated total building stock in the Broadway / Fillmore neighborhood.

**Issues Addressed:**

To identify historic buildings, landscapes, structures, and other distinct components of the community that highlight history on the local, regional, and national levels. Such as:

- Development of the neighborhood
- Major thoroughfares
- Olmsted and Vaux's Buffalo Park and Parkway System
- Immigration of the Polish and German communities
- Land speculation
- Religious institutions
- Residential architecture
- Commercial buildings
- Schools and other public buildings
- Industrial and transportation buildings
- The evolving ethnic makeup


**Recommendations / Strategies include:**

Historic resources in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood that possess high architectural and/or historical significance include:

- Polish religious institutions such as Corpus Christi
- Craftsman Bungalow residential architecture
- Commercial properties such as the Broadway Market and the Art Deco Liberty Bank
- Industrial and transportation buildings including the Duffy Silk Company buildings and the former NY Central Terminal
- Social gathering places including the Dom Polski building
- And Olmsted's Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The information gained from documenting the neighborhood's historic resources forms the foundation for integrating historic preservation into planning, community development, and economic revitalization efforts.

<b><i>Larkin District Plan</i></b>	
<p><b>Date:</b> July, 2006</p> <p><b>Geographic Area:</b> Larkin District</p> <p><b>Prepared By:</b> The Urban Design Project</p> <p><b>Participants Include:</b> City View Properties Kevin Connors and Associates</p> <p><b>Additional Funding for the Plan:</b> Local, federal, and state grant sources, as well as Private sources</p>	
	<p><b>Summary:</b> The Urban Design Project was hired by City View Properties to develop a strategic plan for future projects which will capitalize on ongoing and past projects within the area. UDP created a set of guidelines for proposed potential reinvestment opportunities in an effort to enhance the growth of the area.</p>
	<p><b>Issues Addressed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market the Larkin District “brand name” so that it becomes identifiable to the public</li> <li>• Base future development off of the district’s historic image</li> <li>• Allow for flexibility and change in the plan</li> <li>• Preserve and reuse important historic features</li> <li>• Blend new features with old</li> <li>• Capitalize on the district’s proximity to downtown through connections and design characteristics</li> <li>• Improve public connection routes</li> <li>• Encourage a vital urban neighborhood through public space and vibrant streets</li> <li>• Make the district safe and encourage alternative transportation methods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek historic resources to give the district an “identity”</li> <li>• Promote the legacy of industrial/technological innovation</li> <li>• Propose mixed uses</li> <li>• Make gateways at key entry points into the district</li> <li>• Let historic land uses establish street “themes”</li> <li>• Improve transportation services</li> <li>• Create a network of green spaces</li> <li>• Restrict new incompatible uses</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Current Status / Implementation:</b> The plan includes a timetable outlying short-term as well as long-term implementation goals. Short term implementation goals include seeking historic designations, adopting zoning regulations consistent with the proposed street themes, and improving transportation services. Long term implementation goals include the reconstruction of Seneca Street, an Exchange Street trolley service, and the creation of a downtown-airport rail service</p>	



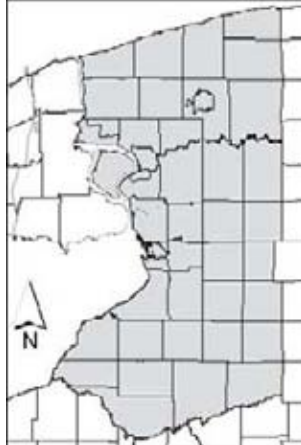
## ***Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan***

**Date:**

January 26, 2007

**Geographic Area:**

Waterfront resources in the City of Buffalo, including the coastal reaches of Lake Erie, the Niagara River and Black Rock Canal, the Buffalo River and portions of Cazenovia Creek and Scajaquada Creek.



**Summary:**

As an extension of the New York State Coastal Management Program, the purpose of the LWRP is to give waterfront communities an opportunity to assess conditions along the waterfront, establish policies to guide development, and implement appropriate waterfront land uses and projects.

The LWRP is aimed at restoring and revitalizing the deteriorated and underutilized areas of the waterfront by promoting development and redevelopment that will meet the City's goals and objectives for the waterfront.

**Issues Addressed:**

Dealing with environmental hazards and constraints, such as:

- Major Oil Storage Facilities
- Chemical Bulk Storage Facilities
- Hazardous Waste Sites
- Brownfields

**Sponsored By:**

- City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning, Timothy E. Wanamaker
- Byron W. Brown, Mayor

**Prepared By:**

Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Planners

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

Funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund

**Recommendations:**

- Foster a pattern of development in the waterfront area that enhances community character, preserves open space, makes efficient use of infrastructure, makes beneficial use of a waterfront location, and minimizes adverse effects of development.
- Preserve historic resources in the waterfront area
- Enhance visual quality and protect outstanding scenic resources
- Protect and restore ecological resources.
- Minimize environmental degradation from solid waste and hazardous substances and wastes
- Provide for public access to, and recreational use of, coastal waters, public lands and public resources in the waterfront area
- Promote economic development
- Allow for a better mix of uses on the waterfront

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Revitalizing the underutilized and deteriorated areas along the waterfront will benefit the surrounding neighborhoods and communities, the City and region, and help the City of Buffalo to achieve its vision of making the waterfront an important part of our economy and a safe, healthy and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

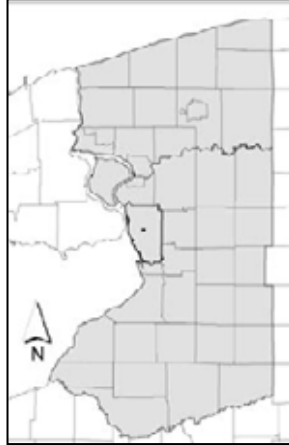
## ***The Masten District Neighborhood Plan***

**Date:**

2004

**Geographic Area:**

Masten District  
Neighborhoods; Cold  
Springs, Delavan -  
Grider, Fillmore -Leroy,  
Hamlin Park, Martin  
Luther King Jr., &  
Trinidad Park



**Prepared By:**

- The Office of Urban Initiatives
- UB Center for Urban Studies

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

**Summary:**

The *Masten District Plan* is a strategy for redeveloping the district and transforms it into a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family. With the slogan, “A community on the move,” it plans to take on land use issues, economic development as well as housing and neighborhood development. By transforming the physical environment, the plan seeks to enhance social development and encourage public and private investment.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Population loss and influx of low - income residents.
- Poor conditions along commercial corridors (“image makers”) reflect negatively on the surrounding neighborhoods.
- A good housing stock with a weak housing market.
- High crime rates and a low perception of safety win the district.

**Recommendations:**

- Establish a “superfund” to finance improvements and upkeep for those who can’t afford it, for public space, and for abandoned and vacant properties.
- Infill construction on vacant lots that follow guidelines.
- Establish a management program for vacant and abandoned lots, also develop a tracking system.
- Redevelopment of MLK Jr. Neighborhood is crucial. This includes redevelopment of Fillmore Ave.
- Develop Key thoroughfares to promote growth in the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Turn the Glenny projects into a passive park. Introduce landscaping, put in benches, and replaced plywood on windows.
- Include an “artist colony” and encourage college students and upwardly mobile groups to move in.

**Current Status / Implementation / Impact:**

The *Masten District Neighborhood Plan* has moved forward with implementation of strategic projects of priority. They have begun offering low - interest housing loans and grants to residents for housing and business improvements.

## Organic Revitalization: Artspace Buffalo

**Date:**

2006

**Geographic Area:**

Census tracts 32.02 & 67.02 including:

- Best St.
- Coe Place
- Dodge St.
- E. Utica St.
- Edna Place
- Ellicott St.
- Holland Place
- Laurel St.
- Main St. Development Section
- Michigan Ave.
- Northampton St.
- Riley St.
- Southampton St.

**Focus Areas:**

- Parks and Greenspace
- Restoration Economy
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

- City of Buffalo
- Artspace

**Prepared By:**

Office of Strategic Planning

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

\$11 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) for the Artspace project



**Summary:**

Artspace, a non-profit organization based in Minneapolis, MN, is developing a new 55 live/work unit artist loft project in a historic, five-story former automobile factory at 1219 Main Street, in what has been historically known as the Sarabeth Building. The *Organic Revitalization* report examines the Artspace Buffalo project as a key initial investment in a much broader revitalization effort planned for Buffalo's Midtown.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Reinforce tightly-knit, urban streetscapes
- Provide gap financing for new home construction and rehabilitation
- Create new small business opportunities corridors
- Preserve and reuse historical resources
- Enhance neighborhood densities through quality infill
- Identify neighborhood greening strategies
- Add new and distinctive streetscape amenities
- Provide a staging ground for arts-related improvements
- Encourage bicycle and transit use
- Solidify the unique image of the Midtown district

**Recommendations:**

- Create a landscaped median on Best Street
- Renovate two of the worst properties on Edna Place
- Commit to complete overhaul of the sidewalk on Dodge St.
- Restore treewall and introduce distinctive streetscape amenities on Southampton St.
- Repave Coe Place in brick
- Install mini-traffic circle at Northampton and Ellicott streets
- Install large flower pots in the middle of Holland Place
- Restore two-way traffic on Ellicott St. north of Goodell
- Purchase and renovate 65 Riley for new retail space
- Install Playwalk demonstration project on Laurel St.
- Resurrect tree canopy on East Utica
- Stabilize historic housing stock on Michigan Ave

**Current Status / Implementation:**

In spring of 2006, Savarino Construction first began foundation work for the new lofts and tenants began moving in July 2007. The feedback from tenants has been mixed.

## ***Scajaquada Creek Watershed Management Plan***

**Date:**

February, 2004

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo

**Focus Areas:**

- Soil
- Water
- Fish and Wildlife
- Habitat
- Food and Agriculture

**Sponsored By:**

- Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District

**Prepared By:**

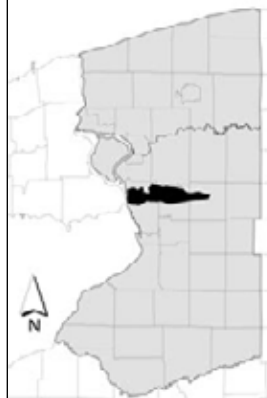
Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District

**Participants include:**

- Scajaquada Creek Watershed Advisory Council
- Erie County Legislature
- City of Buffalo Public Works
- Buffalo Sewer Authority
- Parkside Greens
- Village of Depew Public Works
- Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Partners for Urban Resources and Environment
- Erie County Water Quality Committee
- Ecology and Environment, Inc.

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

Erie County Legislature



**Summary:**

The Scajaquada Creek Watershed has been channelized and routed underground through developed areas. Permitted and unpermitted discharges have polluted the Creek, resulting in the degradation of water quality, hydrologic regime, and wildlife habitat. The Watershed Management Plan takes a community approach to natural resource management, and offers strategies and implementation policies on how to deal with the on-going degradation this urbanized Watershed.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Providing Watershed Management Goals, Objectives, and Action Items to restore and protect the ecological equality of the Watershed

**Recommendations:**

- Improve storm water management along the Watershed
- Create storm water ordinances
- Create retention ponds and riparian buffers
- Eliminate connected impervious surfaces
- Improve water quality
- Reduce pollutant runoff and discharge
- Control soil erosion
- Proper street sweeping along Watershed
- Create storm water storage facilities
- Eliminate sanitary sewer overflows
- Enhance sewer system infrastructure
- Develop wildlife habitat along Watershed
- Enhance existing wetland
- Increase public awareness and participation

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Many of these recommendations have been implemented throughout the area. Public participation cleanups are held annually along the Creek, and a fence has been placed at Hoyt Lake which collects debris and litter. Cheektowaga has discontinued fertilizer use along its streambanks. Brochures have also been distributed to local residents informing them of proper streambank management practices. In addition, soil erosion has been reduced by eliminating tree snags and debris jams, and the Creeks water quality is being monitored through various organizations.

## ***Selections from Queen City in the 21st Century, the City of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan***

**Date:**

February 7, 2006

**Geographic Area:**

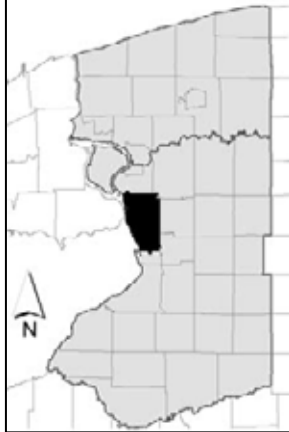
City of Buffalo

**Sponsored By:**

- City of Buffalo
- Office Strategic Planning

**Prepared By:**

- City of Buffalo, Mayor Byron Brown and former Mayor Anthony Masiello
- Buffalo Common Council
- Buffalo City Planning Board
- City of Buffalo, Office of Strategic Planning
- Carter International
- University at Buffalo, SUNY



**Summary:**

The *Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* was created to guide Buffalo to achieve a shared community vision of our future and provide the policy framework for all other local planning efforts. The Plan is based around seven key principle of delivering quality public services; maintain public infrastructure; transform Buffalo's economy; reconstruct schools; rebuild neighborhoods; restore Olmsted, Ellicott and the waterfront; and protect and restore the urban fabric.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Maintenance, amount and access to the City's Public Parks
- Buffalo Olmsted Parks and Parkways System
- The quality of Buffalo's Urban Forestry
- Buffalo's Green Infrastructure


**Recommendations:**

Provide land for the new economy throughout three strategic investment corridors:

- The Waterfront/Tonawanda corridor
- The Main Street/Downtown corridor
- The South Park/Eastside Rail corridor
- Clean up brownfields and a detailed survey and analysis of brownfield potential in Buffalo
- Implement key transportation projects In accordance with the 2025 Long Range Plan for the GBNRTC
- Restore the Ellicott radials and grid with new pavements, where needed, landscaping, new trees, and traffic calming.
- Restore Olmsted's nine parks, seven parkways and seven circles of the system
- Reconnect to the waterfront
- Create an Environmental Management System to facilitate target setting and performance evaluation

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Implementation of the plan will come, in large part, through the management of Buffalo's Capital Improvement Program as augmented by a special Buffalo Development Program to be negotiated among City, County, State and federal governments. The estimated additional need to be met through the Buffalo Development Program is \$35 million a year for a period of ten years.

<b><i>South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area</i></b>		
<b>Date:</b> March, 2008		<b>Summary:</b> The plan includes a nomination study for the South Buffalo BOA, leading to an analysis and masterplan for the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields along the Lake Erie Waterfront, the Buffalo River, and major transportation routes within South Buffalo's boundaries.
<b>Geographic Area:</b> City of Buffalo		<b>Issues Addressed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To gain a comprehensive understanding of the existing conditions</li><li>• To identify all brownfield sites and strategic sites for investment within the area</li><li>• To better understand the evolving economic and marketing trends that will influence the area over time</li><li>• To provide recommendations and revitalization strategies for the community</li><li>• To develop a master plan that articulates proper urban design principles which will help guide development</li></ul>
<b>Prepared By:</b> Urban Strategies Inc.		
<b>Participants include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• URS</li><li>• RCL Co.</li><li>• Watts Engineering</li></ul>		
<b>Funding:</b> City of Buffalo Grant through NYSDEC		
<b>Current Status / Implementation:</b> Project organizers held an open house on March 11, 2008 in South Buffalo to gather feedback and other valuable public information which will be used in future revitalization strategies. Public surveys were also sent out to the South Buffalo Community.		

## ***The Olmsted City: The Buffalo Olmsted Park System, Plan for the 21st Century***

**Date:**

2008

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo (existing and proposed Buffalo Olmsted Park System)

**Focus Areas:**

- Habitat
- Parks and Greenspace
- Restoration Economy
- Transportation

**Sponsoring Party:**

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

**Prepared by:**

The plan was prepared by The Urban Design Project with consulting support:

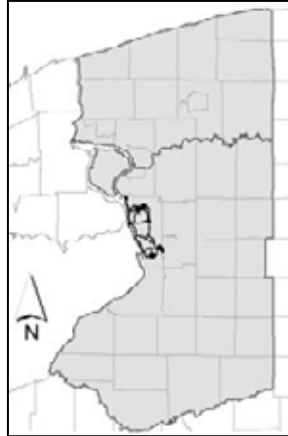
- Wendel Duchscherer, Trowbridge and Wolf
- the Center for Computational Research
- Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council
- Delaware North Companies

**Participants:**

The Olmsted Advisory Council

**Additional Funding for the Plan:**

Primary funding for the plan came from The John R. Oishei Foundation.



**Summary:**

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC), charged with the management and operations of these parks since 2004, has initiated an inclusive and comprehensive planning process with the goal of restoring the system and enhancing the parks and parkways in ways that respect their status as important neighborhood, regional, national, and international resources. The completion of this plan offers a new vision for Buffalo's historic park system well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Issues Addressed:**

The restoration and management of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks and Parkway System

**Recommendations:**

The plan proposes the historic restoration of the Buffalo Olmsted Park System (6 major parks, 7 parkways, 8 circles, and 3 small spaces within the historically designated cultural landscape).

Additional connections and extensions to the Olmsted Park System:

- 6 extensions proposed or designed by Olmsted but never fully realized or subsequently destroyed
- 8 extensions designed to connect to the existing Olmsted system
- 11 extensions connecting the Olmsted system to the city and the Niagara River Greenway.

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The plan was adopted by the Conservancy in January 2008. The plan suggests that its full implementation may take longer than 20 years, and over 428 million dollars. The plan has a 5 Year Plan as part of its implementation strategy that includes fixing the basics first, implementing Greenway related projects, and addressing critical needs. The plan may be adopted as part of the City of Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan. Many of the plan's recommendations have been or will be implemented soon.

<b>Urban Ecosystem Analysis</b>	
<p><b>Date:</b> July, 2003</p> <p><b>Geographic Area:</b> The Cities of Buffalo and Lackawanna</p> <p><b>Focus Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• air</li> <li>• Soil</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Fish and Wildlife</li> <li>• Habitat</li> <li>• Parks and Greenspace</li> <li>• Vacant Properties</li> </ul> <p><b>Sponsored By:</b> US Forest Service, Dept. of Agriculture</p> <p><b>Prepared By:</b> American Forests</p> <p><b>Participants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area</li> <li>• City of Buffalo – Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency</li> <li>• Buffalo-Lackawanna Renewal Communities</li> <li>• Partners for Urban Resources and the Environment (PURE) Erie-Niagara</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding:</b> USDA Forest Service Title VIII grant</p>	<div> </div> <p><b>Summary:</b> The Buffalo-Lackawanna Urban Ecosystem Analysis is part of a larger effort in the Erie-Niagara region to understand the value of the natural environment as “green infrastructure” and for communities to work together on regional planning issues. One major product of this study is a digital map of the area’s landcover, a “green data layer”, which allows local communities to integrate the green infrastructure into their planning. The green data layer shows that trees are a vital and valuable part of the infrastructure in the Buffalo-Lackawanna region.</p> <p><b>Issues Addressed:</b> The economic and ecological impacts of urban forest cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing tree canopy on vacant parcels and riparian zones</li> <li>• A reduction of air and water pollutants</li> <li>• Minimizing the cost of stormwater services</li> <li>• Sequestering carbon</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set Tree Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% tree canopy overall</li> <li>• 50% tree canopy in suburban residential</li> <li>• 25% tree canopy in urban residential</li> <li>• 15% tree canopy in central business districts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consider alternative scenarios for land development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree planting on vacant or riparian lands</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Expand Green Infrastructure Analysis and Planning</li> <li>• Preserve Existing Trees</li> <li>• Work across political boundaries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Current Status / Implementation:</b> The analysis should be a starting point for additional efforts using the tools and data provided with this project to understand the value of the region’s ecology, and the role of green infrastructure in setting planning goals that will meet the ecological needs of the community.</p>	



## ***Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Action Plan***

**Date:**

January 2003

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo

**Focus Areas:**

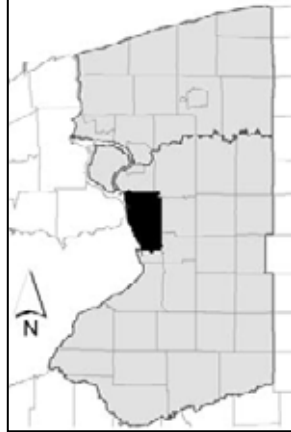
- Parks and Greenspace
- Transportation

**Sponsored By:**

National Parks Service

**Prepared By:**

Wendel Duchscherer, Architects and Engineers



**Summary:**

The 2003 Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Action Plan is a comprehensive audit and analysis of parks, recreation facilities and open space, which was initially undertaken for the Parks, Recreation and Public Space component of the City of Buffalo's Master Plan.

**Issues Addressed:**

Service goals:

- Have a sufficient human resource capacity to meet community recreation service needs.
- Utilize full complement of available recreation resources to meet needs/demands of community.
- Increase financial support for parks and recreation
- Expand recreation opportunities for and utilization of existing recreation resources

Management goals:

- Clarify Department of Public Works Parks & Streets' role
- Improve efficiency of equipment.
- Improve grounds and facility maintenance
- Coordination with the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

**Recommendations:**

- The City of Buffalo to perform regular maintenance at each park, playground, open space and facility.
- Improvements to the Tiff Nature Preserve, which is rated in fair condition.
- Complete the Scajaquada Pathway linking Delaware Park with the Buffalo and Erie County Riverwalk.
- Implementation of planned improvements to Cazenovia, Riverside and Schiller Parks
- Improve Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- Prepare a Comprehensive Bicycle Route Master Plan in coordination with the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Committee's Bicycle Master Plan

**Current Status / Implementation:**

The City has implemented many of these recommendations as evidenced by the allocation of funds in the 2003 – 2007 budget for Delaware, Cazenovia, Front, Schiller, Riverside and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parks. Planned initiatives in relation to the goals and objectives are projected on a five-year implementation schedule.

## ***Vacant Property Asset Management Strategy***

**Date:**

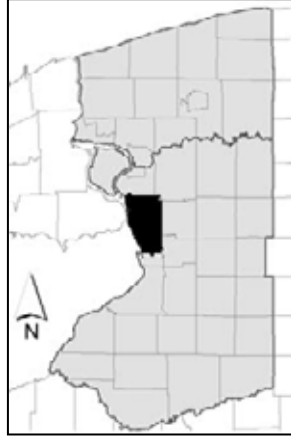
December, 2004

**Geographic Area:**

City of Buffalo

**Prepared by:**

Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Association of Erie  
County



**Participants:**

- Mayor Anthony M. Masiello and Administrative Staff
- Buffalo Common Council Members and Staff
- Office of Strategic Planning
- Administration and Finance
- Taxation & Assessment
- Audit & Control
- Citizens Services
- Community Services
- Fire Department
- Law Department
- Permit & Inspections
- Police
- Public Works – Forestry and Streets & Sanitation
- Planning Board
- Preservation Board
- Buffalo Arts Commission
- Wellness Institute
- Buffalo Environmental Management Commission
- Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority

**Summary:**

Current estimates put vacant land of all types around 13,000 or more than 13% of the total number of parcels in the city. The Vacant Properties Asset Management Strategy is designed to accommodate several important factors currently at the forefront of the City's vacant property issues: including a Comprehensive planning framework and smart Growth principles.

**Issues Addressed:**

- Slowing the rate of properties become vacant.
- Managing existing and future vacant properties.
- Returning vacant properties to appropriate, functional, and revenue generating uses.
- Market all vacant properties on a comprehensive manner
- Vacant property sanitation, blight removal, neighborhood safety and conservation.

**Recommendations:**

- Develop an information and communication systems for vacant property asset management.
- Disseminate information supporting vacant property goals.
- Establish and support a multi-disciplined team to regularly review and advise on vacant property management.
- Policies should be re-evaluated, updated, or developed to reflect city and community-wide redevelopment goals.
- Conservation, rehabilitation and preservation priorities must be incorporated into all procedures and practices.
- Demolition projects, practices and funding priorities must be reevaluated.
- Budget planning and development around the vacant property center is an immediate need.
- Funding development and leveraging community and private resources should be expanded.
- A Vacant Properties Team should be assembled to guide the initiation of these preliminary actions.
- Create an environment to save and control costs through budgeting and partner financing

**Current Status / Implementation:**

Impacts of the strategy include bringing more companies to Buffalo; creating job opportunities for residents; improving the tax base, and improving the environmental and financial health of the city and its residents.

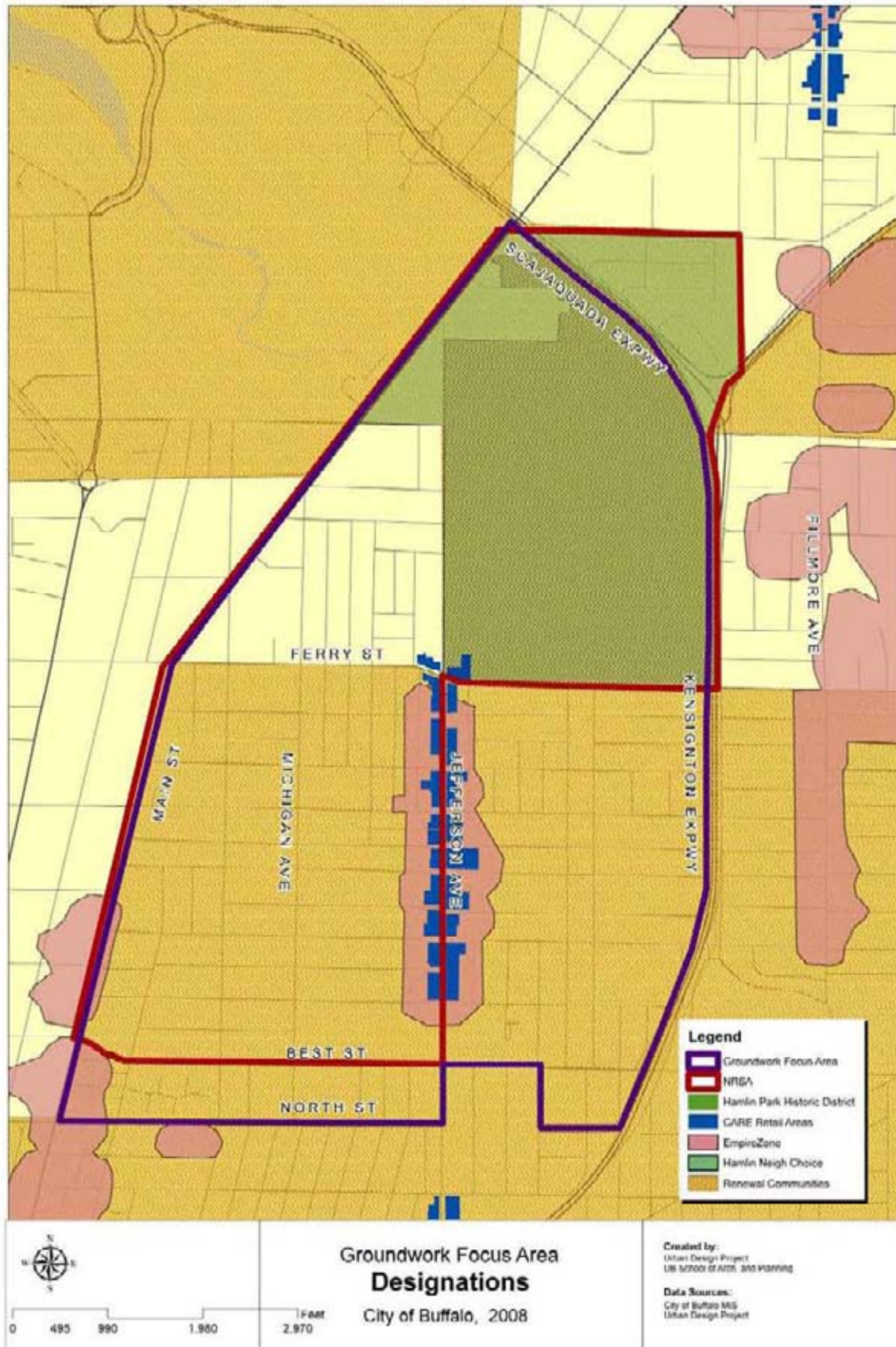
## **Appendix D:**

# **Summary of Mid City Focus Area Planning Designations**

### **Introduction**

This report describes the boundaries and implications of the multiple designations of the Groundwork Buffalo Mid City focus area on the near East Side. These designations demonstrate the City of Buffalo's willingness to reinvest in the focus area. The designations include:

- Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area (NRSA)
- Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE)
- Local Historic District
- Empire Zones
- Renewal Communities
- Block-by-Block Areas
- Livable Communities
- Neighborhood of Choice



## Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area (NRSA)<sup>1</sup>

**Overview:** A Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area (NRSA) is a program that seeks to create opportunities for additional employment, improved housing stock, and to provide necessary human services for the residents of the NRSA. The NRSA program provides the City with incentives to stimulate development in the areas of job creation and retention, housing, economic development, and public services. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) encourages cities to develop comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies to provide for the economic empowerment of the low- and moderate income residents of a particular neighborhood.

In May 2007, the City of Buffalo received approval from HUD for the designation of the Mid City NRSA. This enables the City have more flexibility in spending Community Development Block Grants and allows the income-limits to be reduced so that 51% of projects/units need to benefit people of low-income while the remainder of the funding can be used to create mixed-income incentives and programs.

**Designation Boundaries:** The Mid City NRSA that was designated by HUD in the City of Buffalo is within portions of the Masten and Ellicott Council Districts. The area is bounded by Main Street, East North Street, and both the Scjajaquada and Kensington Expressways. The NRSA also includes portions of the neighborhood just north of Hamlin Park. This area was chosen because of its good housing stock and economic potential. The area contains several single and multi-family houses that despite their poor condition hold the foundation for a great neighborhood. The area could become a mid city economic center with the right investments.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The program will benefit the area in several ways. It offers financial support for the area's mainly poor residents to make much needed improvements to their homes. It also provides incentives for those business owners to improve their properties. Commercial benefits also include initiatives to sustain employment. In addition, investments will address crime prevention, infrastructure improvements, and development of community programs.

The City of Buffalo receives annual funding from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for four Federal entitlement programs:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Estimated \$16,510,228 will be allocated.
- HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME): Estimated \$4,728,820 will be allocated.
- Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA): Estimated \$713,642 will be allocated.
- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG): Estimated \$480,000 will be allocated.

## CARE Retail Areas<sup>2</sup>

**Overview:** The Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) is a comprehensive program designed to rehabilitate and renovate retail and commercial properties in targeted economically distressed areas in the City of Buffalo. It operates through a partnership between neighborhood residents, merchants, the City of

Buffalo, and Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation (BERC). BERC will implement the CARE Program in cooperation and coordination with City of Buffalo Departments of Finance, Public Works, Police, Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency and other city agencies.

**Designation Boundaries:** Sections of Jefferson Avenue have designations of CARE. These sections Jefferson Avenue were chosen for commercial revitalization because Jefferson is an important commercial thoroughfare within the near East Side. Jefferson Avenue has suffered from disinvestment and is need of capital for improving commercial properties and businesses. This CARE area was designated as such in both the *Masten District Plan* and the *East Delavan Planning Community Neighborhood Plan*.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The Storefront Facade Program will provide rebates in recognition of the significant impact storefront improvements have on the appearance and vitality of neighborhood commercial corridors. All Participants in this program are required to be current with federal and state income taxes, property taxes, garbage user fee, water and sewer bills, and all other applicable taxes.

In order to encourage the rehabilitation of the exterior of buildings along the commercial corridor, the BERC will rebate up to 50% of the cost of eligible storefront improvements, up to a maximum of \$8,000 per storefront. Operation FACELIFT funds the removal of deteriorating signage and supportive structures, repair and replacement of broken windows and frames, scraping and painting of building facades, and boarding up of open vacant buildings. Each storefront in CARE area having such a need will receive a maximum grant of \$2,000. In cooperation with the City of Buffalo's Police Department, a Commercial Area Security Survey will be conducted. The BERC will rebate 50% of the cost, up to \$3,000 for installation and implementation of recommended security devices and improvements on individual properties.

## Local Historic District<sup>3</sup>

**Overview:** A historic district in the United States is a group of buildings, properties or sites that have been designated by one of several entities on different levels as historically or architecturally significant. Buildings, structures, objects and sites within an historic district are normally divided into two categories, contributing and non-contributing. Districts greatly vary in size, some having hundreds of structures while others have just a few. Local historic districts are generally administered by the county or municipal government. The guidelines for the local historic district are set by the City of Buffalo Historic Preservation Board. Local historic districts are often more restrictive than national historic districts. The tendency of local districts to place restrictions on property owners causes them to be the targets of the most resistance from the public. They usually enjoy the greatest level of protection, under law, from any threats that may compromise their historic integrity. This is due to the fact that many land-use decisions are made at the local level.

To establish Hamlin Park as a historic district it took an eight year effort by the Preservation Coalition and the Hamlin Park Community and Taxpayers Association. The late Rev. Charles Perkins launched the campaign in 1990. One of the reasons for the effort is that this area is composed primarily of 20th century houses and is the first regionally in which the social contributions of African Americans figure prominently in the designation. The district was named after Cicero Hamlin's 19th century horse racing grounds, the Driving Park, and was later developed by, among others, Hamlin's sons.



**Designation Boundaries:** The Hamlin Park Historic District is the city's first historic district east of Main Street. The area is bounded by Main Street, Humboldt Parkway, and East Ferry Street. It can be divided into four sub-areas:

1. Humboldt Parkway, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, has the largest houses.
2. A southern section, north of Ferry Street to Northland, comprises land actually owned by Hamlin. Typical here is Brunswick Blvd., part of a grid street pattern. The streetscape has maintained its integrity since the period of construction (prior to W.W.I), with one-over-one doubles with uniform setbacks, brick ground floors, glazed sunrooms, and entry porches. Personal expression and variation is found on the wood-sheathed upper story and attic gable.
3. A section between Florida and Delavan is defined by smaller houses and the meandering course of Scajaquada Creek, now buried.
4. A northern section, north of Delavan Avenue, is typified by Hedley Place, which has many single family houses in Colonial Revival and Four Square styles.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The most prominent benefit from the establishment of a historic district is the protection of the buildings and parks that are contained within the district. In order to make alterations within the preservation district, property owners must adhere to a set of guidelines. Often, the most valuable properties in many communities are those within designated historic districts.

## Empire Zones<sup>4</sup>

**Overview:** New York State's Empire Zone program was created to stimulate economic growth through a variety of State tax incentives designed to attract new businesses to New York State and to enable existing businesses to expand and create more jobs. The incentives provided by the New York State Empire Zone designation enhance the climate for reinvestment. The apparent fragmentation of Empire Zones becomes a strength when seen related to school and neighborhood reinvestment areas, landmark sites, renewal community boundaries, and strategic investment areas.

To participate in the Empire Zones Program, a business must first be located in an empire zone, or qualify as a regionally significant project, and become zone certified. To qualify for certification, a business must be able to demonstrate that it will create new jobs and/or make investments in the empire zone and be consistent with the local zone's development plan, including a cost-benefit analysis. Applications approved by local zone officials are then forwarded to the State for review and approval by the Departments of Economic Development (Empire State Development) and Labor. Once a business is certified it is eligible to claim tax credits, subject to requirements and performance based formulas set in Tax Law.

**Designation Boundaries:** The Empire Zones within the Groundwork Focus Area are located along Jefferson Avenue from East Ferry Street to North Street.

**Focus Area Benefits:** Although individual businesses are targeted for Empire Zone benefits, the designation may help retain and attract businesses and employment opportunities to the focus area. Municipalities designated as Empire Zones may also offer additional incentives including sales tax

refunds, and property tax abatements for real property improvements in the Zone. Many utility companies (including gas, electric and telephone services) also offer rate reductions to certified Empire Zone businesses. Many of the benefits within Empire Zones come from tax and incentive credit and include:

- **Wage Tax Credit:** Available to companies hiring full-time or full-time equivalent employees in the zone. Credits are available for up to five consecutive years. Credits are \$1,500 per employee; for employees in special targeted groups the amount is raised to \$3,000 per employee per year. In investment zones, this credit is increased by \$500 for workers with wages over \$40,000. Unused credits can be forwarded indefinitely and new businesses (those that have been taxable for five years or less) are eligible for a 50% refund of unused credits.
- **Investment Tax Credit:** Available to companies making an investment in the zone for depreciable property and/or equipment which is principally used in manufacturing, processing, assembly, industrial waste treatment or air pollution-control facilities, R&D or financial institutions. 10% (8% for personal income tax filers) of the eligible investment can be taken for credit. Unused credits can be forwarded indefinitely and new businesses are eligible for a 50% refund of unused credits.
- **Employment Incentive Credit:** A credit equal to 30% of the investment tax credit is available for each of the three years after the Investment Tax Credit (ITC) is claimed if employment is increased when the investment is made. Unused credits can be forwarded indefinitely and new businesses (personal income tax only) are eligible for a 50% refund of unused credits.
- **Zone Capital Credits:** A 25% tax credit is available for personal or corporate income tax payers for eligible investments in certified zone businesses, or contributions to approved community development projects. There is a lifetime limit of \$100,000 in zone capital credits per contributor for Community Development Projects and \$100,000 lifetime limit in zone capital credits per investor in a Direct Equity Investment project.
- **NYS Sales Tax Refund:** A refund of the State portion [4% to 4.375% in the MTA region] of the sales tax is available for the purchase of building materials used in the construction or renovation of industrial or commercial property located in a zone. Empire Zone certification is not a requirement to receive this benefit; however, the purchaser must be buying for a property in the zone.

## **Renewal Communities<sup>5</sup>**

**Overview:** A Renewal Community (RC) designation stimulates economic development in eligible neighborhoods by offering Federal tax incentives to encourage businesses to locate or expand operations and to hire residents of the RC. The tax benefits took effect January 1, 2002 and remain until December 31, 2009. The incentives include employment credits, a 0% tax on capital gains, accelerated depreciation through Commercial Revitalization Deductions, and other incentives. The Buffalo-Lackawanna Renewal Community is 11 square miles that include sections of the Lower West Side, East Side, Downtown, Seneca-Babcock, Broadway-Fillmore, the former Republic Steel area of South Buffalo and the First Ward in Lackawanna.



**Designation Boundaries:** Most of the focus area is within the Renewal Community boundaries. The only exception is Census Tract 32.01, bounded to the south by Ferry, the east by Jefferson, and the north by Delavan. The Buffalo-Lackawanna Renewal Community is one of 40 designees selected by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). There are five other Renewal Communities in New York State.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The Renewal Community designation aims to promote economic development that would benefit the focus area. The program also offers a Renewal Community Employment Credit (RC Wage Credit) against Federal Taxes up to \$1,500 for businesses for each year of RC designation for every existing employee and new hire who lives and works in the RC.

## **‘Block-By-Block’ Areas<sup>6</sup>**

**Overview:** The Block-by-Block program is a collaborative effort by the State, the City of Buffalo, and grassroots organizations meant to help stabilize neighborhoods in the City of Buffalo. The Block-by-Block program is an important new source of funding aimed to strengthen residential neighborhoods, improve the city's aging housing stock and remove blighted properties. The unique feature of the Block-by-Block program is that every grant will be focused on a block or a series of blocks in the City of Buffalo. Eligible uses of program funds may include:

1. Rehabilitation and repair of owner occupied homes;
2. Acquisition and rehabilitation of owner occupied homes needing substantial repair;
3. New construction proposals are discouraged and will be allowed only as a limited component of a larger plan for comprehensive block stabilization.

**Designation Boundaries:** There is a large Block-by-Block area within the focus area in the Masten Park neighborhood. It is bounded to the east by Jefferson, the south by Northampton, the west by Masten, and the north by Memphis. Most of this area is residential, with a few commercial properties along Jefferson. The Block-by-Block program is new program established in 2008, and there are no other examples of the program in the state or the City of Buffalo.

**Focus Area Benefits:** There will be renovations on 48 units located on several blocks in the Mid-City area of the city's East Side. The program will be administered by Belmont Shelter, Inc., a non-profit housing organization. There will also be an acquisition and rehabilitation of five two-family homes in the Mid-City area on Buffalo's East Side. The homes are currently vacant and owned by the City. BURA will renovate the homes using local contractors and sell them to eligible low- and moderate-income homebuyers.

Many of the homes to be renovated are more than 60 years old and some are even older. In many cases, reduced property values and lack of funds has made it difficult for the owners to finance improvements themselves. The grant will be used to correct basic structural defects or foundation problems, including replacing roofs, doors, windows, and siding, upgrading electrical, heating, and plumbing systems, and replacing deficient water and septic systems. A lead assessment will be conducted and if necessary, a lead abatement performed on each home. The improvement of the housing stock will clean up blighted neighborhoods and provide a foundation for the rehabilitation of key neighborhoods within the City of Buffalo.

## Livable Communities<sup>7</sup>

**Overview:** The Livable Communities program is designed to help community-based organizations make Buffalo a better place to live. The City's administration is committed to working with community-based organizations that are helping to improve the quality of life for all City of Buffalo residents. The purpose of the Livable Communities Grant Program is to provide funding to Block Clubs, civic/citizens associations for the implementation of innovative projects that will provide measurable visual and physical improvements in their neighborhoods. Funding is designated for projects such as planting a community garden, organizing a cleanup, or painting a mural. Any Block Club or Civic/Citizens association located in a low to moderate income area in the City of Buffalo, New York is eligible for funding, however, priority will be given to grassroots Community-Based Organizations (CBO) or Block Clubs whose mission is related to improving the city's neighborhoods. First preference will be given to projects located in one of the thirteen targeted Livable Communities neighborhoods within the city.

There are thirteen targeted Livable Communities neighborhoods in Buffalo, ten of which are outside of the focus area: Black Rock, Grant-Ferry, Lakeview, Cold Springs, Hamlin Park, Masten Park, Medical Park, Broadway-Fillmore, Schiller Park, Leroy, Seneca, Cazenovia Park, and Triangle. In 2007-2008, approximately nineteen groups throughout the City of Buffalo were approved for funding totaling more than \$90,000.

**Designation Boundaries:** The majority of the focus area is within a Livable Community. Cold Springs, Hamlin Park, and Masten Park are individually designated a Livable Community. These neighborhoods also comprise the NRSA. Only the southeast portion of the focus area, east of Jefferson and south of Ferry, is not a Livable Community.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The program is funded through the City Of Buffalo, Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) and the Citizens' Bank Foundation. CBO's and non-profits in the focus area are eligible for grants that range from \$100 to \$5,000 (\$7,500 within the targeted 13 Livable Communities neighborhoods). Grant funds may be used only for the implementation of visual and physical neighborhood improvement projects that fall in the project categories listed below:

- Projects must serve the secular purposes of historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization. The primary purpose of the grant cannot be the advancement of any religious purpose.
- Project may not duplicate an existing program (funds may not be used to rehabilitate private properties, business, or school. Funds may not be used for infrastructure improvement: curbs, sidewalks or repaving of a street.) Funds cannot be used for initial planning and/or concept design, however, construction drawings are considered a part of implementation.
- Soft projects such as social services, training, awards ceremonies, food, or block club parties are not eligible.
- Funds may not be used for duplication of City services; purchase of holiday lights and decorations, T-shirts, lawn mowers and other power tools, or improvement of private properties (ex. Lamp post)

- Salaries and overhead and any cost associated with fundraising are not eligible.
- Projects must have a significant impact on the enhancement of the neighborhood.
- Projects formerly funded through this grant program are not eligible for additional funding.

## Neighborhood of Choice<sup>8</sup>

**Overview:** The Neighborhood of Choice Program aims to improve distressed neighborhoods with existing assets through funding programs so that these neighborhoods become places where people want to live. It is part of the City's Livable Communities Initiative. The strategy involves investing in targeted neighborhoods individually, rather than the whole city at once. It aims to renovate deteriorating housing stock and increase homeownership.

**Designation Boundaries:** Hamlin Park was the first Neighborhood of Choice. Hamlin Park is bounded by Main Street, Humboldt Parkway, and East Ferry Street. There is however, an extension of that district. The Neighborhood of Choice extends up to and along Main Street and a portion of it spills over the Scajaquada Expressway. This extension better connects the neighborhood to the Main St. corridor and improves connections across the Scajaquada Expressway into neighboring districts, the Sisters of Charity Hospital, and Canisius College and its surrounding neighborhoods.

**Focus Area Benefits:** The City will purchase old housing stock, renovate it, and resell it to homeowners who will live in that house. Over \$3.5 million dollars is committed to Phase One, beginning in Summer 2007, which will focus on two neighborhoods: Hamlin Park and Grant Ferry. Because the Hamlin Park Neighborhood of Choice is also a historic district, any changes or improvements to a building have to be approved by the City of Buffalo Preservation Board.

## References

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- <sup>2</sup> "BERC Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE)." Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation. 2008 <<http://www.berc.org/careprogram.php>>.
- <sup>3</sup> McCartney, Susan. "Hamlin Park gets in at last Strength of neighborhood is early 20th century houses." Newsletter of the Preservation Coalition of Erie County. Vol. 22.3. Spring 1999. Preservation Coalition of Erie County. 2008 <<http://preserve.bfn.org/bpr/spr99/smham.html>>.
- <sup>4</sup> "Empire Zones, Tax and Financial Incentives, Empire State Development." New York Loves Business. 2008 <[http://www.nylovesbiz.com/tax\\_and\\_financial\\_incentives/empire\\_zones/default.asp](http://www.nylovesbiz.com/tax_and_financial_incentives/empire_zones/default.asp)>.
- "New York Empire Zones." Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation. 2008 <[http://www.berc.org/incentive\\_empirezone.php](http://www.berc.org/incentive_empirezone.php)>.
- <sup>5</sup> "Renewal Communities." Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation. 2008 <[http://www.berc.org/incentive\\_renewal.php](http://www.berc.org/incentive_renewal.php)>.
- <sup>6</sup> "Governor Paterson Awards First "Block-by-Block" Grants." Press release. 12 June 2008. 2008 <[http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/press\\_0612083.html](http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/press_0612083.html)>
- <sup>7</sup> "Livable Communities Initiative." City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency. 2008 <[http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/home/city\\_departments/bura/livable\\_communities](http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/home/city_departments/bura/livable_communities)>.
- <sup>8</sup> City of Buffalo. Neighborhoods of Choice. Brochure. Author. 20 May 2006. 2008 <[http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/files/1\\_2\\_1/splanning/news/neighborhoods%20of%20choice%20brochure%20may%202006.pdf](http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/files/1_2_1/splanning/news/neighborhoods%20of%20choice%20brochure%20may%202006.pdf)>.

## Appendix E:

### Contacts and Potential Board Members

**Table E-1: Steering Committee**

First	Last	Organization	e-mail	Phone
Anthony	Armstrong	LISC	<a href="mailto:aarmstrong@lisc.org">aarmstrong@lisc.org</a>	853-1136
Kerri	Bentkowski	Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper	<a href="mailto:kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org">kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org</a>	852-7483
Donna	Berry	Buffalo PD	<a href="mailto:dberry@bpdny.org">dberry@bpdny.org</a>	851-4403/864-0797
Justin	Booth	Wellness Institute/Green Options Buffalo	<a href="mailto:jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-4052
Dwayne	Diggs	Group Ministries	<a href="mailto:ddiggs@groupministriesbuffalo.org">ddiggs@groupministriesbuffalo.org</a>	883-4367
Brian	Dold	BOPC	<a href="mailto:bdold@buffaloolmstedparks.org">bdold@buffaloolmstedparks.org</a>	838-1249 ext 33
John	Fell	City of Buffalo, Strategic Planning	<a href="mailto:jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-5035
Heidi	Freedman		<a href="mailto:howdyheidiho@hotmail.com">howdyheidiho@hotmail.com</a>	435-7113
Nancy	Freeland	VOICE Buffalo	<a href="mailto:nfreeland@hotmail.com">nfreeland@hotmail.com</a>	842-6571
David	Hahn-Baker	Community Action Organization	<a href="mailto:dhahnbaker@aol.com">dhahnbaker@aol.com</a>	332-4554
Ada	Hopsin-Clemens	Board of Block Clubs	<a href="mailto:ahconnections@yahoo.com">ahconnections@yahoo.com</a>	851-6500
Renata	Kraft	Buffalo Micro Parks	<a href="mailto:rkraft@bergmannpc.com">rkraft@bergmannpc.com</a>	852-3211 x862
Kirk	Laubenstein	Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	<a href="mailto:kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com">kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com</a>	851-4647
Zoe	Lavatelli	Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	<a href="mailto:grgbuffalo@hotmail.com">grgbuffalo@hotmail.com</a>	851-4647
Ivan	Lee	Hodgson Russ / BOPC	<a href="mailto:ilee@hodgsonruss.com">ilee@hodgsonruss.com</a>	848-1560
Rod	McCallum	Queen City Farm	<a href="mailto:rod@queencityfarm.org">rod@queencityfarm.org</a>	207-9327
Jay	McCarthy	Buffalo Micro Parks	<a href="mailto:jason.mccarthy@gmail.com">jason.mccarthy@gmail.com</a>	
Jim	O'Connell	National Parks Service	<a href="mailto:Jim_O'Connell@nps.gov">Jim_O'Connell@nps.gov</a>	617-223-5222
Jim	Pavel	Keep WNY Beautiful	<a href="mailto:jimpavel@verizon.net">jimpavel@verizon.net</a>	851-4370
Diane	Picard	Massachusetts	<a href="mailto:dpnoc@mass-ave.org">dpnoc@mass-ave.org</a>	882-5327

April 12, 2009

		Avenue Project		
Laura	Quebral-Fulton	CFGB	<a href="mailto:lqfulton@oisheifdt.org">lqfulton@oisheifdt.org</a>	852-2857
Micaela	Shapiro-Shellaby	Coalition for Economic Justice	<a href="mailto:micaelajaine@gmail.com">micaelajaine@gmail.com</a>	892-5877
Erin	Sharkey	Massachusetts Avenue Project	<a href="mailto:sharkey@mass-ave.org">sharkey@mass-ave.org</a>	882-5327
Dave	Stebbins	ECIDA/Buffalo Urban Development Corp	<a href="mailto:dstebbins@ecidany.com">dstebbins@ecidany.com</a>	856-6525 x114
David	Torke	Fix Buffalo	<a href="mailto:davidtorke@gmail.com">davidtorke@gmail.com</a>	602-5440
Lauren	Weiss		<a href="mailto:spicy.weiss.e@gmail.com">spicy.weiss.e@gmail.com</a>	348-8996
Ava	White	Group Ministries	<a href="mailto:adwhite@groupministriesbuffalo.org">adwhite@groupministriesbuffalo.org</a>	883-4367
Brenda	Young	Daemen College - Center for Sustainable Communities	<a href="mailto:byoung@daemen.edu">byoung@daemen.edu</a>	838-8489

**Table E-2: Consultant/Study Committee (RFQ)**

First	Last	Organization	e-mail	Phone
Anthony	Armstrong	LISC	<a href="mailto:aarmstrong@lisc.org">aarmstrong@lisc.org</a>	853-1136
Kerri	Bentkowski	Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper	<a href="mailto:kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org">kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org</a>	852-7483
Brian	Dold	BOPC	<a href="mailto:bdold@buffaloolmstedparks.org">bdold@buffaloolmstedparks.org</a>	838-1249 ext 33
John	Fell	City of Buffalo, Strategic Planning	<a href="mailto:jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-5035
Kirk	Laubenstein	Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	<a href="mailto:kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com">kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com</a>	851-4647
Jajean	Rose-Burney	Urban Design Project	<a href="mailto:jr58@buffalo.edu">jr58@buffalo.edu</a>	829-3485 ext 233
Lynda	Schneekloth	Urban Design Project	<a href="mailto:lhs1@buffalo.edu">lhs1@buffalo.edu</a>	829-3485 ext 201
Erin	Sharkey	Massachusetts Avenue Project	<a href="mailto:sharkey@mass-ave.org">sharkey@mass-ave.org</a>	882-5327

**Table E-3: Other Organization Contacts**

First	Last	Organization	e-mail	Phone
		African Cultural Center	-	884-2013
		Artspace	<a href="mailto:info@artspacebuffalo.org">info@artspacebuffalo.org</a>	803-6205
		Belmont Shelter	-	884-7791
		Black Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:admin@wnyblackchamber.com">admin@wnyblackchamber.com</a>	

April 12, 2009

Mack	Richard	Black Rock Riverside GNPA	<a href="mailto:review@buffnet.net">review@buffnet.net</a>	445-6415
Evelyn	Vossler	Black Rock Riverside GNPA	<a href="mailto:grammyevelyn@aol.com">grammyevelyn@aol.com</a>	875-3605
Eileen	Nowak	Broadway Area Business Association		
		Broadway Fillmore NHS		852-3130
		Broadway Market Management Corporation	<a href="mailto:director@broadwaymarket.com">director@broadwaymarket.com</a>	893-0705
Justin	Booth	Buffalo Green Fund	<a href="mailto:jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-4052
Michael	Gainer	Buffalo ReUse	<a href="mailto:buffaloreuse@gmail.com">buffaloreuse@gmail.com</a>	885-4131
Tim	Tielman	Campaign for Greater Buffalo	<a href="mailto:C4GB@aol.com">C4GB@aol.com</a>	854-3749
Michael	Miller	Central Terminal Restoration Corp.	<a href="mailto:webmaster@buffalocentralterminal.org">webmaster@buffalocentralterminal.org</a>	
		Citizens Campaign for the Environment	<a href="mailto:twlcproject@aol.com">twlcproject@aol.com</a>	829-3501 x12
Mike	Schade	Citizens' Environmental Coalition	<a href="mailto:cecmike@choiceonemail.com">cecmike@choiceonemail.com</a>	
		Clinton Bailey Community Association	<a href="mailto:clintonbailey@yahoo.com">clintonbailey@yahoo.com</a>	
		Cornell Cooperative Extension	-	652-5400
		Corpus Christy Church	<a href="mailto:info@corpuschristionline.org">info@corpuschristionline.org</a>	
		Dulski Center	<a href="mailto:tjdulski@roadrunner.com">tjdulski@roadrunner.com</a>	847-2860
Jackson	Rosemary	East Delavan GNPA		896-6806
Snell	Connie	East Delavan GNPA	<a href="mailto:snook8733@aol.com">snook8733@aol.com</a>	891-4365
Jacqueline	Hall	East Side Neighborhood Transformation Partnership	<a href="mailto:jhall5@ub-esntp.com">jhall5@ub-esntp.com</a>	829-2133 x342
Roberta	Cates	Ellicott Naighborhood Advisory Council	-	852-4460
Julien	Terrell	Environmental Justice Action Group of Western New York		898-5305
		Erie County Environmental Management Council	<a href="mailto:hersey@bflo.co.erie.ny.us">hersey@bflo.co.erie.ny.us</a>	858-8560

April 12, 2009

Bill	Rogers	First Hand Learning	<a href="mailto:billroger@gmail.com">billroger@gmail.com</a>	831-8722
David	Torke	Fix Buffalo	<a href="mailto:fixbuffalo@gmail.com">fixbuffalo@gmail.com</a>	
Eric	Fox	Fox Tire	<a href="mailto:thefoxxes100@yahoo.com">thefoxxes100@yahoo.com</a>	856-1696
		Gloria J. Parks Community Center	<a href="mailto:uhcda@uhcda.org">uhcda@uhcda.org</a>	832-1010
Nate	Dragg	Great Lakes United	<a href="mailto:glu@glu.org">glu@glu.org</a>	886-0142
		Hamlin Park Community and Tak Payer's Association		881-1727
Melanie	Nowicki	Harvard Farms	<a href="mailto:melanienowicki@gmail.com">melanienowicki@gmail.com</a>	332-4554
Stephanie	Simeon	Heart of the City Neighborhoods	-	882-7661
		Hickory Woods Homeowners for a Clean Environment, Inc.	<a href="mailto:info@FBNR.org">info@FBNR.org</a>	
Lourdes	Iglesias	Hispanos Unidos de Buffalo, Inc.	<a href="mailto:liglesias@hispanicsunitedofbuffalo.net">liglesias@hispanicsunitedofbuffalo.net</a>	856-7110
		Homefront Buffalo	-	856-2952
		International League of Muslim Women		892-6013
		Jefferson Ave - 50 Women with a Vision	<a href="mailto:michellebgmi@aol.com">michellebgmi@aol.com</a>	882-7594
Bill	Donahue	Jeremiah Partnership	<a href="mailto:bethelbflo@yahoo.com">bethelbflo@yahoo.com</a>	886-1650
David	Young	King Urban Life Center	<a href="mailto:djyoung@adelphia.net">djyoung@adelphia.net</a>	
Marian	Deutschman	League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara	<a href="mailto:lwvbn@buffnet.netg">lwvbn@buffnet.netg</a>	884-3550
		LEWAC Associates of Western New York, Inc.	<a href="mailto:hwellness@aol.com">hwellness@aol.com</a>	881-6111
		Livable Communities Grant Program	<a href="mailto:omestre@city-buffalo.com">omestre@city-buffalo.com</a>	851-4229
David	Majewski	Lovejoy/Kaisertown; Recommended by Councilmember Fontana	<a href="mailto:premscape2@roadrunner.com">premscape2@roadrunner.com</a>	432-2960
Leslie	Vishwanath	Lt Col Matt Urban Housing Department	<a href="mailto:info@urbanctr.org">info@urbanctr.org</a>	716-893-7222 ext 214
Richard	Cummings	Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Steering Committee	<a href="mailto:rrcummings@choiceonemail.com">rrcummings@choiceonemail.com</a>	892-4240



April 12, 2009

Ada	Hopson Clemens	Masten Block Club Coalition	-	316-2063
Boyd	Michelle	Masten GNPA	<a href="mailto:groupbuffalo@aol.com">groupbuffalo@aol.com</a>	883-4367 ext.11
Cray-Dihaan	Valeria	Masten GNPA		882-7594
Mark	Mortenson	MLK Community Coalition	<a href="mailto:mmortenson@sciencebuff.org">mmortenson@sciencebuff.org</a>	
Kimberley	Moore	Mural Arts Project	<a href="mailto:buffalomuralarts@gmail.com">buffalomuralarts@gmail.com</a>	572-7026
Dave	Majewski	Premium Services Inc.	-	432-2960
		Preservation Buffalo Niagara	-	852-3300
Emily	Gadanyi	PUSH Buffalo	<a href="mailto:veridisthum@yahoo.com">veridisthum@yahoo.com</a>	
David	Colligan	ReTree WNY	<a href="mailto:paul.maurer@citcomm.com">paul.maurer@citcomm.com</a>	888-9766
David	Bruce	RUN Buffalo	<a href="mailto:RUNBUFFALO@gmail.com">RUNBUFFALO@gmail.com</a>	549-3966
Mark	Mortenson	Science Museum	<a href="mailto:mmortenson@sciencebuff.org">mmortenson@sciencebuff.org</a>	
Ava	White	Second Chance Ministries	<a href="mailto:adwhite@groupministriesbuffalo.org">adwhite@groupministriesbuffalo.org</a>	883-4367
		Seneca Babcock Association	<a href="mailto:senecababcock@aol.com">senecababcock@aol.com</a>	822-5094
Jane	Jontz	Sierra Club Niagara Group	<a href="mailto:rmciesie@yahoo.com">rmciesie@yahoo.com</a>	
		St Lukes Mission of Mercy	<a href="mailto:stlukesmom@juno.com">stlukesmom@juno.com</a>	
		St. Stanislaus Church		849-4980
		Street Synergy	<a href="mailto:info@streetsynergy.org">info@streetsynergy.org</a>	
		The Buffalo Lupus Project / Toxic Waste Lupus Coalition	<a href="mailto:twlcproiect@aol.com">twlcproiect@aol.com</a>	829-3501 x12
Beverly	McLean	UB School of Architecture and Planning	<a href="mailto:bmclean@buffalo.edu">bmclean@buffalo.edu</a>	829-3485 ext 123
Samina	Raja	UB School of Architecture and Planning	<a href="mailto:sraja@buffalo.edu">sraja@buffalo.edu</a>	829-3485 ext 225
Ada	Hopson Clemens	United Neighborhoods	<a href="mailto:ahcconnections@yahoo.com">ahcconnections@yahoo.com</a>	
Peg	Overdorf	Valley Community Association	-	823-4707
Elizabeth	Triggs	We Care Buffalo	<a href="mailto:tayers@wecaretrans.com">tayers@wecaretrans.com</a>	898-7900
Harvey	Garrett	West Side Community Collaborative	<a href="mailto:harveygarrett@gmail.com">harveygarrett@gmail.com</a>	603-9762
		West Side NHS		885-2344
Joyelle	Tedeschi	YWCA Community Café		852-6120 x121

April 12, 2009

**Table E-4: List of Potential Board of Directors**

First	Last	Organization	e-mail	Phone
<b>Steering Committee</b>				
Brian	Dold	BOPC	<a href="mailto:bdold@buffaloomstedparks.org">bdold@buffaloomstedparks.org</a>	838-1249 ext 33
Jay	McCarthy	Buffalo Micro Parks	<a href="mailto:jason.mccarthy@gmail.com">jason.mccarthy@gmail.com</a>	
Renata	Kraft	Buffalo Micro Parks	<a href="mailto:rkraft@bergmannpc.com">rkraft@bergmannpc.com</a>	852-3211 x862
Kerri	Bentkowski	Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper	<a href="mailto:kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org">kbentkowski@bnriverkeeper.org</a>	852-7483
Micaela	Shapiro-Shellaby	Coalition for Economic Justice	<a href="mailto:micaelajaine@gmail.com">micaelajaine@gmail.com</a>	892-5877
David	Hahn-Baker	Community Action Organization	<a href="mailto:dhahnbaker@aol.com">dhahnbaker@aol.com</a>	332-4554
Brenda	Young	Daemen College - Center for Sustainable Communities	<a href="mailto:byoung@daemen.edu">byoung@daemen.edu</a>	838-8489
Kirk	Laubenstein	Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	<a href="mailto:kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com">kirk.laubenstein@gmail.com</a>	851-4647
Zoe	Lavatelli	Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	<a href="mailto:grgbuffalo@hotmail.com">grgbuffalo@hotmail.com</a>	851-4647
Ivan	Lee	Hodgson Russ / BOPC	<a href="mailto:ilee@hodgsonruss.com">ilee@hodgsonruss.com</a>	848-1560
Anthony	Armstrong	LISC	<a href="mailto:aarmstrong@lisc.org">aarmstrong@lisc.org</a>	853-1136
Erin	Sharkey	Massachusetts Avenue Project	<a href="mailto:sharkey@mass-ave.org">sharkey@mass-ave.org</a>	882-5327
Justin	Booth	Wellness Institute/Green Options Buffalo	<a href="mailto:jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jbooth@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-4052
<b>Focus Area Community</b>				
Mark	Mortenson	MLK Community Coalition	<a href="mailto:mmortenson@sciencebuff.org">mmortenson@sciencebuff.org</a>	
Rosemary	Jackson	East Delavan GNPA		896-6806
Connie	Snell	East Delavan GNPA	<a href="mailto:snook8733@aol.com">snook8733@aol.com</a>	891-4365
Michelle	Boyd	Masten GNPA	<a href="mailto:groupbuffalo@aol.com">groupbuffalo@aol.com</a>	883-4367 ext.11
Michael	Gainer	Buffalo ReUse	<a href="mailto:buffaloreuse@gmail.com">buffaloreuse@gmail.com</a>	885-4131
		Artspace	<a href="mailto:info@artspacebuffalo.org">info@artspacebuffalo.org</a>	803-6205
		Hamlin Park Community and Tax Payer's Association		881-1727
		Jefferson Ave - 50 Women with a Vision	<a href="mailto:michellebgmi@aol.com">michellebgmi@aol.com</a>	882-7594
		Canisius College		883-7000
Alita	Steward	City of Buffalo, Strategic	<a href="mailto:asteward@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">asteward@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-5035

April 12, 2009

		Planning, GNPA		
		Buffalo Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts	-	816-4220
		City Honors School	-	816-4230
		Hamlin Park School	-	816-3490
Valeria	Cray-Dihaan	Masten GNPA		882-7594
Ada	Hopsin- Clemens	Board of Block Clubs	<a href="mailto:ahcconnections@yahoo.com">ahcconnections@yahoo.com</a>	851-6500
<b>Technical/City/Financial</b>				
John	Fell	City of Buffalo, Strategic Planning	<a href="mailto:jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us">jfell@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us</a>	851-5035
Laura	Quebral- Fulton	CFGB	<a href="mailto:lqfulton@oisheifdt.org">lqfulton@oisheifdt.org</a>	852-2857
Dave	Stebbins	ECIDA/Buffalo Urban Development Corp	<a href="mailto:dstebbins@ecidany.com">dstebbins@ecidany.com</a>	856-6525 x114
		M&T Bank - Jefferson Ave		883-2167

## **Appendix F:**

# **Mapping Inventory and GIS Database**

These maps were developed as part of the assessment of opportunities and challenges for a Groundwork Buffalo and were also used in the selection of the Mid City Focus Area. They will be useful in the future for the Groundwork Buffalo organization.

### **City of Buffalo**

Base Map (2000)  
Elevation and Water Resources (2000)  
Historic Waterway Boundaries 1800  
Historic Waterway Boundaries, 1894  
Public Greenspace and Grassroots Gardens (2008)  
Land Cover (2001)  
Street Trees (2008)  
Tree Canopy (2000)  
Local Planning Initiatives (2008)  
GNPA Community Boundaries (2008)  
Annual Income by Census Blockgroup (2000)  
Poverty Status (2000)  
Unemployment by Census Blockgroup (2000)  
Educational Attainment by Census Blockgroup (2000)  
Means of Transportation to Work (2000)  
Travel Time to Work by Census Blockgroup (2000)  
Vacant Properties (2008)  
Vacant and In Rem Properties (2008)  
In Rem Properties and Demolition Activity (2008)

### **Mid City Focus Area Maps**

Groundwork Focus Area in City (2008)  
Groundwork Focus Area (2008)  
Elevation (2008)  
Census Tracts (2008)  
Council Districts (2008)  
Zip Codes (2008)  
Green Infrastructure (2008)  
Assets and Opportunities (2008)  
Adjacent Assets and Opportunities (2008)  
Historic Resources (2008)  
Designations (2008)  
Planning Initiatives (2008)  
Annual Income (2000)  
Poverty Status (2000)  
Unemployment Rate (2000)  
Means of Transportation to Work (2000)  
Educational Attainment (2000)  
Environmental Concerns (2008)  
Vacant and In Rem Properties (2008)  
NRSA (2008)

April 12, 2009

## **Citywide Maps**



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

## Base Map

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
for Bureau of Public and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo, NY



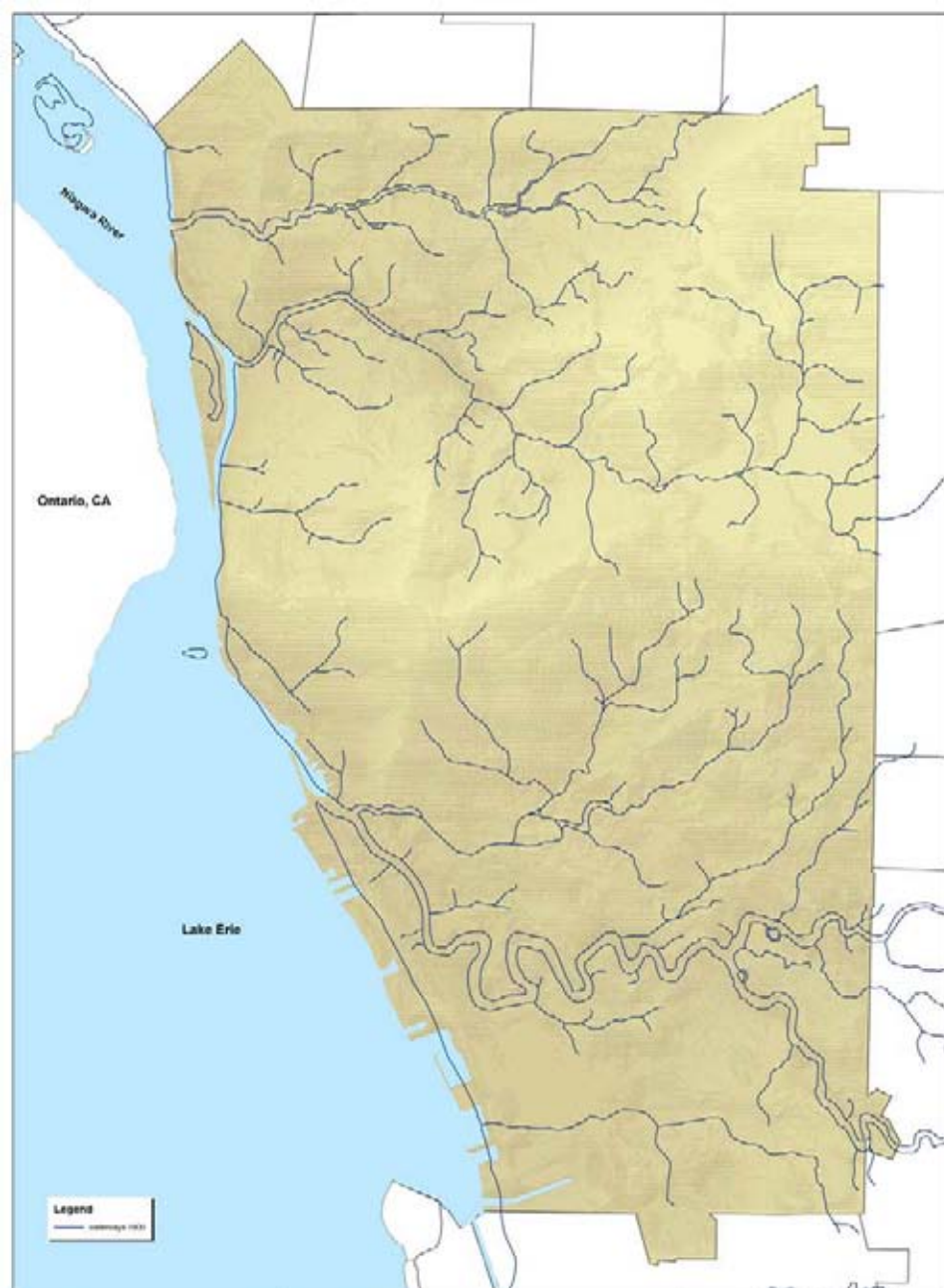
## Elevation and Water Resources

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
US School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
USGS





## Historic Waterway Boundaries

City of Buffalo, 1800

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
for School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
Urban Design Project





0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

## Historic Waterway Boundaries

City of Buffalo, 1895

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
Vill School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
Urban Design Project

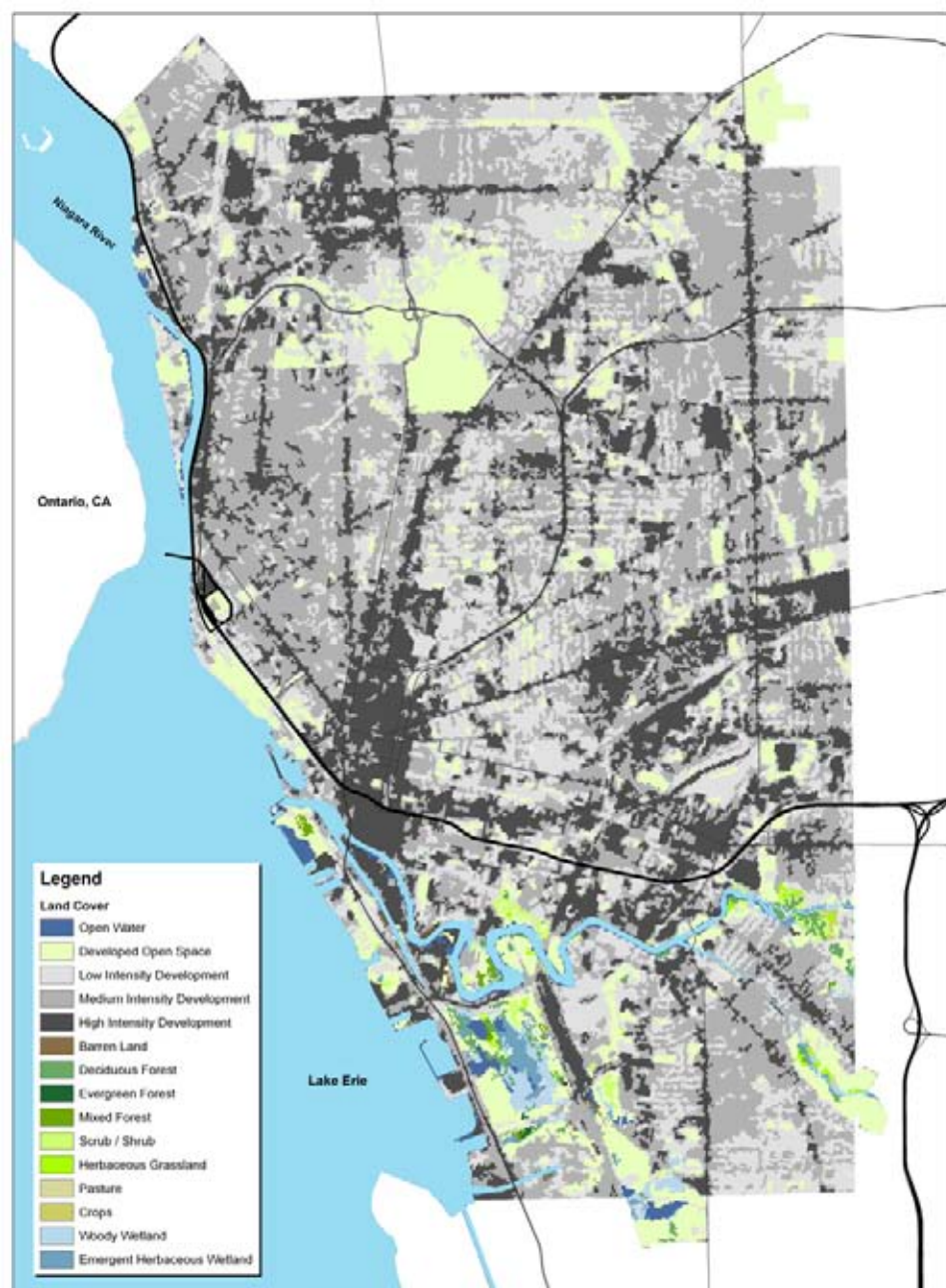


## Public Greenspace and Grassroots Gardens

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
for Buffalo, NY, and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Grassroots Gardens



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

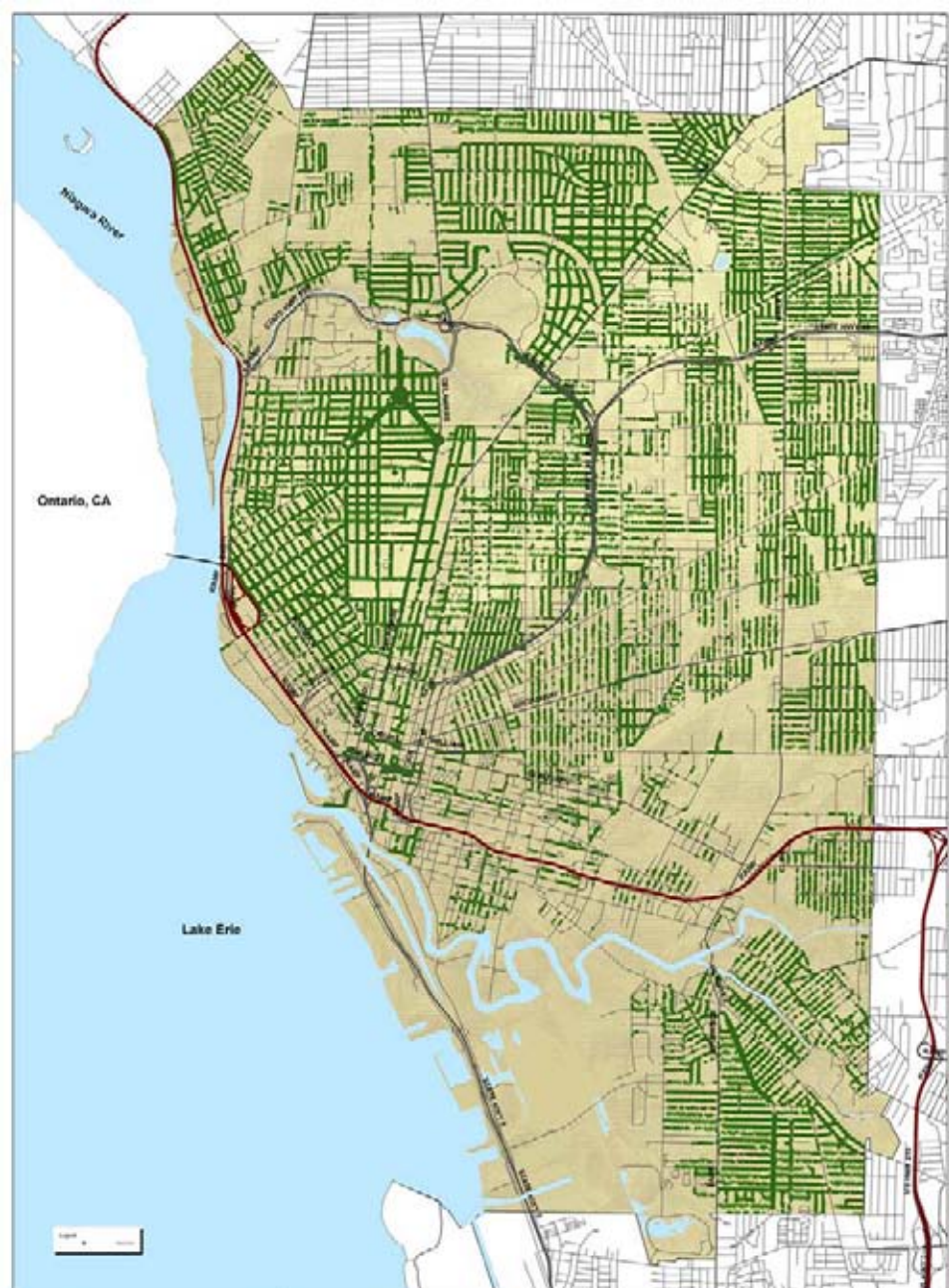
## Land Cover

City of Buffalo (2001)

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
S20 School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
United States Geological Survey (USGS)



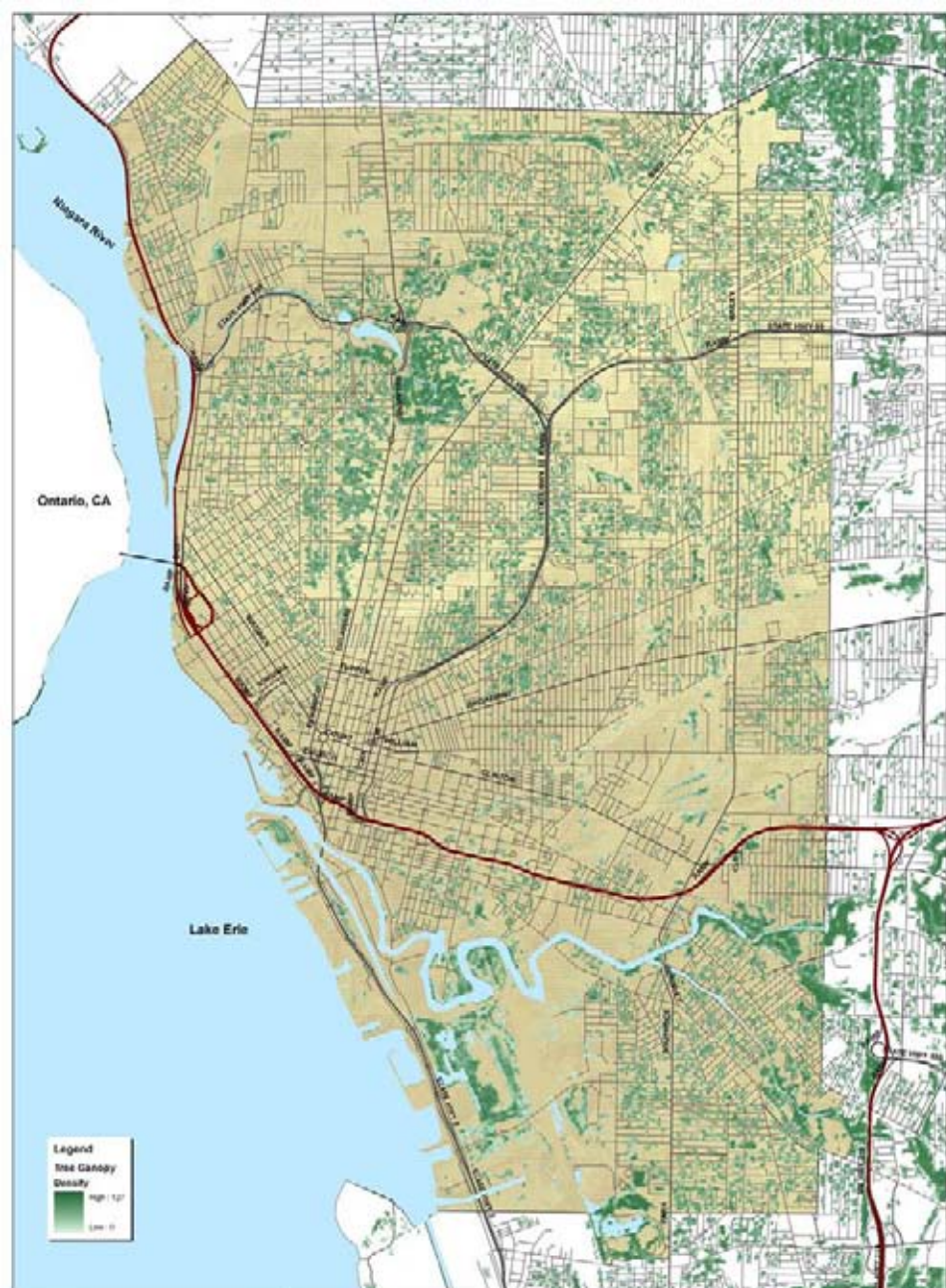


## Street Trees

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
USP School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
Wendel Duchscherer Architects and Engineers



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

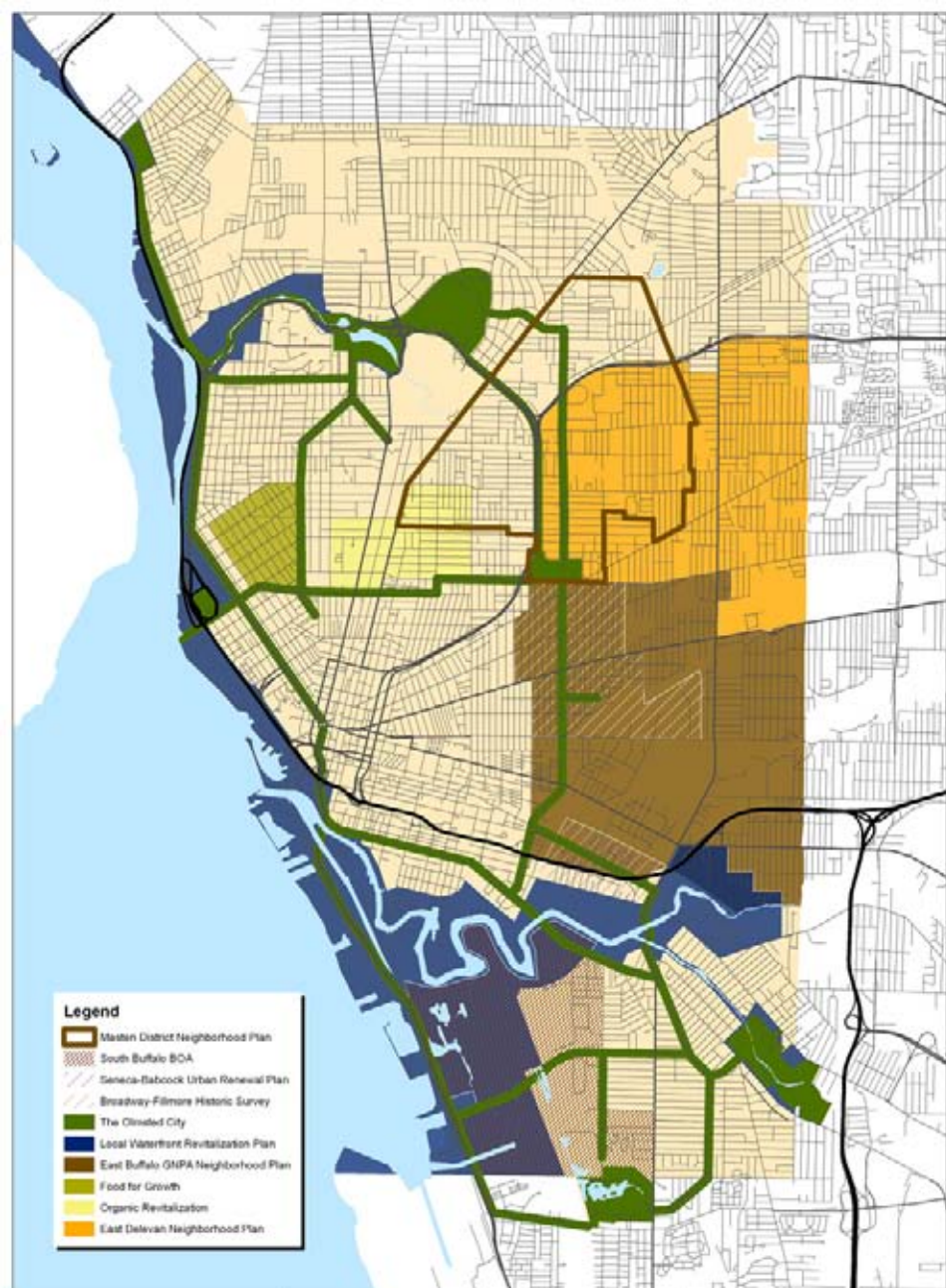
## Tree Canopy

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
Vill. School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
USGS





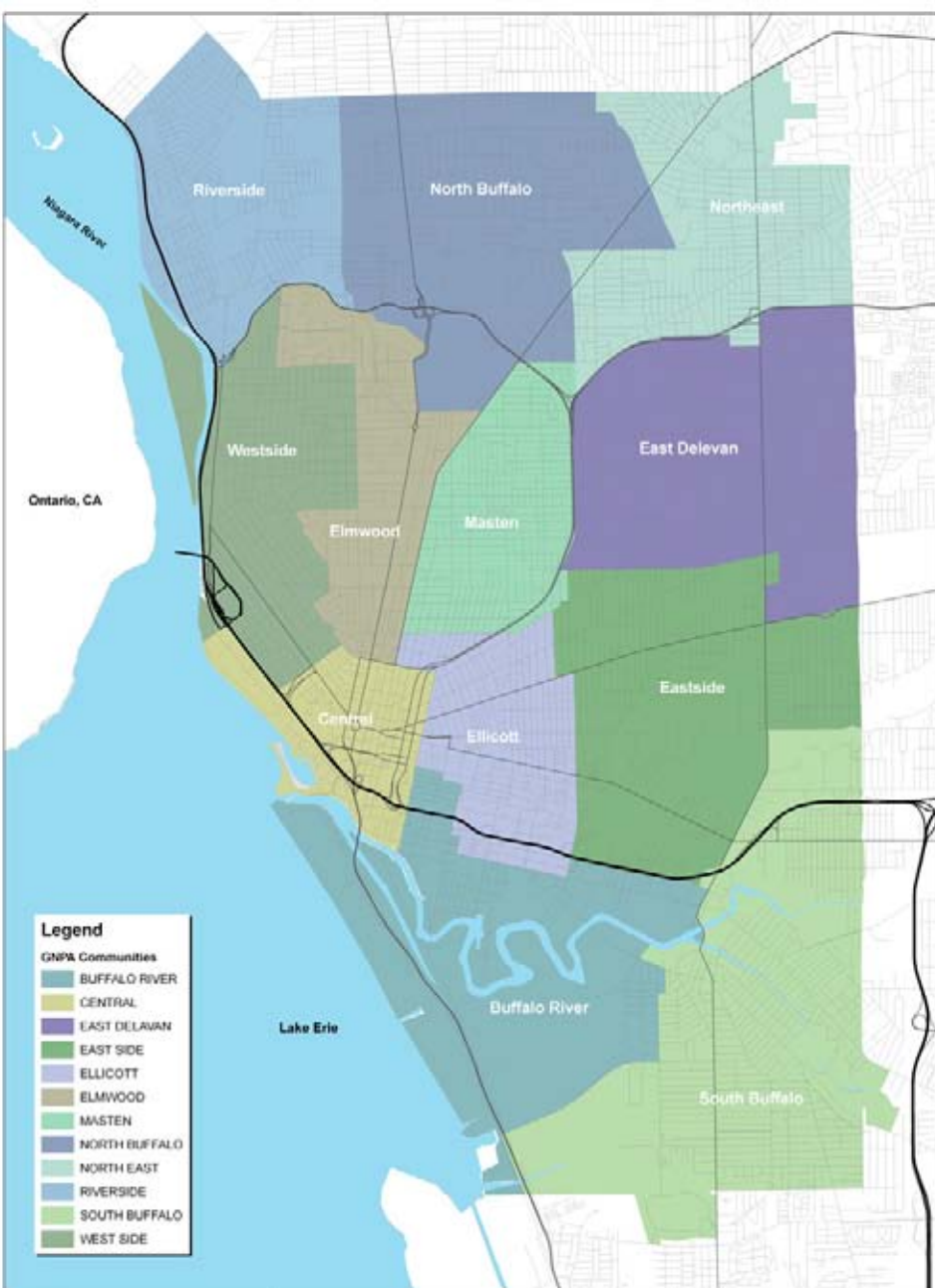
0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 Miles

## Local Planning Initiatives

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Groundwork RFP Committee



**GNPA Community Boundaries**  
City of Buffalo (2008)

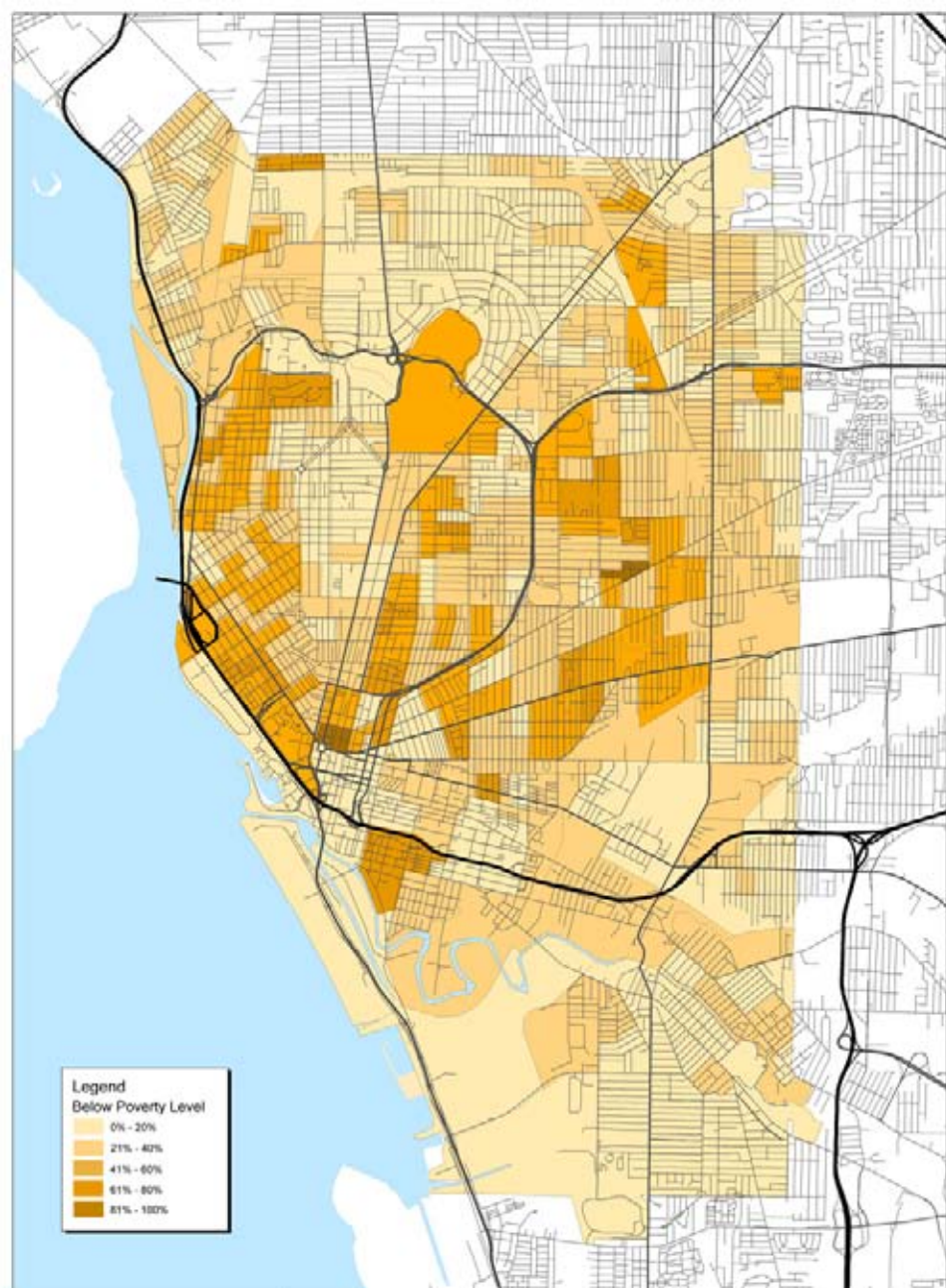
**Created by:**  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

**Data Sources:**  
City of Buffalo









0 1,600 3,200 6,400 9,600 Feet

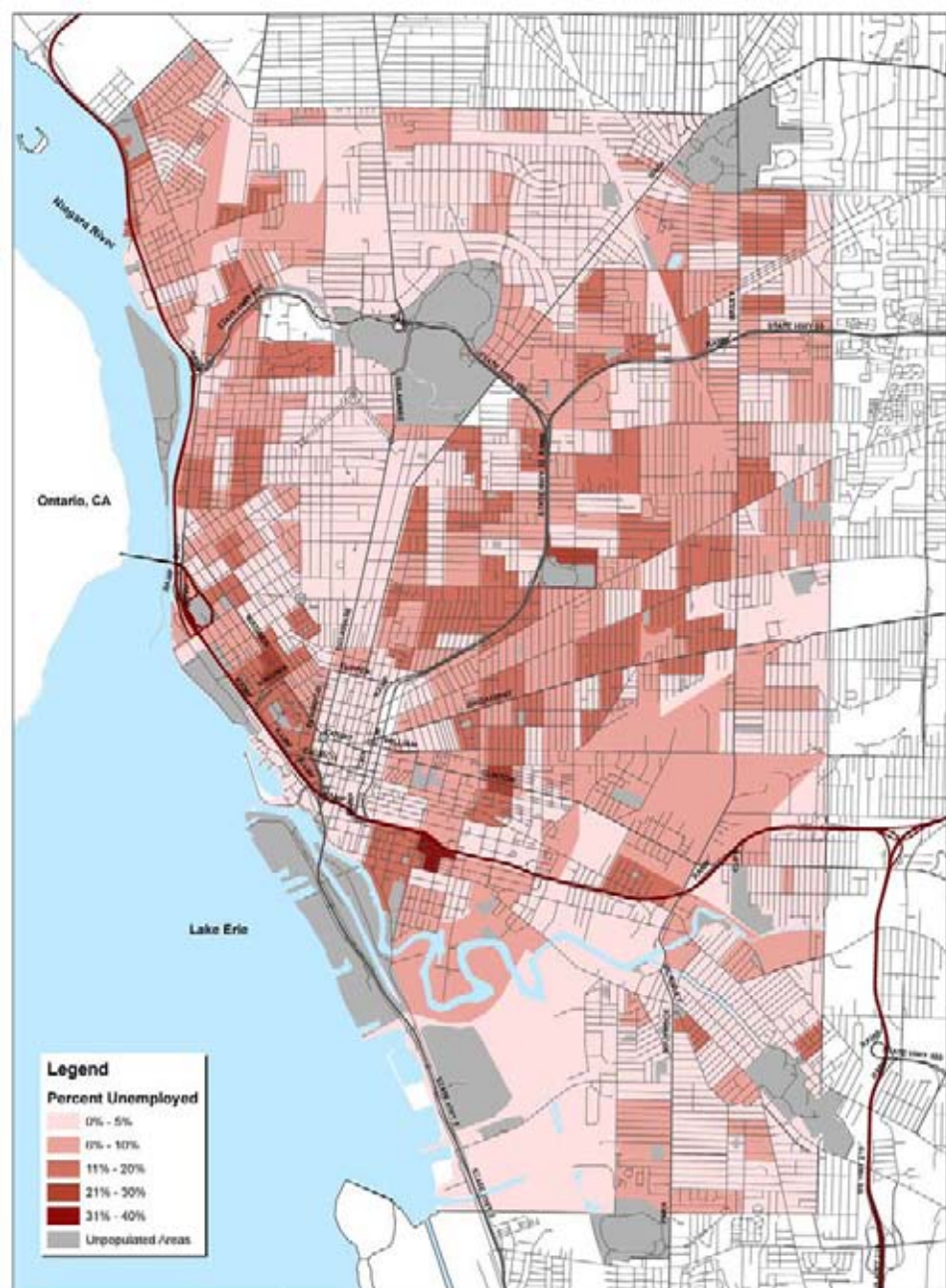
## Poverty Status

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

**Data Sources:**

City of Buffalo M2  
U.S. Census Bureau

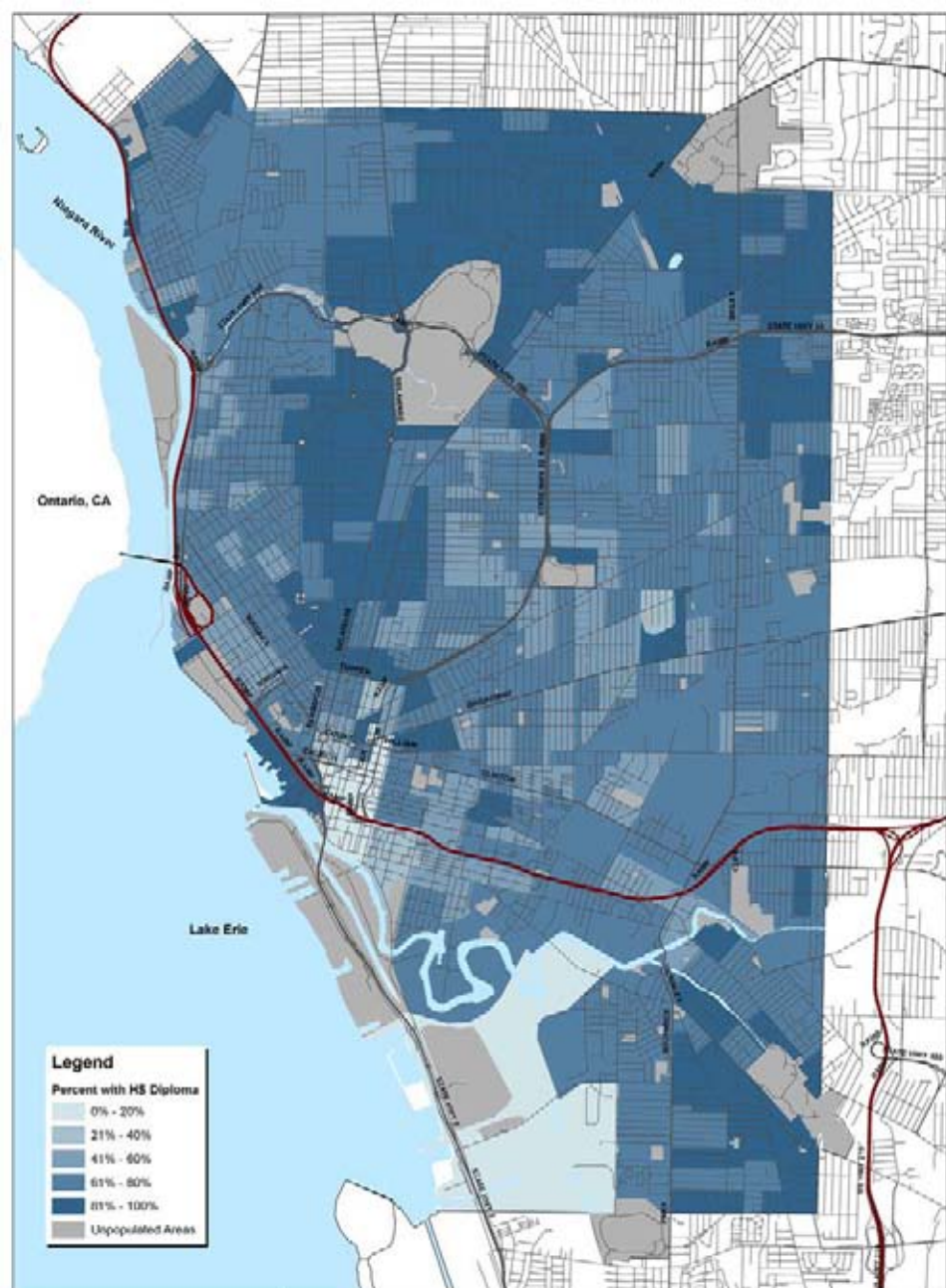


## Unemployment by Census Blockgroup

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
US School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
2000 US Census (CPS)



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

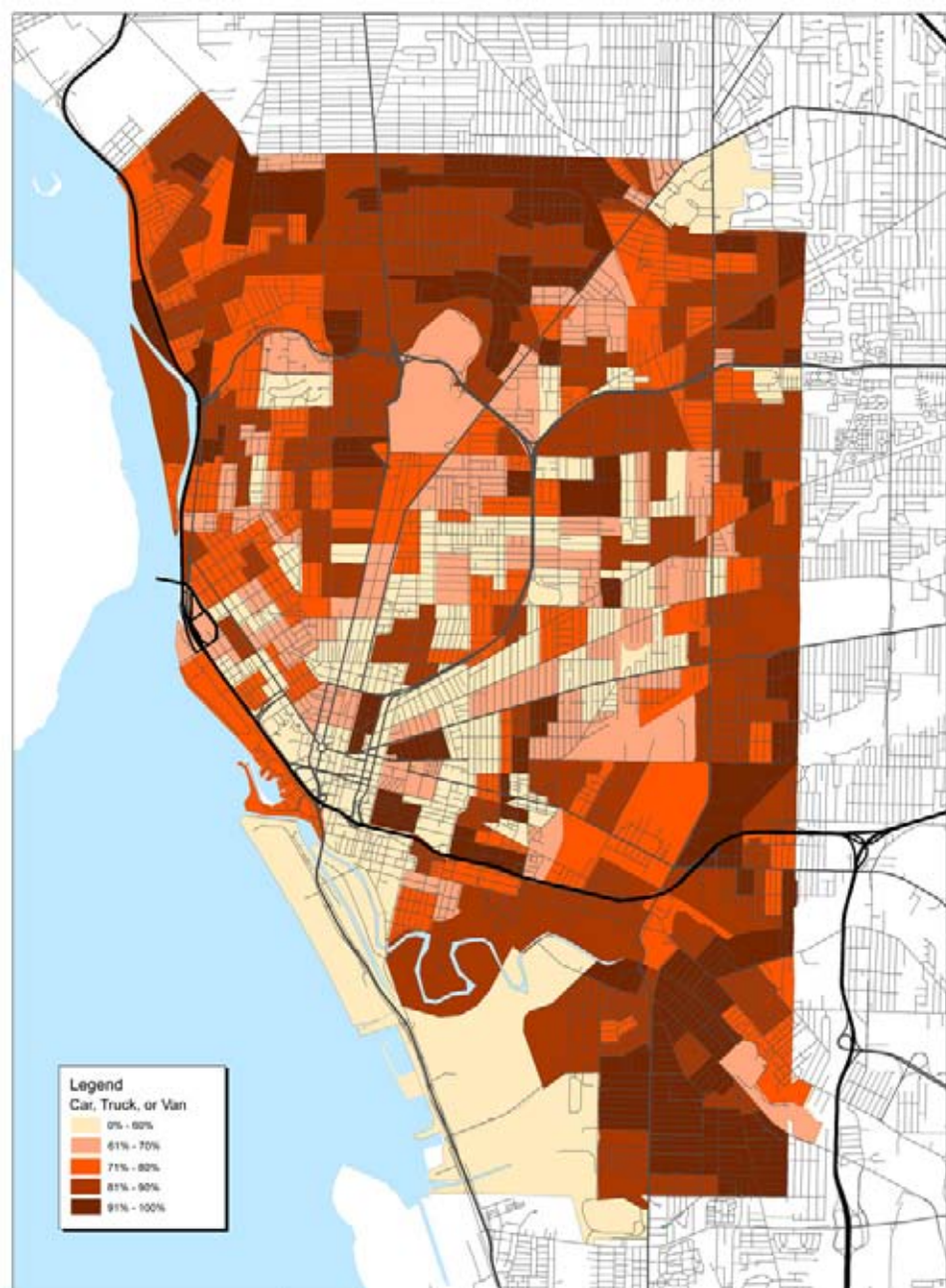
## Educational Attainment by Census Blockgroup

City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
for School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
2000 US Census (CPS)





## Means of Transportation to Work

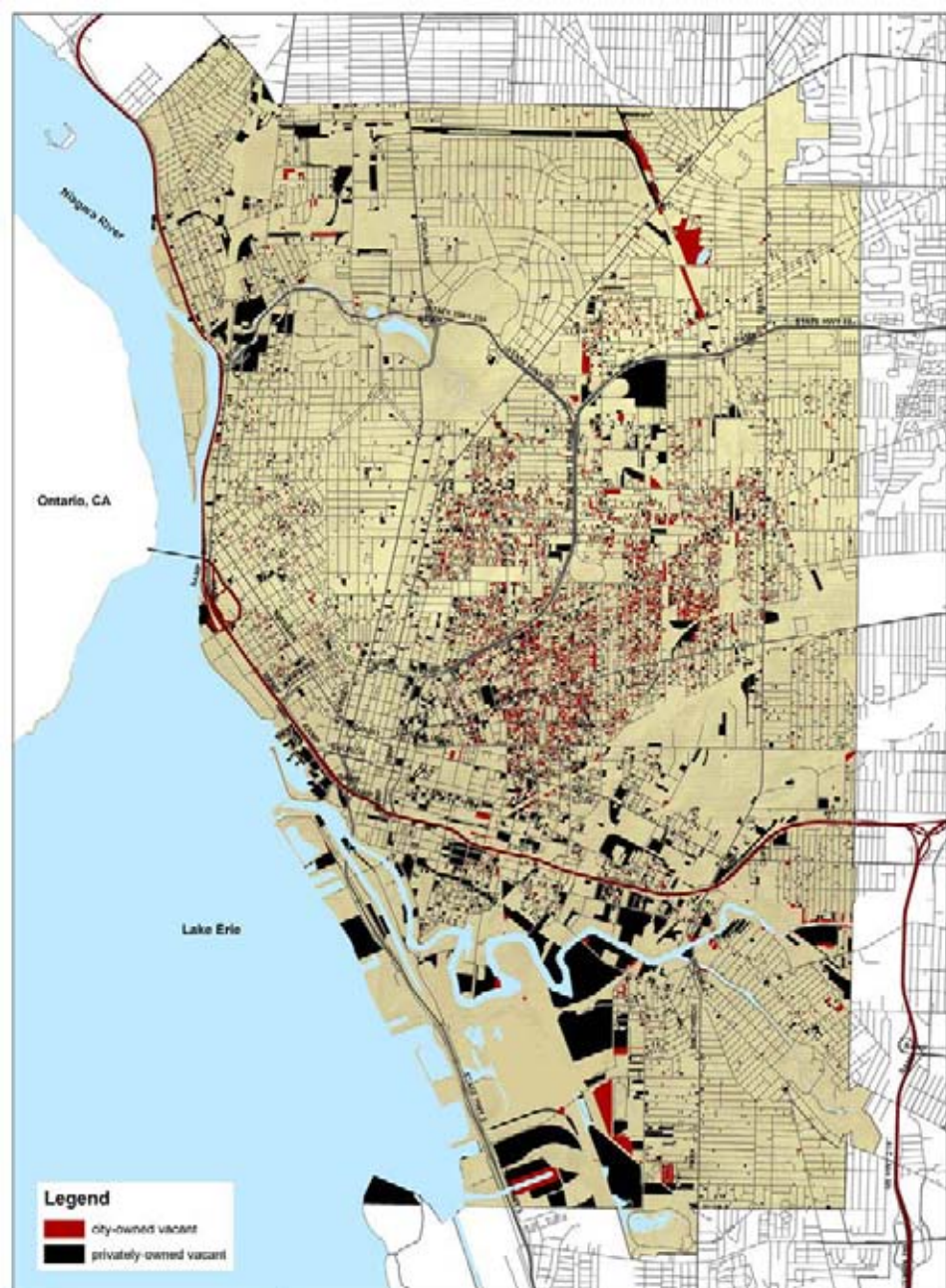
City of Buffalo, 2000

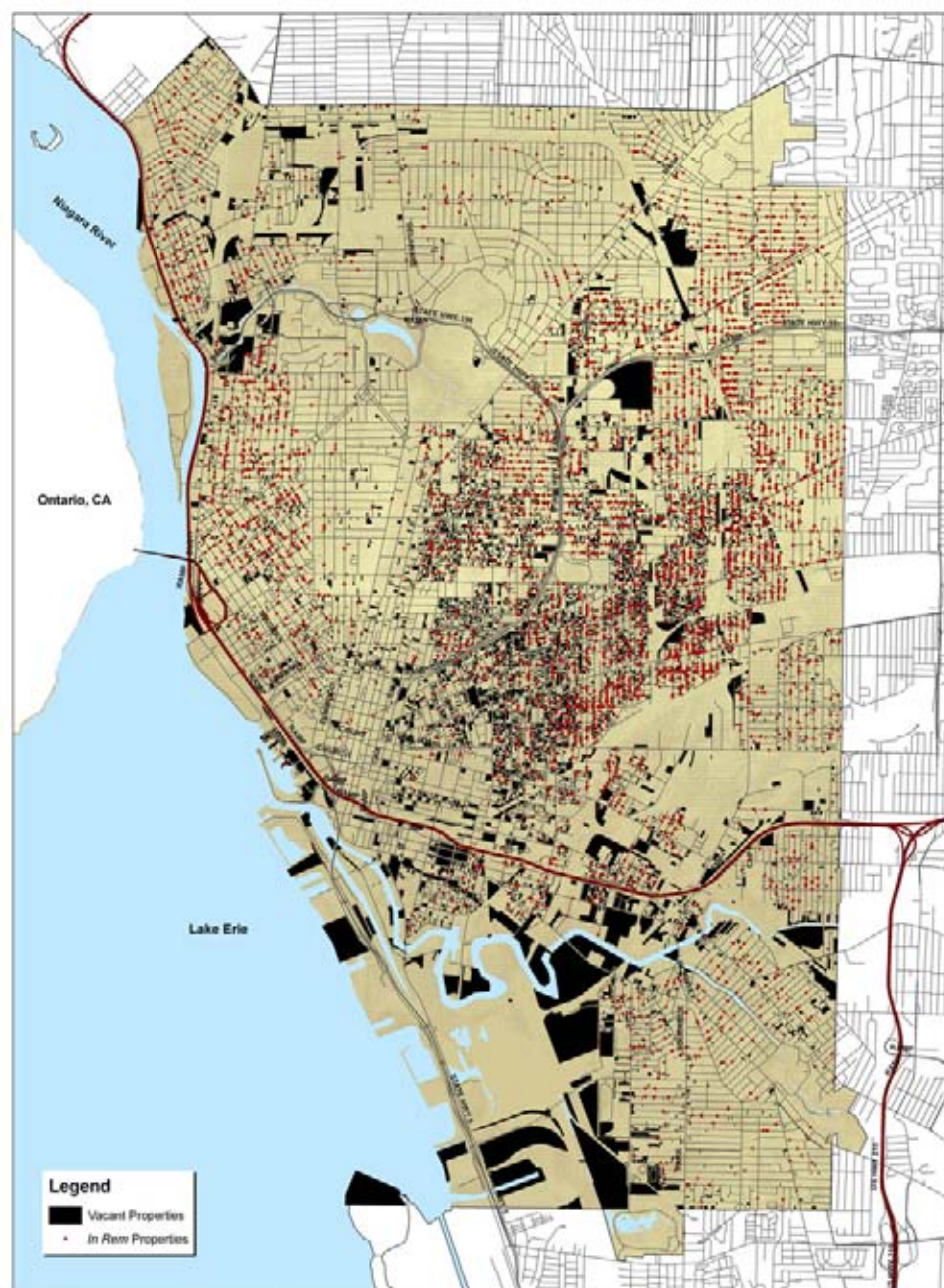
Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
U.S. Census Bureau









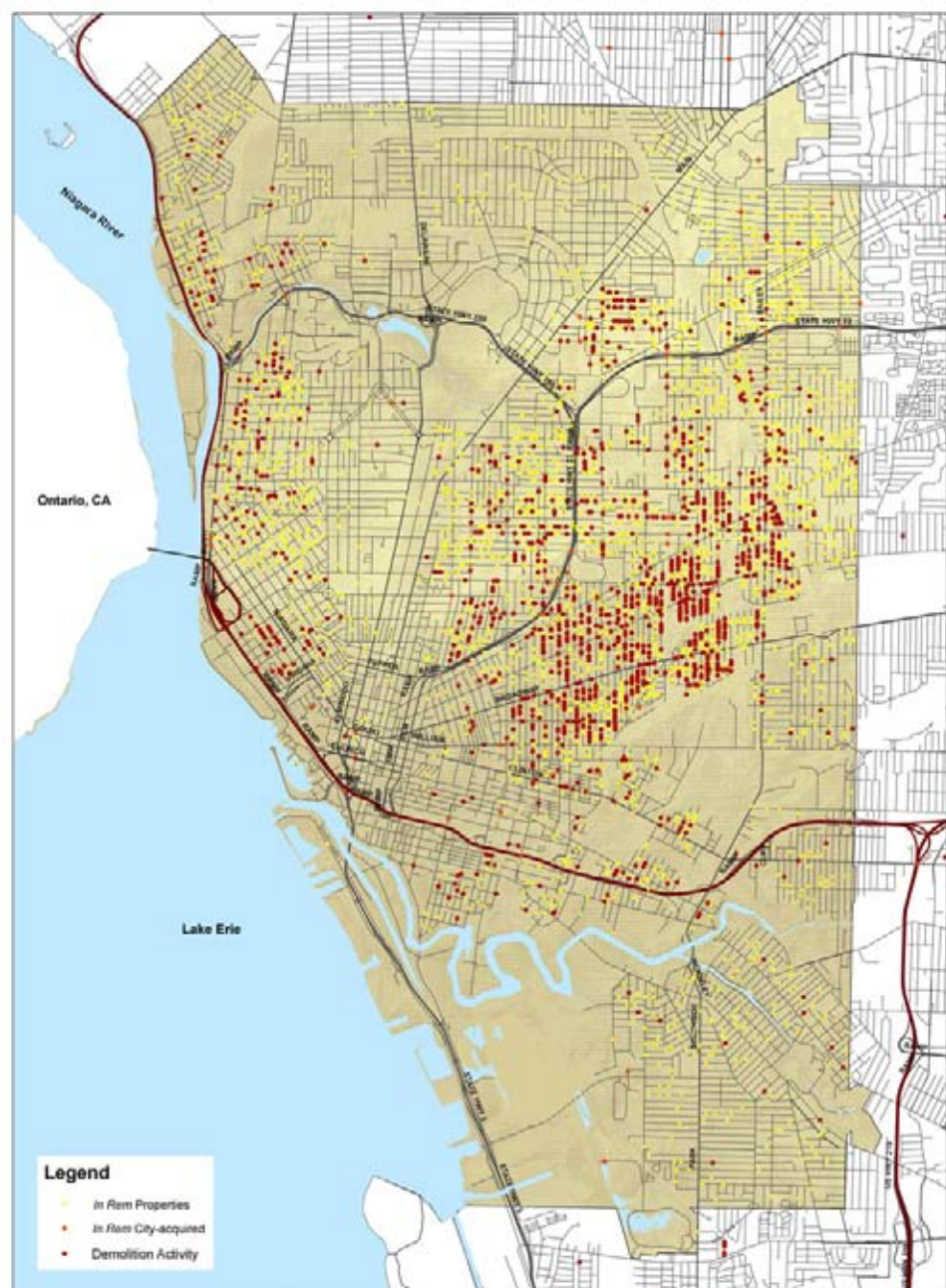
## Vacant and In Rem Properties

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UAB School of Arts and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
City of Buffalo A&T Department





## ***In Rem Properties and Demolition Activity***

City of Buffalo, 2008

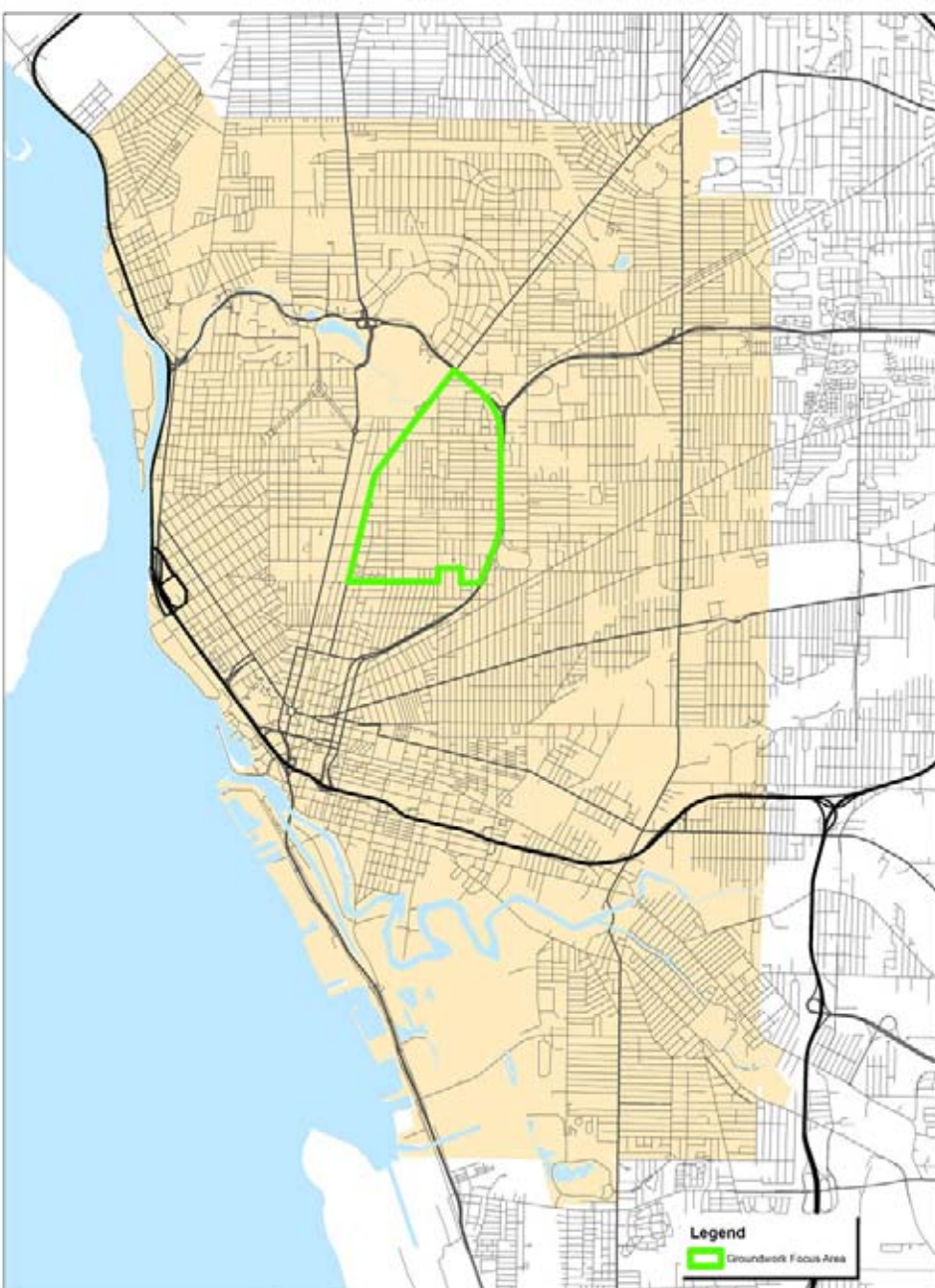
Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
Vill School of Arts and Planning

Data Sources:  
Office of Strategic Planning



April 12, 2009

## **Focus Area Maps**



0 1,600 3,200 6,400 9,600 Feet

## Groundwork Focus Area

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS



**Legend**

 Groundwork Focus Area



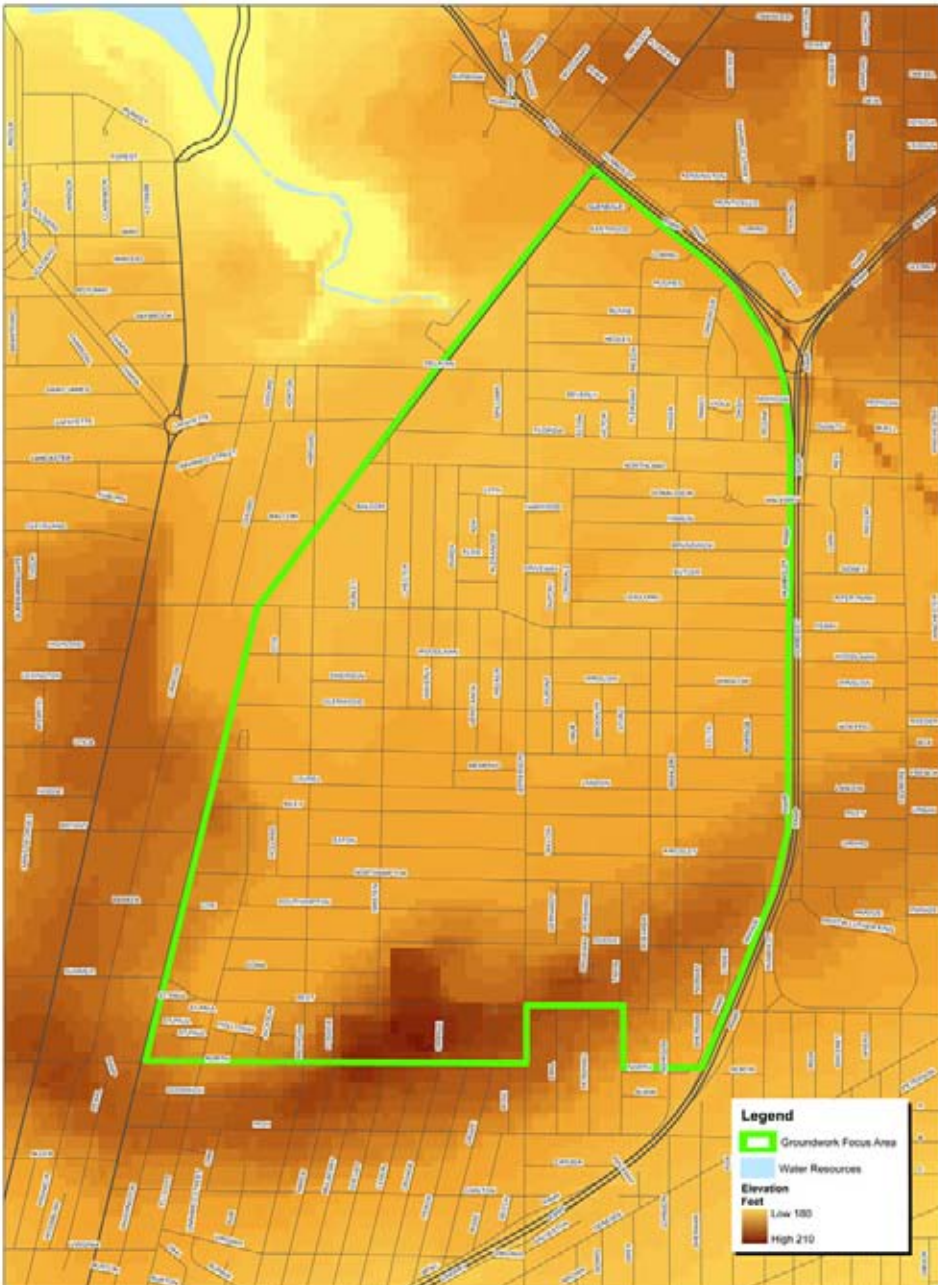
0 387.5 775 1,550 2,325 Feet

**Groundwork Focus Area**  
**Groundwork Focus Area**  
City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project





0 365 770 1,540 2,310 Feet

**Groundwork Focus Area**  
**Elevation**  
City of Buffalo, 2008

**Created by:**  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

**Data Sources:**  
City of Buffalo GIS  
1995



0 395 790 1,580 2,370 Feet

# Groundwork Focus Area Census Tracts

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project





0 395 790 1,580 2,370 Feet

## Groundwork Focus Area Council Districts

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project











1. Canisius College
2. Institute for Islamic Higher Education
3. BAVPA
4. ArtSpace Apt's
5. Former St. Vincent's
6. Packard Apt's
7. Buried Scajaquada Creek
8. Former GRC Orphanage
9. Makowski Center
10. Masten Park
11. City Honors School 195
12. Merriweather Jr. Public Library
13. Hamlin Park Elementary School 74
14. Boys and Girls Club of Erie
15. Buffalo Public School 53
16. Buffalo Public School 8
17. 1490 Enterprises
18. African Cultural Center
19. Belmont Shelter
20. Buffalo Halfway House
21. Buffalo ReUse
22. Group Ministries
23. Queen City Farm
24. Community Action Information Center
25. Hamlin Tax Payers Association



0 400 800 1,600 2,400 Feet

## Groundwork Focus Area Assets and Opportunities

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project



#### WITHIN FOCUS AREA

1. Canisius College
2. Institute for Islamic Higher Education
3. BAI/PA
4. Artspace Apt's
5. Former St. Vincent's
6. Packard Apt's
7. Buried Scapopoda Creek
8. Former GRC Orphanage
9. Makowski Center
10. Mastin Park
11. City Honors School 195
12. Meriwether Jr. Public Library
13. Hamlin Park Elementary School 74
14. Boys and Girls Club of Erie
15. Buffalo Public School 51
16. Buffalo Public School 8
17. 1486 Enterprises
18. African Cultural Center
19. Belmont Shelter
20. Buffalo Halfway house
21. Buffalo Re/Use
22. Group Ministries
23. Queen City Farm
24. Community Action Information Center
25. Hamlin Tax Payers Association

#### ADJACENT TO FOCUS AREA

26. Buffalo Science Museum/School
27. MLK Jr. Park
28. Westalle College
29. Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church
30. Jewish Community Center
31. School 39
32. Community Action Organization
33. "Bizzies" Environmental Coalition
34. "Side Neighborhood Transformation Partnership"



0 455 970 1,940 2,910 Feet

## Groundwork Focus Area Adjacent Assets and Opportunities

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created By:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project



#### Legend

- Groundwork Focus Area
- Historic Sites
- Historic Districts

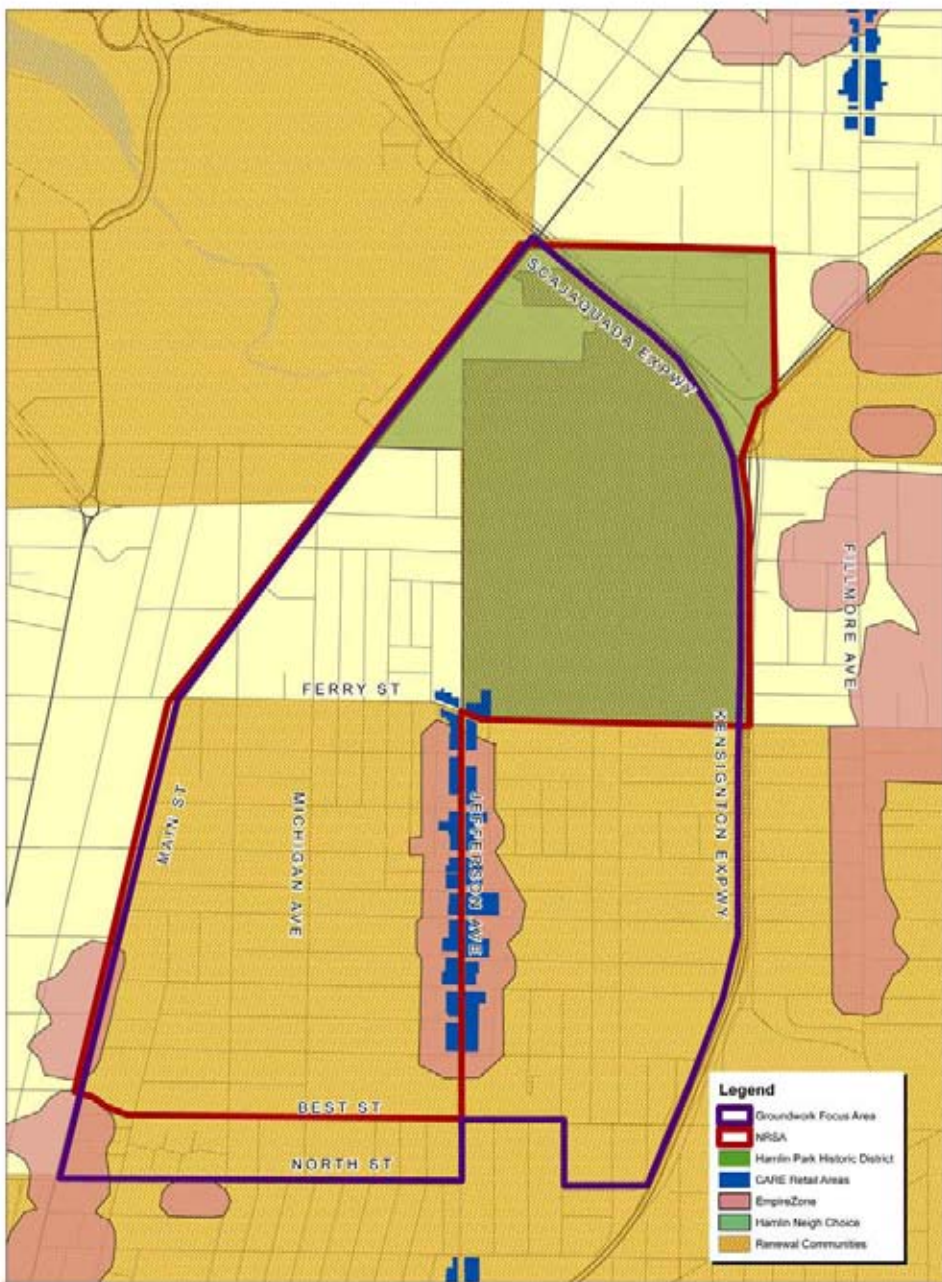
### Groundwork Focus Area Historic Resources

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Buffalo Comprehensive Plan





0 495 990 1,980

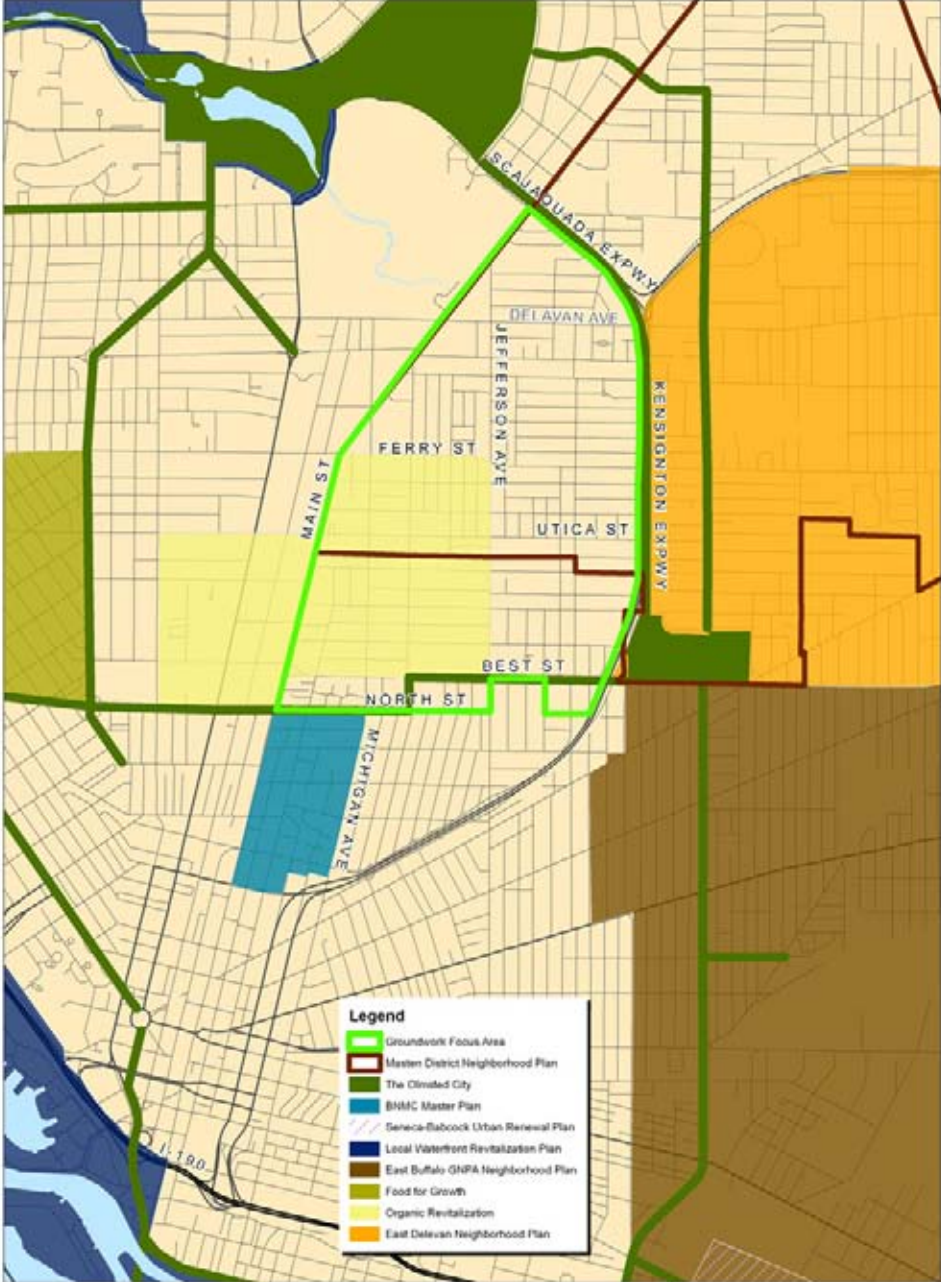
1 Feet  
2,970

## Groundwork Focus Area Designations

City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
VUB School of Arch. and Planning

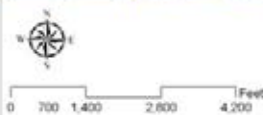
Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Urban Design Project

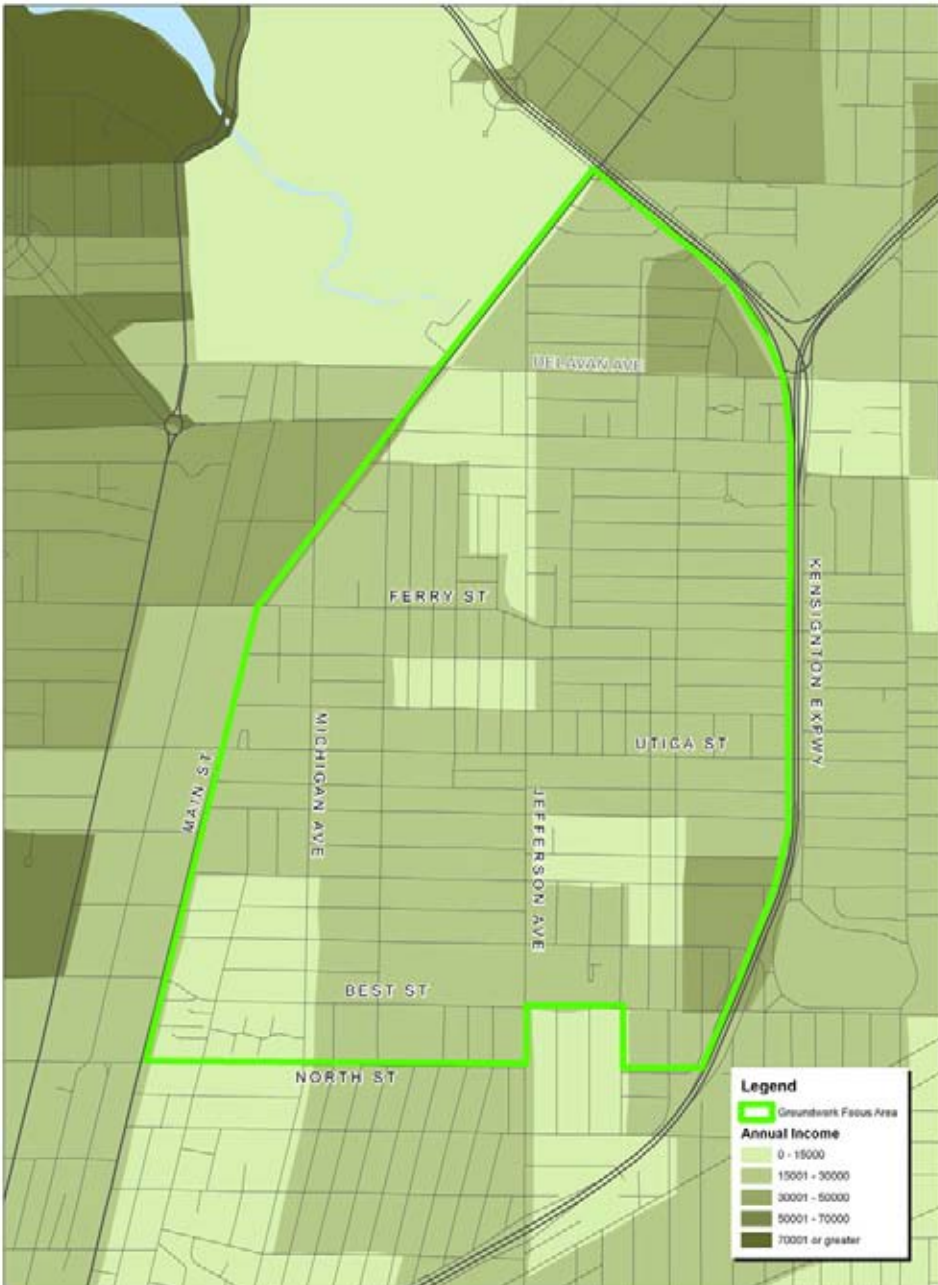


**Groundwork Focus Area  
Planning Initiatives**  
City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Office of Strategic Planning  
NYSDOC



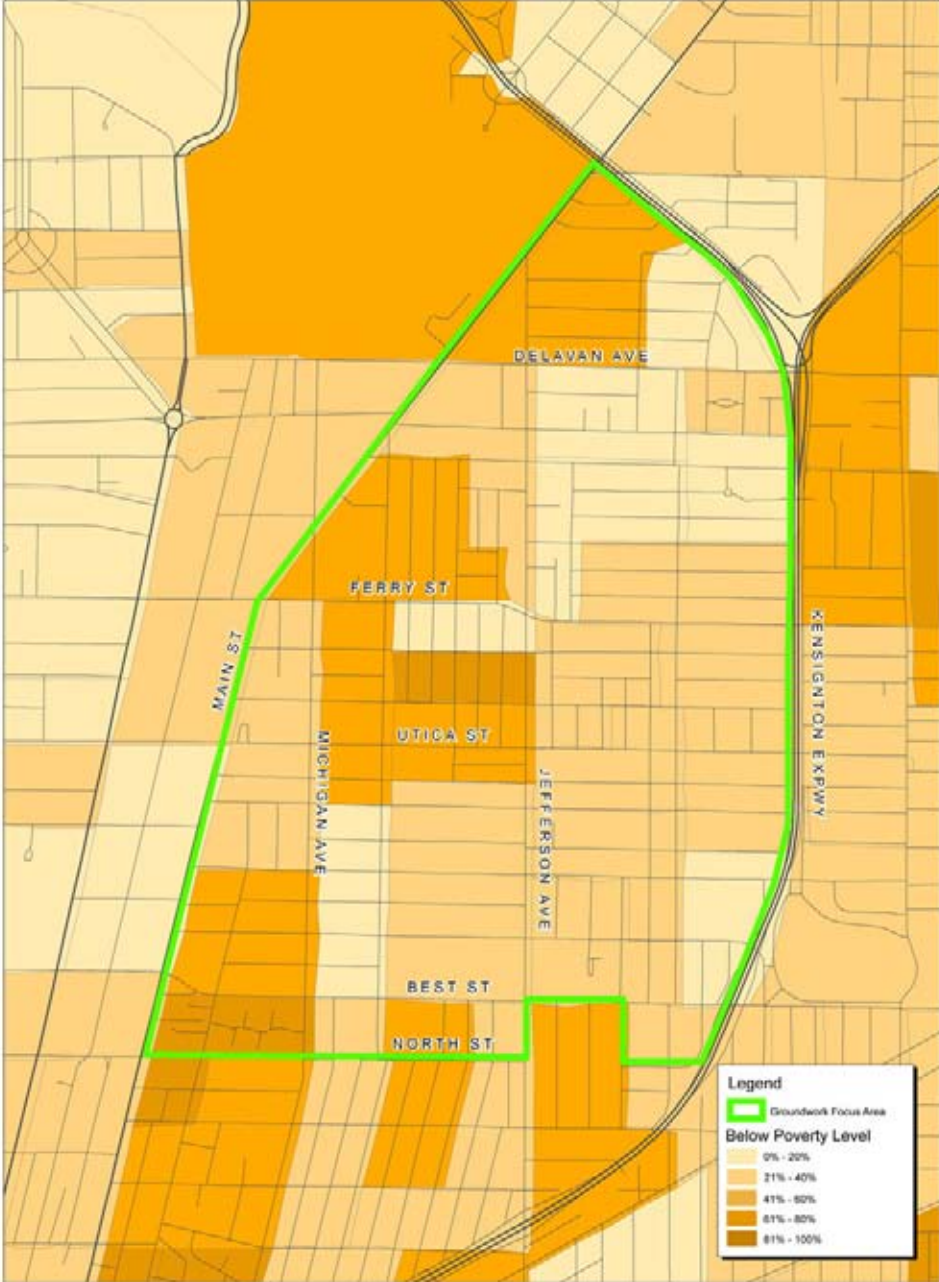


Groundwork Focus Area  
**Annual Income**  
City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
U.S. Census Bureau





0 360 720 1,520 2,280 Feet

Groundwork Focus Area  
**Poverty Status**  
City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
U.S. Census Bureau



**Legend**

Groundwork Focus Area

**Percent Unemployed**

0% - 2%

4% - 8%

9% - 14%

15% - 31%

32% or over



0 365 730 1,540 2,310 Feet

**Groundwork Focus Area  
Unemployment Rate**  
City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo M2  
U.S. Census Bureau





Groundwork Focus Area  
**Means of Transportation to Work**  
City of Buffalo, 2000

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
U.S. Census Bureau

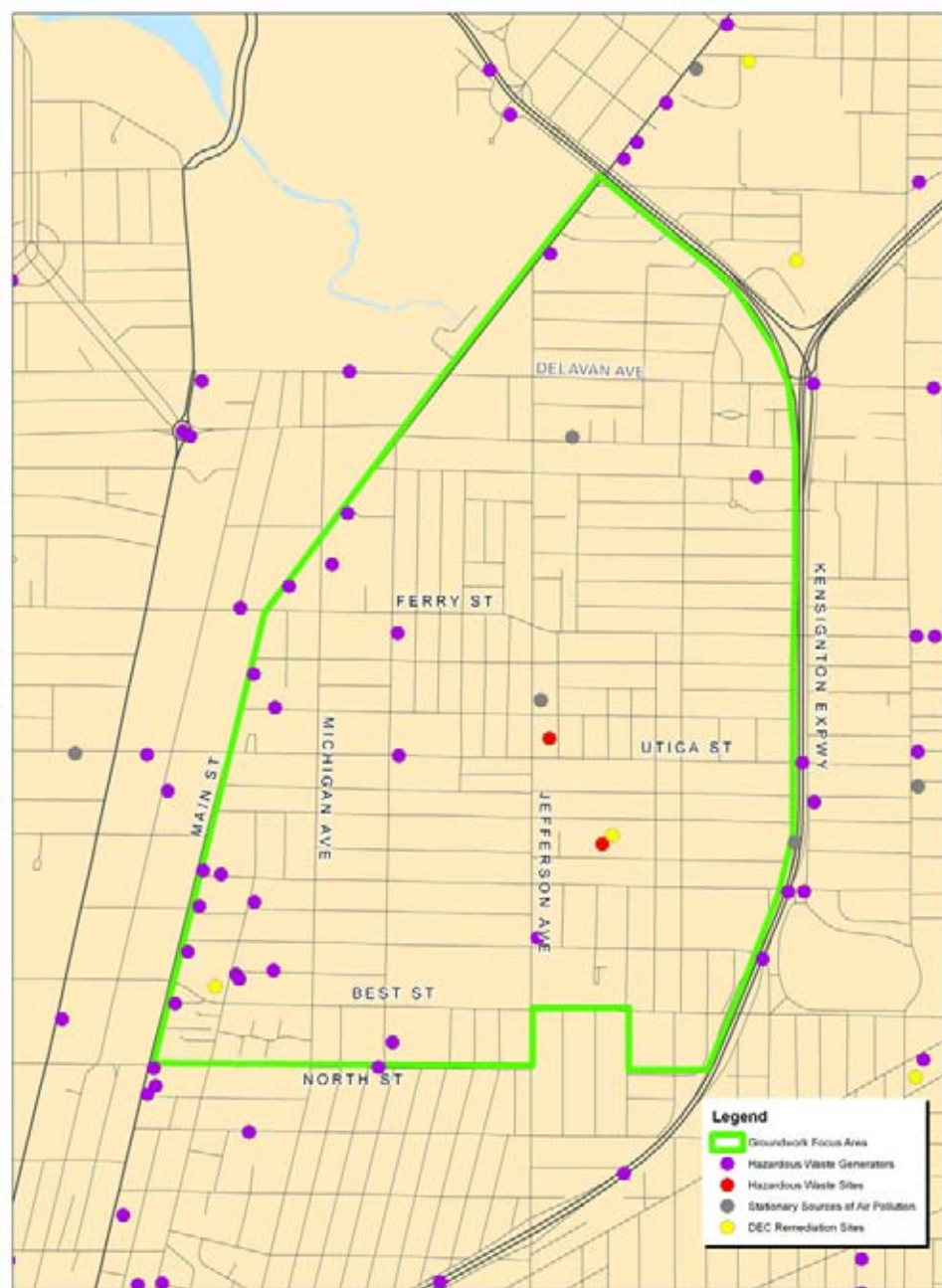


0 365 730 1,540 2,310 Feet

**Groundwork Focus Area**  
**Educational Attainment**  
City of Buffalo, 2000

**Created by:**  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

**Data Sources:**  
City of Buffalo GIS  
U.S. Census Bureau



Groundwork Focus Area  
**Environmental Concerns**  
City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Arch. and Planning

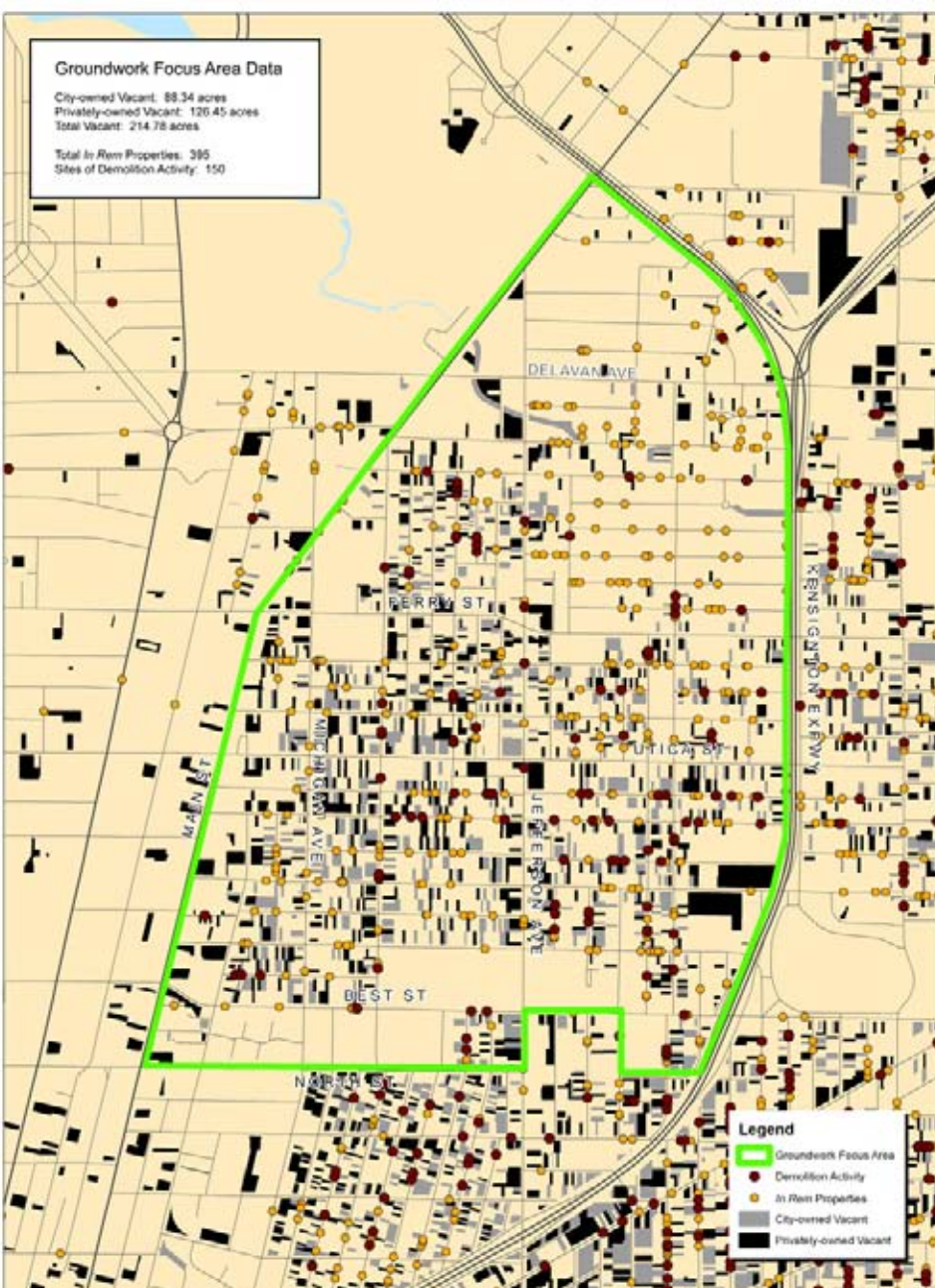
Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



## Groundwork Focus Area Data

City-owned Vacant: 88.34 acres  
Privately-owned Vacant: 126.45 acres  
Total Vacant: 214.78 acres

Total In Rem Properties: 395  
Sites of Demolition Activity: 150



### Legend

- Groundwork Focus Area
- Demolition Activity
- In Rem Properties
- City-owned Vacant
- Privately-owned Vacant

## Groundwork Focus Area Vacant and In Rem Properties City of Buffalo, 2008

Created by:  
Urban Design Project  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

Data Sources:  
City of Buffalo GIS  
Dept. of Taxation and Assessment



0 360 720 1,520 2,280 Feet



0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

HAMLIN PARK

COLD SPRING

Jefferson Incubator  
334 East Utica

**Legend**

- New Builds
- Block by Block Rehab Candidates
- Future New Builds
- ▲ Inven 42

- Public Owned Lots
- Demolitions
- Future Demolitions

**Land Use**

- Residential single family
- Residential two family
- Residential three family
- Residential other
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreational
- Community Service
- Industrial
- Public Service
- Conservation Areas / Parks
- Livable Communities Area
- Jefferson CARE Area
- Block by Block Area
- Infrastructure Improvements

MASTEN PARK



Office of Strategic Planning  
City of Buffalo  
October 2, 2008

April 12, 2009

## **Appendix G:**

### **Meeting Summaries**

#### **RFQ Committee (Executive Committee)**

May 22, 2008

June 24, 2008

August 12, 2008

September 30, 2008

November 4, 2008

November 25, 2008

#### **Steering Committee**

May 13, 2008

July 8, 2008

September 16, 2008

November 12, 2008

# Draft Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

RFQ Committee Meeting

May 22, 2008

8:30 AM

The Urban Design Project

---

**RFQ Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong (LISC)
- ☐ Brian Dold

- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein  
(Councilman Rivera)
- ☐ Erin Sharkey (MAP)

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Paul Ray
- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
- ☐ Lynda Schneekloth

- ☐ Bill Smith
- 

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## Agenda

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**Agenda**

Review the immediate work plan

1. Communication Framework
2. Plan Analysis
3. Organization Mapping
4. Focus Groups and Interviews
5. General Background Information
6. Chapter 2: Needs and Assets
7. July 8<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting

---

## Minutes

---

**Agenda Item: Communication Framework****Discussion and Conclusions:**

1. Access
  - Emails/Addresses for RFQ Committee
  - Emails/Addresses for Steering Committee
  - General mailing list of 'interested' people.
2. Communication Framework
  - Website on LISC and UDP with periodic updates and link to the Wiki site.
  - Create a Wiki site accessible by the RFQ and Steering Committees.
  - Communications can come directly from The Urban Design Project to the public.
3. Develop format for agenda and minutes (e.g. agenda, issues discussed and summary, action items and who will follow through).

**Action items****Person responsible****Deadline**



-Create a UDP Web page for Groundwork.	Jajeon	ASAP
-Create a Wiki site for Groundwork.	Jajeon	ASAP
-Send a letter to the Steering Committee to notify them that the UDP will be contacting them.	Anthony	Done
-Send the Steering Committee list to the RFQ Committee.	Anthony	Done
-Add names and organizations to the Steering Committee list as needed: Send to Anthony who will then send to the UDP.	All RFQ Com.	May 27
-Add needed information to Steering Committee list: Position, address.	All RFQ Committee	May 27

---

### Agenda Item: Plan Analysis

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

1. Establish a format for reporting information from plans and proposals (WCI as template).
2. What plans need to be added from our experience and others? (Check bibliography of existing plans).

The following is the format to be used for summarizing related plans:

Name  
Date  
Sponsoring party  
Participants,  
Issue and Scope  
location (let's literally map where possible)  
Proposal or plan  
Implementation (done, being done, future)  
Funding  
Evaluation of Implemented  
Identify relevant appendices or bibliography  
Paragraph summarizing content

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Begin Evaluation	UDP	

---

### Agenda Item: Organization Mapping

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

##### *Schedule of the Feasibility Study*

1. From the lists of interested parties, get information on them from websites and/or telephone calls to find out what they do and so on. Let's map them or create a matrix by categories we need to develop.
2. Access information on funding opportunities, institutions, organizations, programs, etc.

The following is the format to be used for summarizing the work of related organizations in Buffalo:

---

Name and type (govt, 501c3, non-incorporated, volunteer - what is typology?)  
 Focus / Mission  
 How long been working  
 Organization structure - board (#), membership, ED, # of staff, volunteers  
 Partners and coalitions  
 Programs  
 Key projects  
 Physical location/target area  
 Communication  
 Financial structure and approximate budget  
 Self-assessment of effectiveness  
 Obstacles to being more effective

#### Action items

Begin Evaluation (phone calls, Websites)

#### Person responsible

UDP

#### Deadline

### Agenda item: Focus Groups

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

Based on 5.13 meeting, these seem to be focus areas of organizations within the Steering Committee:

1. Gardens, Agriculture and Food Security
2. Economic Justice and community development (poverty, employment, youth)
3. Housing and community revitalization (vacancy, brownfields, transp)
4. Green Infrastructure (trees, water (stormwater), habitat, recycling, parks, recreation)

The categories will be refined as more interviews are held.

Focus groups will be held with organizations within these categories.

Many organizations may overlap these categories. These organizations may be invited to multiple focus groups.

#### Action items

#### Person responsible

#### Deadline

### Agenda item: General Background Information

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

1. Buffalo's Social/Ecological Justice Issues  
 Start with report generated by LISC – let's decide how to deepen depending on (1) issue or focus; (2) location; (3) other suggestive category.
2. Collect and organize mapping of Buffalo to demonstrate need (GIS)  
 Vacant land, community gardens, parks, etc  
 Poverty by census tract, street tree inventory, green infrastructure, topography, watershed, utilities, poverty, schools, Samina Raja's food desert map, USPS vacant buildings data.

There are multiple categories of vacant land – We need to consider this as we map.

3. Groundwork precedent studies
4. Organizational models and funding types

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
GIS data collection.	UDP	
Contact other Groundwork organizations – Wait for the UDP to develop a list of questions to ask.	RFQ Committee and UDP	

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#### Agenda item: Needs and Assets

##### Discussion and Conclusions:

Once we have all of the above, we'll need to develop categories for assessment, gap analysis, organizational analysis, project types and locations, challenges, opportunities, and so on. (To be included in chapter 2)

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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#### Agenda item: Products

##### Discussion and Conclusions:

1. Report
  - a. Chapter 2: Needs and Assets
2. Data Base
  - a. GIS and Contact List
3. Mapping.
  - a. Map of needs, problems, and actions from inventory
  - b. Map of organizations working on these issues
4. Steering Committee
  - a. July 8

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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# Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

RFQ Committee Meeting

June 24, 2008

9:00 AM

MAP

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**RFQ Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ John Fell

- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein
- ☐ Erin Sharkey
- ☐ Carrie (representing Julie O'Neill)

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
- ☐ Lynda Schneekloth

- ☐ Bill Smith
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## Agenda

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### Agenda

1. Communication – Web and phone based, with meetings with the Steering Committee
  - a. Groundwork Wiki Space and UDP – everything
  - b. Daemen Website - announcements
2. Organization Mapping
  - a. Internet research and phone calls
  - b. The survey
  - c. Analyzing the collected data
  - d. Focus groups emerging from research
    - i. Gardens, agriculture and food security
    - ii. Social justice and community development (poverty, employment, youth)
    - iii. Land redevelopment (vacancy, brownfields, transportation)
    - iv. Green Infrastructure (trees, water, stormwater, habitat, recycling, parks, recreation)
    - v. Service provision
    - vi. Community organizing
3. Plan Analysis: Summarizing and categorizing the plans
4. Mapping
5. Researching Other Groundwork Organizations
  - a. Contacts we need
  - b. Questions we will ask
6. The Assets and Needs Analysis
  - a. Assets/Needs
  - b. What are some variables for identifying the most suitable land?
7. The Next Steering Committee Meeting – July 8<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM, at the CFGB
  - a. Purpose – hoped-for outcome
  - b. Presentation: (data, maps, findings, other?)
  - c. Notification and attendance (expand?)
8. Next Steps

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## Minutes

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**Agenda Item: Communication**

**Discussion and Conclusions:**

The meeting began with a discussion of methods of communication for the Groundwork Feasibility Study. In particular, the use of different Websites was considered. Below is a matrix of the Websites considered for use and the material that would be on each. This matrix was prepared prior to the meeting, and comments about additions are described below.

WEBSITES – POTENTIAL INFORMATION TO BE POSTED				
	UDP	Wiki	Daemen	LISC
Overview	X	X	X	X
Survey Link	X	X	X	X
Survey Results	X	X		
Announcements	X	X	X	
Web Links		X		
Project Resources		X		

The UDP and Wiki Web sites should contain the bulk of project information and working materials.

- The LISC and City of Buffalo Website should contain a link to the UDP Website.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Add RFQ Committee meeting material to the Wiki site	Jajeon	ASAP
Add Steering Committee links to the Wiki Site	Jajeon	ASAP
Add the UDP Web link to the LISC and City of Buffalo Websites	Anthony Armstrong/ John Fell	ASAP

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## Agenda Item: Organization Mapping

### Discussion and Conclusions:

#### *Internet and Phone Calls*

The UDP has been conducting internet research and phone interviews with organizations on the Steering Committee and with other organizations identified by the Steering Committee.

- Many of these organizations have Websites that have much of the needed information.
- It has been difficult to get phone interviews with these organizations (phone calls are unanswered, messages are not returned, many phone numbers are inactive or incorrect)
- A survey will be prepared and sent out in order to gather needed information that internet research and phone calls have not been able to. Additional phone calls will be suspended until after the survey is circulated.

#### *Survey*

A survey to be sent to the organizations on the Steering Committee and to other organizations identified by the Steering Committee was discussed. Below is a summary of the comments made about the survey:

- Depending on the response rate obtained by the survey, additional follow up phone calls will need to be made. Responses from some organizations will be needed more than others.

Changes that need to be made to the survey include:

- The survey does not have appropriate questions for agencies. It is aimed at getting responses from organizations. An additional survey or phone calls should be used to gather information from agencies.
  - Organizations should be able to self identify with one or more of the focus group categories.
  - An additional question should be asked to determine if organizations have any strategic plans or project documents available.
  - The introduction to the survey should list the members of the RFQ Committee as contacts if the respondents have any questions.
-

### **Analyzing the Collected Data**

Data collected about organizations will be analyzed and summarized into a one page table. A sample of one these tables was discussed. Comments are summarized below.

- The summary table should include a contact person.
- It should include self identified focus area categories (used to develop focus groups)

### **Focus Groups**

Several focus groups will be conducted as part of the data collection and inventory phase of the feasibility study. The focus groups should be used to better understand policy initiatives, group collaboration, and ongoing projects. Focus groups emerging from the research include:

- Gardens, agriculture and food security
- Social justice and community development (poverty, employment, youth)
- Land redevelopment (vacancy, brownfields, transportation)
- Green Infrastructure (trees, water, stormwater, habitat, recycling, parks, recreation)
- Service provision
- Community organizing

Comments about the focus group categories include:

- Add a "Planning/Policy" category
- Separate potential funders from the group of organizations to be surveyed (Fox Tire, HSBC, DEC, EPA, Buffalo Sewer Authority)
- Add the International League of Muslim Women to the list of organizations to be contacted.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Update the Survey	UDP	Complete
Send the survey to the RFQ for review	UDP/RFQ	Complete
Send the survey to organizations	UDP	Tuesday, July 1st

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### **Agenda Item: Plan Analysis**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

Over twenty plans have been summarized and analyzed to date. A copy of the summary tables for each plan was passed around for review. These plans will be analyzed using a matrix, categorizing the plans by sponsoring organization, geography, plan type, action, and focus. Comments include:

- The most relevant projects to Groundwork should be analyzed.
- Samina Raja's evaluation of MAP projects should be included in the plan summary tables.

The overall geographic focus of the Feasibility Study was discussed. The RFQ Committee had at times described the focus of the project as the Near East Side.

- At this meeting, it was determined that the focus should be the entire city.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Send the UDP additional MAP plans AND Samina Raja's evaluations of MAP projects	Erin Sharkey	ASAP

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**Agenda item: Mapping****Discussion and Conclusions:**

Several maps were presented at the meeting, including a base map, a green infrastructure map, and many demographic maps.

There are five categories of maps that will be produced:

- Base map
- Assets (green infrastructure, natural resources, community gardens)
- Challenges (vacant land, brownfields, contamination)
- Demographics (poverty, income)
- Projects/plans and organizations (location, target area)

The RFQ Committee suggested a list of other potential maps and data sources. These include:

- Food Desert Maps – Samina Raja
- In Rem list of properties – City of Buffalo
- MBBA Housing List – PUSH
- Owner vs rental occupied housing – Census
- BNRK Green Infrastructure Map
- City-wide community gardens – Need contacts for South Buffalo and North Buffalo community gardens
- Buried city waterways, sewer lines
- Historic waterways – UDP
- Half mile buffer around greenspaces
- Family owned farms
- CSA distribution points

**Action items**

Send RFQ Committee Shapefiles of historic waterway

**Person responsible**

UDP

**Deadline**

Complete

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**Agenda item: Researching Other Groundworks****Discussion and Conclusions:**

Other Groundwork organizations will be contacted and interviewed in order to conduct a precedent study. These organizations will be asked questions that will address their general background, projects and programming, organization and management, funding and resources, launching strategies, and opportunities and challenges.

The RFQ Committee gave contacts for three Groundwork organizations that should be contacted first.

- Jen Lawrence, Groundwork Somerville, (207)651-1972
- Mary Beth Driscoll, Milwaukee, (414)405-3272
- Kate O'Brien, Lawrence, (978)974-0770

**Action items**

Begin contacting the Groundwork Organizations

**Person responsible**

UDP

**Deadline**

July

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**Agenda item: Assets and Needs****Discussion and Conclusions:**

A preliminary outline of assets and needs was presented:

**Assets**

- Many organizations in Buffalo working to address the needs described below.
  - Green infrastructure such as existing park systems and nature preserves.
  - Natural resources including the Lake Erie, the Niagara River and Niagara Falls, the Escarpment.
  - Available small and large tracts of land.
  - Freshwater.
  - Location.
-



- Universities.
- Architecture and history
- Affordable living.

#### Needs

- Large amounts of vacant and underutilized land.
- Environmental contamination and brownfields.
- Lack of recreation and green space.
- High levels of poverty and unemployment

Other needs that could be included:

- Health issues, crime, education.

Based upon discussion, additional needs that should be included are

- connectivity between neighborhoods
- connectivity between green spaces

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Write Chapter 2 of the Report – Community Needs and Assets	UDP	July 18

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#### Agenda item: Steering Committee Meeting

##### Discussion and Conclusions:

The Next Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled for July 8<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM, at the CFGB

- The UDP will present findings from relating to plan analysis and organization analysis, as well as preliminary maps.
- On goal of the meeting will be to establish focus groups by using the categories described earlier.

A discussion was held about whether or not to invite new city officials to the steering committee meeting.

- It was decided that a meeting with the city officials, Anthony Armstrong, Lynda Schneekloth, and John Fell, would be more appropriate.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Set up a date, time, and location, for the next RFQ Committee meeting	UDP/RFQ	August

# DRAFT Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

RFQ Committee Meeting

August 12, 2008

9:00 AM

MAP

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**RFQ Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ John Fell

☐ Kirk Laubenstein

☐ Erin Sharkey

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
- ☐ Lynda Schneekloth

☐ Bill Smith

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## Agenda

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### Agenda

1. Work In Progress
  - a. Mapping
  - b. Organization Analysis
    - Results of the Survey
    - Analyzing the collected data
  - c. Plan Analysis
  - d. Researching Other Groundwork Organizations
2. The Assets and Needs Draft Chapter
3. Identifying a Focus Area
  - a. Proposed Location – The Near East Side
  - b. Background Information
  - c. Opportunities
4. Focus Groups
5. Next Steps
  - a. The Next Draft Chapters – Projects and Programming, Organization and Management, Funding and Resource Development, Launching Strategies.
  - b. Other Additional Chapters – Groundwork Trust Precedents, Focus Area Justification and Background Data.
  - c. The Next Steering Committee Meeting – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 AM, at the CFGB

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## Minutes

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### Agenda Item: Work In Progress

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

#### Mapping

A series of city-wide maps were presented. These maps are now available on the Groundwork Buffalo Wiki Website ([www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com](http://www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com)) These maps include:

- Assets (green infrastructure, waterways)
  - Challenges (vacant and inrem properties)
  - Demographic data
  - Planning framework
  - Organization locations
-

### **Organization Analysis**

Over 70 Buffalo based organizations have been researched. This research includes interviews, Web searches, and a survey. Approximately 30 organizations have responded to the survey. These organizations were analyzed based upon their focus issues. The total number of organizations working in each discrete focus issue was calculated with the results shown below (this summation only includes organizations that have responded to the survey, completed interviews, or have adequate information on a Website):

- Green Infrastructure and Recreation – 14
- Gardens, Agriculture, and Food Security – 16
- Land Redevelopment – 17
- Historic and Cultural Resources – 9
- Social and Economic Justice – 20
- Community Services – 19
- Community Organizing and Advocacy – 23
- General Planning and Policy Making - 15

### **Plan Analysis**

Over 20 plans for Buffalo that are related to vacant land and housing, and environmental resources have been analyzed. This planning framework has been used to help understand the context in which a Groundwork will operate and the gaps that need to be addressed by a Groundwork. These plans address several relevant focus issues. Below is a summation of the number of plans addressing specific focus issues:

- Air and Water Quality – 7
- Fish and Wildlife – 6
- Parks and Recreation/Greenspace – 14
- Food and Agriculture – 1
- Historic Resources – 7
- Vacant Properties – 9
- Brownfields – 7
- Transportation – 3
- Community/Local Economy – 6

### **Researching Other Groundwork Organizations**

A precedent study of three other Groundwork organizations is being conducted. The three Groundwork organizations studied were selected because they operate in similar contexts as Buffalo. These organizations include Groundwork Yonkers, Groundwork Lawrence, and Groundwork Milwaukee. The results of initial interviews were presented. Major findings include:

- As expected, raising and sustaining operating resources are the biggest challenges.
- Both Groundworks have 2-3 target areas.
- Groundwork Yonkers is expanding regionally, and changing its name to Groundwork Hudson Valley.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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### **Agenda Item: The Assets and Needs Draft Chapter**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

A draft of Chapter 2, Community Assets and Needs, of the Feasibility Study was presented. The chapter includes an overview of city-wide built and natural assets, challenges that range from vacant land and contamination to high levels of poverty, and opportunities based upon those assets and challenges as well as the organizational and planning framework of the city.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Review draft chapter 2 and send revisions to the UDP.	RFQ Committee	ASAP

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## Agenda Item: Identifying a Focus Area

### Discussion and Conclusions:

An initial focus area was identified prior to the meeting. This focus area is known as the Near East Side. It is bounded to the west by Main Street and to the north, east and south by the Kensington Expressway. The focus area is meant to be a first phase for Groundwork. The Groundwork will work throughout the entire city, and expand into other focus areas over time. The discussion about the focus area included the following:

#### ***Justification for the Focus Area***

- It is adjacent to strong West Side markets.
- It has strong north and south institutional anchors (Canisius College and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus).
- It has assets and challenges that Groundwork can address.
- The city has designated it a neighborhood revitalization strategy area.

#### ***Opportunities***

- The area has significant development potential, and greenspaces need to be preserved and planned for before they are lost. This green space can be an asset for future development in the area, rather than a hindrance.
- The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) is conducting a neighborhood revitalization study.
- There are opportunities for land banking. The perception of vacant lots can be changed if they appear to be used for something. (stormwater management, urban forests)
- There are opportunities for resettlement of the focus area. This includes:
  - Establishing an immigrant enclave.
  - Targeted relocation of homes and occupants to the focus area from more distressed neighborhoods in Buffalo.
  - Appropriate housing programs that attract people from more distressed areas.
- There is a city rent to own housing program in the focus area, with 29 existing units and 50 coming.
- New housing units were built recently in Cold Springs.

#### ***Challenges***

- The re-use of vacant property as permanent greenspace currently faces opposition from several facets within the City, which tend to view traditional development (residential, commercial, etc.), as the only desirable option — particularly in areas in closer proximity to downtown
- The Fruit Belt area has many organizations working to improve the community. There is often a lack of coordination amongst these organizations.
- St. John's Church in the Fruit Belt has a family life center and a charter school. However, the family life center does not feel open to the surrounding community.
- Out migration from the focus area is a challenge.
  - Immigration and resettlement services do not focus on the Near East Side.
  - The Home Zone program pulled people out of Hamlin Park.

#### ***Revised Focus Area Boundary***

Based upon this discussion, the focus area boundaries were changed to avoid potential lack of support for Greening initiatives in close proximity to downtown and the Medical Campus. The revised southern boundary of the focus area is E. North Street. Meanwhile, an effort should be made to gain support for a Groundwork from constituents of the neighborhood, to help gain the support of the district Councilmen.

#### **Action items**

Get the Masten GNPA plan from Alita Stewart.  
Get the Masten District plan from John Fell.

#### **Person responsible**

UDP  
UDP

#### **Deadline**

ASAP  
ASAP

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**Agenda item: Focus Groups****Discussion and Conclusions:**

Ideas for potential focus groups were discussed. Two focus groups were proposed:

- City-wide gardens, agriculture, and food security organizations.
- Focus area institutions, organizations, and neighborhood groups.

**Action items**

Set up focus group sessions.

**Person responsible**

UDP

**Deadline**

ASAP

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**Agenda item: Next Steps****Discussion and Conclusions:**

The Urban Design project will continue to write the Feasibility Study as needed, and will complete a draft by the end of October.

**Action items**

Schedule the next RFQ meeting.

**Person responsible**

UDP

**Deadline**

ASAP

# DRAFT Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

RFQ Committee Meeting

September 30, 2008

9:00 AM

MAP

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**RFQ Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ Brian Dold

- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein
- ☐ Maureen Mayer
- ☐ Erin Sharkey

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
  - ☐ Lynda Schneekloth
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## Agenda

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**Agenda**

1. Focus Area Strategy
2. Projects and Programs
  - a. Projects in play
  - b. Proposed projects - Urban Agriculture and Neighborhood Revitalization
3. Partnerships and Funding Ideas
4. Upcoming Meetings
  - a. Urban agriculture
  - b. Upcoming community forum
  - c. Board of Block Clubs meeting

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## Minutes

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**Agenda Item: Projects and Programs****Discussion and Conclusions:**

The Urban Design Project is currently writing a draft of the projects and programming chapter for the Feasibility Study. The outline of this chapter as presented to the RFQ Committee is below:

- I. Goals
  - II. Opportunities
    - a. Urban Agriculture
      - i. Community gardens
      - ii. Urban Farming
    - b. Green Infrastructure
      - i. Parks
      - ii. Green Streets
      - iii. Urban Forests
      - iv. Constructed Wetlands
      - v. Stormwater Management
        1. Rain barrels
        2. Rain gardens
        3. Bioretention (bioswales)
      - vi. Day lighting Scajaquada Creek
    - c. Affordable Housing
-

d. Historical Preservation / Restoration

III. Draft Proposal

a. Queen City Farm

IV. Programs

- a. Youth programming
- b. Training and business development
- c. Small business development (food sector)
- d. Volunteer coordination
- e. Coordinating leadership
- f. Neighborhood planning
- g. Testing for contamination

**Urban Agriculture**

One of Groundwork's potential projects can be based upon neighborhood revitalization through urban agriculture. The New York State Department of Ag and Markets is planning to visit Buffalo on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to see food/urban agriculture projects in action, and to hear ideas from folks in Buffalo regarding potential next steps for building a sustainable, healthy Buffalo. They hope to take our ideas back to NYS Dept. of Ag and Markets in an effort to generate support for food and urban agriculture projects in Buffalo. There is strong interest at Ag & Markets, DEC, the Department of State and potentially others in an interagency collaboration to support a pilot project in Buffalo. A potential urban agriculture pilot project within the Groundwork Buffalo focus area can include the Queen City Farm project on Utica between Masten and Purdy. The pilot project would have to deal with both food security issues as well as sprawl. Comments from the discussion about this project included:

- Concerns about the challenges Queen City Farm faces. These challenges include land ownership, political support, and neighborhood support. Queen City Farm may not be achievable in the near term.
- The challenge for Groundwork will be to help implement the Queen City Farm project.
- Can Queen City Farm be a non-food farm? This could include growing native plant species for habitat restoration projects. This can solve the problems associated with soil contamination.
- Considering some urban farms a temporary land use may reduce political opposition.
- Buffalo Reuse is attempting to develop a composting facility. A partnership between Queen City Farm and Buffalo Reuse can be mutually beneficial.

**Stormwater Management**

The city and the Buffalo Sewer Authority are investing in alternative stormwater treatment strategies to improve problems related to combined sewer overflows (CSOs). These projects can include rain barrels, rain gardens, bioswales, and constructed wetlands, among others. In the Groundwork focus area, there is a storm sewer beneath Masten Avenue, and combined sewer overflows beneath Jefferson Avenue and Michigan Avenue. Areas along these streets are good locations to collect and treat excess stormwater. Discussion included:

- Given the amount of vacant land along these streets, there are many locations for potential recreated wetlands.
- Green Stormwater retention can be designed into city streets.
- Stormwater retention projects can be tied into Queen City Farm as a source of water for irrigation.
- New rain gardens around Johnny B. Wiley Stadium can improve drainage there and tie into other green infrastructure along Jefferson Avenue.
- Masten Park was once a city reservoir and may have an existing pumping system already in place.

**Hamlin park Stabilization**

The Hamlin Park neighborhood has little vacant land, but many inrem properties. The neighborhood is in need of stabilization efforts. Discussion regarding Hamlin Park neighborhood stabilization included:

- Hamlin Park is designated a local historic district, giving the city preservation board the power disallow demolitions.
  - Although there is a Canisius College faculty and staff neighborhood homeownership program, nearly all investment has been in the Parkside neighborhood.
  - Pathways and green spaces along the buried Scajaquada Creek represent opportunities for green improvements in the neighborhood. The pedestrian bridge across the Kensington Expressway will be reconstructed soon.
  - The reconstruction of the Humboldt Parkway along the Kensington Expressway represents an opportunity for new green infrastructure.
  - The Wellness Institute is working with the Hamlin Park school on several health related grant funded projects.
  - The city has posted a 1 million dollar bond for Hamlin Park streetscape and infrastructure improvements. Groundwork Buffalo can work with the city to make these improvements "green."
-



## Green Connections

There is a desire to create new green connections between assets in the focus area. These green connections can be along city streets or trails on publicly owned land within city blocks. Green connections discussed include connections between:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Masten Park.
- Artspace and Queen City Farm.
- City Honors School, Masten Park, and Artspace.
- Scajaquada Creek pathways.
- Expanding Masten Park into adjacent publicly owned vacant land.

Discussion regarding green connections included:

- Removing properties from the city inrem list can be a strategy to increase available public space for new green connections.
- The BMHA housing adjacent to City Honors School may be removed and replaced with recreation space. The current residents would be moved to other infill housing.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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### Agenda item: Partnerships and Funding Ideas

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

The RFQ Committee suggested a few partnership and funding opportunities. The discussion included:

- The Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper has received an urban forestry grant and would like to find locations within the Groundwork focus area to do urban forestry projects.
- Premium Services Inc., a private landscaping business, is interested in partnering with Groundwork on green infrastructure and natural restoration projects.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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### Agenda item: Upcoming Meetings

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

There are a few upcoming meetings related to the Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study. They include:

- The New York State Department of Ag and Markets is planning to visit Buffalo on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. They will be meeting with the many city urban agriculture groups, and will be going on site visits of urban agriculture projects, including Queen City Farm and the Groundwork focus area.
- A community forum on reusing vacant land and housing on the Near East Side is being held by the city on October 7 and 9. Groundwork Buffalo is a cosponsor of the forum and encourages Groundwork committee members to attend and support Groundwork initiatives.
- The Buffalo Board of Block Clubs holds regular meetings on the last Thursday of every month. A representative of Groundwork Buffalo has been invited to the next meeting in October.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Circulate the Near East Side Community forum invitation.	UDP	Complete

# DRAFT Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study – Meeting Summary

RFQ Committee Meeting

November 4, 2008

9:00 AM

MAP

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**RFQ Committee**

☐ Anthony Armstrong

☐ Brian Dold

☐ John Fell

☐ Zoe Lavatelli

☐ Ivan Lee

☐ Erin Sharkey

**Urban Design Project**

☐ Jajean Rose-Burney

☐ Lynda Schneckloth

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## Agenda

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**Agenda**

1. Groundwork USA Assembly – Lessons Learned
2. Draft Feasibility Study - Review Table of Contents
3. Proposed Initial Project Initiatives
  - a. Groundwork Buffalo Role
  - b. Funding Opportunities
  - c. Potential Partners
4. Organization and Management – Discussion
  - a. Board of Directors
5. Next Steps
  - a. Upcoming Steering Committee Meeting
  - b. The Next RFQ Meeting

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## Minutes

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**Agenda Item: Groundwork USA Assembly****Discussion and Conclusions:**

Jajean Rose-Burney from the Urban Design Project attended the 2008 Groundwork USA Assembly in Milwaukee Wisconsin from October 15-18. He reported several important findings regarding the Feasibility Study. They include:

- **Brownfields** - The Feasibility Study must highlight potential brownfield related projects. The EPA has recently cut funding for the Groundwork program. Groundwork USA feels that in order to maintain funding levels from the EPA, or increase them in the future, the individual Groundworks need to focus on brownfield projects, large or small.
  - **Funding** - The Feasibility Study must identify and quantify specific funding sources for potential projects. In order for Groundwork Buffalo to be successful, it must be able to sustain itself financially. There have been a few recent failed Groundwork trusts for financial reasons. Because of these failings, Groundwork USA is more cautious about approving new start ups.
-

- Organizational overlap - The Feasibility Study must demonstrate the need for a Groundwork trust in Buffalo. This goes without saying, but Groundwork USA was concerned that there are already several “greening” organizations in Buffalo, and that Groundwork may be competing with these organizations. Our work shows that these organizations are interested in collaboration with Groundwork, as evidenced by their participation on the Steering Committee.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Generate ideas for potential funding sources.	RFQ Committee	ASAP

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## Agenda item: Table of Contents

### Discussion and Conclusions:

The Feasibility Study’s draft table of contents was reviewed, and no major changes were suggested. The table of contents is below:

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0	INTRODUCTION
2.0	METHODOLOGY
2.1	Data Collection
2.2	Engagement Process
3.0	CITY WIDE ASSETS AND NEEDS
3.1	A City of “Good Bones”
3.2	Assets
	Community Assets
	Natural Assets
	Cultural Amenities
3.3	Challenges
3.4	Opportunities
4.0	BUFFALO’S NEAR EAST SIDE: FOCUS AREA
4.1	Assets
4.3	Challenges
4.4	Opportunities
5.0	PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMING
6.0	ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT
7.0	FUNDING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
8.0	LAUNCHING STRATEGIES

#### APPENDICES

A.	Groundwork Trust Case Studies
B.	Organization Inventory
C.	Selected Citywide Planning Inventory
D.	Summary of Focus Area Planning Designations
E.	List of Contacts
F.	Mapping Inventory and GIS Database
G.	Meeting Summaries
H.	Other Research

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
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## **Agenda item: Proposed Initial Project Initiatives**

### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

Three proposed initial project initiatives were discussed. The RFQ Committee was asked for comments, what the role of Groundwork should be, and potential funding sources. The proposed projects included an urban farm, vacant property and brownfield conversions, and green infrastructure and stormwater management. The discussion is below:

#### ***Urban Farm***

Vacant land in the focus area can be reused for urban farming. Discussion regarding this proposal included:

- The proposed Queen City Farm project can be part of this proposal, but other locations should be considered as well. Groundwork Buffalo's role should not be to manage the urban farm. Instead Groundwork Buffalo should:
  - Facilitate neighborhood and City collaboration.
  - Coordinate a business plan for a separate organization that would manage the urban farm.
  - Develop distribution methods for the farm.

The Massachusetts Avenue Project does not feel that establishing an urban farm in the focus area infringes on MAP's own role in the community. MAP would like to establish itself as a resource center for training, technical expertise, and youth coordination for other food security projects and organizations in the city.

#### ***Vacant Property and Brownfield Conversions***

Groundwork Buffalo should work within a small segment of the focus area on a property-by-property strategy that could include varying forms of green infrastructure on vacant land. The initial location for this strategy can be the neighborhoods surrounding Artspace, including City Honors and BAVPA. Discussion included:

- Groundwork Buffalo's role should be to:
  - Develop and implement this strategy. The strategy will take extensive surveying of existing conditions and planning for each property, but must include implementation to demonstrate Groundwork Buffalo's effectiveness.
  - Organize the City and community to help implement these projects.
- This proposal would be a good way for Groundwork Buffalo to start work. It can lead to many green reuse projects.
  - One of the green infrastructure projects can include a trail on vacant lots just east of Artspace.
  - Groundwork should work to connect other existing green assets together through green infrastructure projects.

#### ***Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Management***

Groundwork Buffalo should work to use green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, bioswales, and constructed wetlands to reduce the amount of stormwater entering storm sewers and combined sewer overflows. Discussion included:

- The Buffalo Sewer Authority has concerns that green infrastructure cannot reduce stormwater enough to be worth the investment. Groundwork Buffalo must demonstrate the ability of green infrastructure to reduce stormwater. Measuring the impact will be an important part of any green infrastructure pilot project. The project must reduce the amount of stormwater entering storm sewers and combined sewer overflows, and save money from reducing the need to invest in traditional grey infrastructure.
  - A combination of green streets and constructed wetlands will be most effective at achieving desired outcomes.
  - Stormwater can be collected from the roofs of nearby buildings and piped into constructed wetlands.

#### **Action items**

Determine funding sources for projects

#### **Person responsible**

UDP/RFQ

#### **Deadline**

ASAPA

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**Agenda item: Organization and Management****Discussion and Conclusions:*****Funding Sources***

Several funding sources were discussed. They include:

- The City's Livable Communities grant program.
- Urban forestry grants that Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper has secured.
- ReTree WNY.
- Corporate sponsorships.

Collaboration with exiting organizations on their initiatives will help Groundwork Buffalo find the resources it needs early on. It will be important for Groundwork Buffalo to establish partner organizations in the focus area. These partner organizations may be able to share resources, including office space. These shared resources can be part of the funding strategy for Groundwork Buffalo.

- Buffalo ReUse and Grassroots Gardens are working to establish 8 community gardens in the focus area. There are resources that can be shared through collaboration, including project leaders, AmeriCorps workers, and volunteers.

***Board of Directors***

As a non-profit, Groundwork Buffalo will need to have a Board of Directors. Often, Steering Committee members from Groundwork Trust Feasibility Studies transition into a Board of Directors. Groundwork Buffalo's Board of directors could comprise of:

- 4 Steering Committee members.
- 4 focus area neighborhood representatives.
  - Potential neighborhood representatives include the Board of Block Clubs, MLK Park neighborhood community organization, Artspace, City Honors, BAVPA, Hamlin Park School, or the Hamlin Park Taxpayers Association.
- 4 people who are technical experts, City representatives, or have access to fundraising resources.
  - Some Steering Committee members are also neighborhood representatives, technical experts, city representatives, and have access to resources.
  - City representatives can come from the Office of Strategic Planning or the Good Neighbors Planning Alliance.

**Action items**

Determine potential Board members

**Person responsible**

UDP/RFQ/Steering Committee

**Deadline**

November 2008

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**Agenda item: Next Steps****Discussion and Conclusions:*****Steering Committee meeting***

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday November 12, 8:30 am at the CFGB.

***RFQ Committee meeting***

The next RFQ Committee meeting needs scheduled for sometime after the Steering Committee meeting.

**Action items**

Set up the next RFQ meeting in November

**Person responsible**

UDP

**Deadline**

ASAP



# Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

Steering Committee Meeting

May 13, 2008

9:30 AM (after Green and Growing)

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

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## **Steering Committee**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Armstrong (LISC)            | <input type="checkbox"/> David Hahn Baker (CAO)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim O'Connell (NPS)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Julie Barrett O'Neill (Riverkeeper) | <input type="checkbox"/> Kirk Laubenstein (Councilman Rivera) | <input type="checkbox"/> Laura Quebral Fulton (CFGB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Clarke (LISC)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoe Lavatelli (Grassroots Gardens)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Erin Sharkey (MAP)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brian Dold                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Audrey Leos (CFGB)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lauren Weiss                |
|  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Brenda Young (Daemen)       |

## **Urban Design Project**

- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jajeane Rose-Burney |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lynda Schneekloth   |

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## **Agenda**

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### **Agenda**

1. Introduction – Anthony Armstrong (LISC)
2. The Steering Committee Charge - Lynda Schneekloth (UDP)
3. The Work Plan
  - a. Monthly RFQ Committee Meetings
  - b. Bi-Monthly Steering Committee Meetings
  - c. Collection and Analysis of Existing Plans
  - d. Feasibility Study
4. Are there other groups that should be involved in the Steering Committee
  - a. Rules of inclusion
  - b. Rules of exclusion
5. Are there additional relevant plans and proposals that should be considered?
  - a. Geography of plans and proposals
  - b. Topics eligible for inclusion
6. The next Steering Committee meeting is July 8<sup>th</sup> at 9am at the CFGB.



## Minutes

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### Agenda Item: Introduction

### Discussion and Conclusions:

#### Groundwork

Groundwork organizations' purpose is to build sustainable communities through joint environmental action thereby empowering people, creating better places, and helping to bring about prosperity. The [Groundwork USA network](#) is built on partnership and linked together by the Groundwork USA national office, with support from the Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. Projects and activities are organized into six program areas as part of our integrated approach to community rejuvenation: land, brownfields, education, business, youth, and communities.

Throughout the course of organizing the Groundwork Trust Steering Committee, it became apparent that Buffalo did not have a strong coordinated forum for dialogue across greening organizations. There are a multiplicity of groups working on projects from a number of different angles, but a network of like-minded organizations working in partnership has the potential to not only improve each current individual initiative, but also to marshal greater resources for bringing efforts to scale and filling in gaps where current organizations do not possess the capacity.

As both convener and implementer, a Groundwork Buffalo (GWB), with representation from existing greening and environmental organizations, has the prospect of adding much value to the process of reclaiming underutilized and neglected open space throughout the city. The reality of resource limitations, however, should be neither overlooked nor understated. It will be crucial for GWB, and its partner agencies to tailor their efforts to communities where their work can have a substantial and sustainable impact. By leveraging and connecting existing assets, greening efforts can serve as more than active and passive recreation spaces, but can serve as catalysts for community involvement and anchors for future investment.

To generate commitment from the partner agencies, local government, and potential contributors, GWB would need to articulate specific benefits to each stakeholder group:

- For funders, GWB could provide a cohesive voice which helps direct resources to prioritized projects.
- For the City, GWB could provide specific input, insight, and direction for land use planning efforts and community planning projects.
- For partner agencies, GWB could provide technical expertise and facilitation. GWB would also provide a forum for ideas, best practice discussion, and assistance amongst the individual agencies, and help to create an authoritative voice on greening efforts throughout Buffalo.
- For communities, GWB would ensure that all projects reach their greatest potential by incorporating a variety of underlying elements that improve environmental health and wellness (airborne carbon reduction, phyto-remediation, storm water retention) as well as promoting spin-off positive economic effects (i.e., increased property values and new investment) and abating looming pass-through costs (sewer capacity expansion).

On the ground projects in which GWB would take a lead role have not been specifically identified. However, the theme of public space as a way to connect communities with existing assets – i.e., the waterfront, newly renovated schools, collegiate and medical institutions (“eds & meds”), etc. – has resonated strongly amongst the group. Vacant lands, where formerly residential or commercial buildings stood, provide opportunities to reconfigure public space to make this goal a reality.

Groundwork Buffalo, if determined to be feasible, will serve as an umbrella organization for related Buffalo organizations, and will also develop and facilitate its own projects.

#### Action items

#### Person responsible

#### Deadline

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## **Agenda Item: The Steering Committee Charge**

### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

#### *Goals for the Steering Committee*

- To assist in shaping Groundwork Buffalo through the Feasibility Study planning effort: community needs and assets, organization and management, funding and resource development, launching strategies, and useful contacts.
- To ensure community priorities and needs are addressed.

#### *Meeting Schedule*

- The committee will meet every two months over the eight month planning process, approximately four times in total. The next meeting is scheduled for July 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### *Tasks*

- Review proposed Goals and Priorities.
- Review the work of The Urban Design Project.
- Assist with background information gathering.
  - Initial data collection.
  - Assets and needs of the community.
  - Priority project types and locations for Groundwork Buffalo.
  - Challenges for Groundwork Buffalo
- Assist with creating a list of potential stakeholders, funders, clients, board members, advisors, and contact organizations.

#### *General Composition*

- All interested community and environmental organizations are welcome to participate.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
The Steering Committee should email The Urban Design Project (Jajean <a href="mailto:jr58@buffalo.edu">jr58@buffalo.edu</a> ) other potential Steering Committee members names and contact info.	Steering Committee members	

## Deadline

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## Agenda item: Who Else Should Be Involved?

### Discussion and Conclusions:

#### *Existing Organization Sectors*

- Community gardens, urban agriculture, urban forestry, and food security
- Economic justice and community development - poverty, employment, education, training, businesses development, youth issues.
- Housing and community revitalization - vacancy, brownfields, demolition, transportation
- Green infrastructure - trees, water (stormwater), habitat, waste and recycling, parks, recreation.
- Governance

#### *30 Year Vision for Buffalo*

- Conservation
  - Self ownership and increased awareness of water conservation.
  - Taking land conservation seriously.
- Sustainability at the neighborhood level.
  - Localized agriculture.
  - Food, water, and work in one neighborhood.
  - Small businesses, improved local economy.
  - Highways disappear and are replaced by more sustainable transportation systems.
  - Reverse from over-vacant and under-parked, with more private ownership of vacant land.
- Social and Economic Changes
  - Family and social structures continue to change; communities become more integrated, multi-generational.
  - New jobs, sustainable jobs.
  - Fixed Buffalo Public Schools. Currently, there are no neighborhood schools because of the busing system.
  - Do we plan for the people who are here now, or for people we think might be coming (population growth)?

#### *Ideas for Additional Groups or People*

- Mary Rossy from Erie County
- Black Rock GNPA
- South Buffalo organizations
- Denise Herkey-Jarosch
- Niagara Greenspace Consortium
- Scott Weber from UB

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
The Steering Committee should email The Urban Design Project (Jajean <a href="mailto:jr58@buffalo.edu">jr58@buffalo.edu</a> ) other potential Steering Committee members names and contact info.	Steering Committee members	

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**Agenda item: Next Steering Committee Meeting**

**Discussion and Conclusions:**

The next Steering Committee meeting is July 8<sup>th</sup> at 9am at the CFGB.

**Action items**

**Person responsible**

**Deadline**

# Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

Steering Committee Meeting

July 8, 2008

8:30 AM

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

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**Steering Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ Julie Barrett O'Neill
- ☐ Justin Booth

- ☐ John Fell
- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein
- ☐ Laura Quebral Fulton
- ☐ Micaela Shapiro-Shellaby

- ☐ Brenda Young

**Guests**

- ☐ Jim O'Connell

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajean Rose-Burney
  - ☐ Lynda Schneekloth
  - ☐ Bill Smith
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## Agenda

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**Agenda**

1. INTRODUCTION  
RFQ Committee - Anthony Armstrong, LISC  
Jim O'Connell, National Park Service
2. UPDATE ON PROGRESS  
Urban Design Project: Lynda Schneekloth, Jajean Burney, Bill Smith
  - Wiki Site – [www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.org](http://www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.org)
  - Groundwork Trust Precedents
  - Buffalo Plans Review
    - Structure of Analysis
    - List of Plans
  - Organizational Overview
    - List of Organizations
    - Data Collection
      - Interviews and Web research
      - Survey
      - Focus Groups - Structure and Proposed Dates
    - Analysis (proposed structure)
  - Mapping
3. REPORT PREPARATION  
Assets and Needs Analysis Chapter: Proposed Outline
4. NEXT STEPS  
Steering Committee and others: Complete the survey; attend focus groups; add plans.  
UDP: Draft Precedents and Assets/Needs Chapters; continue with data analysis  
Next Meeting: September 16<sup>th</sup>?

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## Summary

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### Agenda Item: Introduction

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

The Steering Committee meeting began with an introduction from Anthony Armstrong (LISC).

Jim O'Connell from the National Park Service (NPS) gave an overview of the history of Groundwork Trusts in the United States, including their purpose and how the program was started.

The potential for Groundwork Buffalo was also described by Jim O'Connell.

- Buffalo is a great example of a city in which a Groundwork Trust can fill a need.
- EPA funding for Groundwork Trusts is dependent upon the political climate of the year. The amount of funding varies each year, has not been decided yet for this year, and may impact a potential Groundwork Buffalo.

#### Action items

#### Person responsible

#### Deadline

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### Agenda Item: Update on Progress

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

##### *Wiki Site*

The capabilities of the online wiki site were discussed. Currently, the site is publically accessible and editable by all Steering Committee members. The site has the following:

- Discussion space
- Steering Committee members and their organization's Website links
- Electronic versions of Buffalo plan documents
- Meeting material (agendas, summaries, reports)

The site will be updated continuously with work in progress.

### *Groundwork Trust Precedents*

A precedent study of other Groundwork Trusts will be completed as part of the Feasibility Study. The precedent study will include information regarding:

- General background
- Projects and programming
- Organization and management
- Funding and resources
- Launching strategies
- Opportunities and challenges

Groundwork organizations that are in similar cities as Buffalo should be researched first. These include:

- Lawrence, MA
- Milwaukee, WI
- Yonkers, NY

### *Buffalo Plans Review*

Over 20 planning documents relating to the Groundwork Feasibility Study have been analyzed. Each document has been summarized, with the most relevant information documented. These plans were compared in order to look for major gaps in planning work. Several additional plans that should be included in the study are listed below:

- Remedial Action Plans
  - Scajaquada Creek Watershed Management Plan
  - Habitat Inventory for the Buffalo River
  - Buffalo River Greenway Plan
-

- Buffalo Greenway Implementation Plan
- City Comprehensive Plan
- Buffalo Sewer Authority Planning and Comments
- Black Rock Riverside GNPA planning
- Seneca Street Revitalization Plan
- Larkin District Plan
- Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper projects (recent grants)

A few comments regarding the analysis of these plans included:

- The plans should be categorized by whether or not they have been adopted.
- How should job training and youth development planning be included in the analysis? Although the focus of planning work has been on vacant land, brownfields, and the environment, job training (Green Gold for example) captures people's attention and energy.
- Additional plans that have been overlooked should be submitted by the Steering Committee.

### Organizational Overview

Over 70 organizations from Buffalo relating to the Groundwork Feasibility Study have been included in data collection. Research about these organizations is meant to determine the types of organizations that exist in Buffalo related to Groundwork; who is doing what (programs, projects, plans), their capacity and size, funding sources, and partnerships. This will help determine how a Groundwork Buffalo will best fit in and add value. Summary tables for each organization will be created to help with this analysis. Research methods for data collection include:

- Web research
- Phone interviews
- The survey
- Focus groups

Additional organizations that should be included are:

- Buffalo Green Fund

Attendees of the meeting were asked to identify the type of organization they represent, and identify other organizations they may know about, using focus group categories developed from preliminary research. Below are the results of this task in two tables. There were also a few comments regarding the categories:

- Biking is a form of alternative transportation, not just recreation.
- Green infrastructure should not be defined anthropocentrically.
- Fish and wildlife should be considered part of food security.

Steering Committee	Historic and Cultural Resources	Gardens, Agriculture, Food Security	Green Infrastructure and Recreation	Land Redevelopment	Social and Economic Justice	Community Services	Community Organizing and Advocacy	General Planning and Policy Making
Board of Block Clubs*								
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper	x	x	x	x		x	x	
Buffalo PD								
Buffalo Urban Development Corp.								
City of Buffalo, Strategic Planning	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Coalition for Economic Justice								
Community Action Organization								
Community Foundation for greater Buffalo								
Daemen College	x			x		x		
ECIDA								
Fix Buffalo								
Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo	x		x				x	
Great Lakes United								
Green Options Buffalo		x		x	x	x	x	
Group Ministries								
Keep WNY Beautiful	x	x		x	x	x		
LISC			x					
Massachusetts Avenue Project								
National Parks Service								
Olmsted Parks Conservancy								
VOICE Buffalo								
Wellness Institute		x		x	x	x	x	

\* The Buffalo Board of Block Clubs will be used to help contact block club leaders from throughout the city



## Other Organizations

	Historic and Cultural Resources	Gardens, Agriculture, Food Security	Green Infrastructure and Recreation	Land Redevelopment	Social and Economic Justice	Community Services	Community Justice	General Planning and Policy Making
Adam Maczewski Library	x							
Black Chamber of Commerce								
Broadway Area Business Association								
Broadway Area Business Association								
Broadway Fillmore NHS								
Broadway Market Management Corporation								
Buffalo Green Fund								
Buffalo Microparks		x	x					
Buffalo ReUse			x	x				
Central Terminal Restoration Corp.								
Citizens Campaign for the Environment								
Citizens' Environmental Coalition		x					x	
Clinton Bailey Community Association								
Corpus Christy Church								
Dulski Center								
EastSide Neighborhood Transformation Partnership								
Environmental Justice Action Group of Western New York								
Erie County Environmental Management Council	x	x	x				x	
First Hand Learning								
Gloria J. Parks Community Center								
Good Neighbor Planning Alliance (GNPA) **							x	
Hamlin Tax Payers Association								
Hickory Woods Homeowners for a Clean Environment, Inc.	x			x	x			
Hispanos Unidos de Buffalo, Inc.								
International League of Muslim Women								
Jefferson Ave - 50 Women with a Vision								
Jeremiah Partnership								
King Urban Life Center								
League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara								
LEWAC Associates of Western New York, Inc.								
Masten Block Club Coalition								
Matt Urban - Crescent Village Project								
MLK Jr. Park Steering Committee								
Mural Arts Project								
PUSH Buffalo			x	x		x	x	
Queen City Farm	x		x					
ReTree WNY	x	x		x	x	x		
RUN Buffalo								
Science Magnet School								
Science Museum								
Seneca Babcock Association								
Sierra Club Niagara Group								
St Lukes Mission of Mercy								
St. Stanislaus Church								
Street Synergy								
The Buffalo Lupus Project / Toxic Waste Lupus Coalition								
United Neighborhoods								
Walden Bailey Community Association								
We Care Buffalo								
West Side NHS								
YWCA Community Café								

\*\* The GNPA represent ten neighborhood organizations in the City of Buffalo

## Mapping

There are five categories of maps being produced, including:

- Base Maps
- Assets
- Challenges
- Demographics
- Plans/Organizations

Comments about the existing maps and new maps needed include:

- Show the underground route of the Scajaquada Creek.
- Show Buffalo sewer system maps.
- Add additional community gardens to the map.
- Add contaminated sites and remediated sites.

- Commute to work by mode of transportation.
- Put vacant, *in rem*, contaminated, and city owned property on one map.
- Add proposed city demolitions.
- Add marinas to green space maps.
- Reduce the size of the greenspace represented by the Erie Canal Harbor.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Begin Groundwork Precedent Study	UDP	
Respond to the survey	Steering Committee	7-14-08
Submit additional plans that need to be included	Steering Committee	7-18-08
Coordinate focus groups	UDP	

---

## Agenda Item: Report Preparation

### Discussion and Conclusions:

#### **Assets and Needs Analysis**

The first chapter of the Feasibility Study to be written is the assets and needs analysis. A preliminary summary of assets and needs were presented to the Steering Committee. These include:

#### Assets

- Many organizations
- Existing park systems and
- nature preserves
- Natural resources
- Available urban land
- Freshwater
- Central location
- Universities
- Architecture and history
- Affordable living

#### Needs

- Vacant and underutilized land
- Contamination and brownfields
- Lack of recreation/green space
- High levels of poverty and unemployment
- Connectivity between neighborhoods
- Connectivity between green spaces

Additional assets to be considered include:

- Good weather
- Central location (most recent Brookings report)
- Businesses (tourism, restoration economy)
- Sustainable power

Additional needs to be considered include:

- Lack of natural habitat areas
- Air and water pollution
- Crime
- Health problems

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Begin writing the Assets and Needs Chapter	UDP	7-18-08

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**Agenda item: Next Steering Committee Meeting**

**Discussion and Conclusions:**

The next Steering Committee meeting is Tuesday September 16, at 8:30 am at the CFGB.

**Action items**

**Person responsible**

**Deadline**

# Steering Committee Meeting Summary

## Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

Steering Committee Meeting

September 16, 2008

8:30 AM

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

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**Steering Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ Cheryl Bird
- ☐ Justin Booth

- ☐ John Fell
- ☐ David Hahn Baker
- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein
- ☐ Maureen Mayer

- ☐ Laura Quebral Fulton

**Guests**

- ☐ Jay McCarthy
- ☐ Jim O'Connell

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
  - ☐ Lynda Schneekloth
- 

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## Agenda

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**Agenda**

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BACKGROUND DATA COLLECTION PROGRESS
  - Groundwork Trust Precedents
  - Buffalo Plans Review
  - Organizational Overview
  - Mapping
3. THE FOCUS AREA – THE NEAR EAST SIDE
  - Justification
  - Overview of the Assets, Challenges and Opportunities
4. POTENTIAL PROJECTS
  - Discussion of potential Groundwork projects
5. RECENT AND UPCOMING MEETINGS
  - Working with the city
  - Open Space Technology
6. NEXT STEPS
  - The complete first draft by early November
  - Setting a date for the next steering committee meeting

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## Summary

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### **Agenda Item: Introduction**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

The Steering Committee meeting began with introductions from everyone present. The introduction included an overview of the role of a Groundwork Trust and the goal of the Feasibility Study.

- Role of Groundwork Trusts: Revitalizing underutilized and vacant land for environmental, community development, and economic development purposes.
- Goal of the Feasibility Study: Determining if a Groundwork Buffalo would be beneficial and sustainable.

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### **Agenda Item: Background data collection progress**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

An overview of the background data collection progress was presented to the Steering Committee. This included summaries of:

- Groundwork Trust Precedents
- Buffalo Plans Review
- Organizational Overview
- Mapping

#### ***Groundwork Trust Precedents***

Groundwork organizations that are in similar cities as Buffalo were researched. These include Lawrence, MA, Milwaukee, WI, and Yonkers, NY. Some of the more important findings include:

- Groundwork Yonkers is expanding regionally throughout the Hudson Valley.
- Each Groundwork Trust has found a niche in their community. Groundwork Milwaukee works closely with the county parks department since the parks department was decimated by budget cuts. Groundwork Lawrence work closely with the city and acts as an arm of the city's community organizing and planning department. Groundwork Yonkers works with a regional watershed coalition.
- Paid staff ranges from 4 to 9 employees. Volunteers are essential and come from local schools, neighborhoods, and service corps organizations.
- Budgets range from \$115,000 to \$875,000. The majority of funding for each Trust is from government grants and government service contracts.
- Major challenges include limited capacity and budgets.
- Opportunities include programs and fundraising related to climate change.

#### ***Buffalo Plans Review***

Over 20 planning documents relating to the Feasibility Study have been analyzed. Each document has been summarized, with the most relevant information documented. These plans were compared in order to look for major gaps in planning work. The plans were categorized by geographic scope, sponsoring party, and focus. Findings include:

- Half of the plans were city-wide in scope, while the rest were for smaller parts of the city.
- Local non-profits were the most common sponsoring party.
- Most of the plans focused on green infrastructure, land redevelopment, recreation, and community organizing.

#### ***Organizational Overview***

Over 70 organizations from Buffalo relating to the Feasibility Study have been included in data collection. Research methods for data collection include Web research, interviews, and a survey. Findings from the 34 survey responses include:

- 21 out 34 are non-profits
- 14 out of 21 are not affiliated (local/regional)
- 18 out of 24 have board of directors
- 11 out of 20 have paid staff

- 13 out of 34 receive donations
- 9 out of 34 receive funding from foundations
- 15 out of 35 receive funding from government grants

Findings regarding organizational focus from interviews, Websites, and surveys, include the following (the number of organizations with each focus):

- Community Organizing (15)
- Land Redevelopment (12)
- Community Services (12)
- Food Security (10)
- Social/Economic Justice (10)
- Community Gardens (9)
- Urban Agriculture (9)
- Green Infrastructure (7)
- Historic/Cultural Resource (7)
- Recreation (5)
- Planning/Policy (5)
- Transportation (1)

Discussion at the Steering Committee meeting included:

- The consultants should keep asking what is missing throughout the process.
- Community Action Organization (CAO) is working on lead poisoning issues and Harvard Farm, an urban agriculture project on Harvard Place.

### ***Mapping***

There are five categories of city-wide and focus area maps including:

- Base Maps
- Assets
- Challenges
- Demographics
- Plans/Organizations

<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Post the Groundwork Trust precedent study to the wiki.	UDP	ASAP
Resend the survey and close the survey by the end of September.	UDP	Complete

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### **Agenda Item: The Focus Area – The Near East Side**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

An initial focus area was identified based upon meetings with the RFQ Committee and the city. This focus area is known as the near East Side. It is bounded to the west by Main Street, to the north and east by the Kensington Expressway, and to the south by North Street. Groundwork will work throughout the entire city, and expand into other focus areas over time. The discussion about the focus area included the following:

#### ***Justification for the Focus Area***

- It is adjacent to strong West Side markets.
- It has strong institutional anchors (Canisius College)
- It has assets and challenges that Groundwork can address.
- The city has designated it a neighborhood revitalization strategy area.
- There are opportunities for preserving and creating green spaces before the area becomes completely redeveloped.

#### ***Focus Area Assets***

Assets include:

- Strong neighborhoods
- Community organizations
- Educational institutions

- Green spaces and parks

Designations include:

- Hamlin Park Historic District
- Hamlin Park Neighborhood of Choice
- Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area
- CARE retail area

Planning Framework:

- Masten District Neighborhood Plan
- The Olmsted City
- Organic Revitalization
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

### ***Focus Area Challenges***

Challenges include:

- Contaminated land
- Vacant land
- Vacant housing
- Inrem housing
- Low educational attainment
- High unemployment
- High poverty rates

The Steering Committee agreed that the focus area was a good place for Groundwork Buffalo to start work because of the assets, challenges and opportunities. Discussion of the focus area included:

- The city will be investing 1 million dollars in Hamlin Park for streetscape improvements. Hamlin Park residents are well organized and have a readiness to move forward on projects. School 74 and the Boys and Girls Clubs in Hamlin Park should be included as assets. The Wellness Institute is working with children at school 74 on healthy lifestyle programs.
- The Steering Committee urged the Groundwork organizers to begin involving residents and organizations from the focus area to determine their interest level in a Groundwork Trust.
- The Steering Committee suggested that assets and opportunities immediately surrounding the focus area be considered, including Harvard Farm and the Community Action Organization, and possibly expanding the focus area border to include the certain blocks on the west side of Main Street.

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## **Agenda item: Potential Projects**

### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

#### ***Opportunities***

Several opportunities for projects and programs were discussed. They include:

- Coordinating community leadership – There are many organizations working within the focus area. Groundwork can help coordinate efforts of these organizations.
  - Stormwater management – There are many opportunities for innovative stormwater management projects in the focus area. Tree plantings, rain gardens, and rainwater retention are just a few ideas.
  - Daylighting the Scajaquada Creek – Daylighting the Scajaquada Creek can provide green space and recreation opportunities. It can also be part of a stormwater management strategy.
  - Greening vacant land near schools – Many of the schools in the focus area have nearby vacant land that can be reused for various types of green space and educational programs. The Wellness Institute is currently working with the Hamlin Park public school on several healthy lifestyle grant funded programs. Other relationships can be formed between Groundwork and these schools.
  - Greening public streets – Many of the public streets in the focus area represent greening opportunities. The streets can be redesigned as green connections between other existing assets, innovative stormwater management areas, traffic calming, and to provide play/recreation space pedestrian/bicycling space.
  - Environmental justice cleanup and redevelopment – There are several contaminated sites in the focus area, as well as a few remediated sites. The remediated sites may be good locations for redevelopment. The environmental justice action
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group is a good source of information about contaminated sites in the focus area.

### **Challenges**

- The Steering Committee discussed the fact that there may be differences between what the community wants and what the city wants.
- In order to gain the trust of the community, Groundwork will have to be a grassroots effort. Projects will have to be able to demonstrate positive impacts for community residents. The community will need to be involved throughout the process.

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### **Agenda item: Recent and Upcoming Meetings**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

#### ***Meeting with the city***

The Groundwork consultants and members of the RFQ Committee recently met with officials from the City of Buffalo, including representatives of the Office of Strategic Planning and the Mayor's office. These officials were supportive of the Groundwork effort as well as the identification of the near East Side focus area. They asked Groundwork organizers to include them in reviews of the draft Feasibility Study. They also suggested that the city would like to see implementable projects result from the Feasibility Study.

#### ***Upcoming Community Forum (Open Space Technology Meeting)***

The City of Buffalo is organizing two meetings in early October – “How Can We Maximize the Local Economic and Social Capital Impacts of Buffalo's Vacant and Abandoned Residential Properties?” to be held on the near East side.

Groundwork Buffalo should co-sponsor the community forum – it covers the area we have selected as our proposed focus area for the Feasibility Study. Steering Committee members are encouraged to attend, making a case for the interests concerning Groundwork Buffalo as well as representing your own organizations. The forum is open to the community, and is being held at the Belmont Shelter Corporation at 1195 Main Street. It is a two day event. An orientation session will take place on Tuesday October 7th from 6-8pm, and a working session will take place on Thursday October 9th from 6-9pm.

<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Attend the upcoming community forum	Steering Committee	Oct 7+9
Seek co-sponsorship	UDP	Complete

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### **Agenda item: Next Steps**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

The first draft of the Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study will be complete by early November. The consultant team will have approximately 1 month to revise the draft based upon Steering Committee comments.

<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Schedule the next Steering Committee meeting.	UDP	ASAP



# Steering Committee Meeting Summary

## Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study

Steering Committee Meeting

November 12, 2008

8:30 AM

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

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### Steering Committee

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ Kerri Bentkowski
- ☐ Kirk Laubenstein

☐ Laura Quebral Fulton

### Guests

- ☐ Jim O'Connell
- ☐ Ivan Lee

### Urban Design Project

- ☐ Jajean Rose-Burney
  - ☐ Lynda Schneekloth
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## Agenda

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1. INTRODUCTION
2. FEASIBILITY STUDY PROGRESS
  - Review Table of Contents and request for review
3. DISCUSISON OF PROPOSED INITIAL PROJECT INITIATIVES
  - Overview of general issues and three ideas for initial projects
  - PROPOSAL REVIEW: Discussion about the three proposals:
    - Strengths and weaknesses
    - Ideas for modification
    - The role of Groundwork Buffalo
    - Potential partners
    - Funding opportunities
4. Other Issues
  - *In Rem* Properties
  - Board of Directors
  - Additional Funding Opportunities
  - Launching Strategies
5. THE NEXT STEPS – Jim O'Connell (NPS)

## Summary

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### Agenda Item: Introduction

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

The Steering Committee meeting began with introductions from the consultants at the Urban Design Project. Jajeon Rose-Burney from the Urban Design Project attended the 2008 Groundwork USA Assembly in Milwaukee Wisconsin from October 15-18. He reported several important findings regarding the Feasibility Study. They include:

- **Brownfields** - The Feasibility Study must highlight potential brownfield related projects. The EPA has recently cut funding for the Groundwork program. Groundwork USA feels that in order to maintain funding levels from the EPA, or increase them in the future, the individual Groundworks need to focus on brownfield projects, large or small.
- **Funding** - The Feasibility Study must identify and quantify specific funding sources for potential projects. In order for Groundwork Buffalo to be successful, it must be able to sustain itself financially. There have been a few recent failed Groundwork trusts for financial reasons. Because of these failings, Groundwork USA is more cautious about approving new start ups.
- **Organizational overlap** - The Feasibility Study must demonstrate the need for a Groundwork trust in Buffalo. This goes without saying, but Groundwork USA was concerned that there are already several "greening" organizations in Buffalo, and that Groundwork may be competing with these organizations. Our work shows that these organizations are interested in collaboration with Groundwork, as evidenced by their participation on the Steering Committee.

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### Agenda Item: Feasibility Study Progress

#### Discussion and Conclusions:

A complete first draft of the Feasibility Study was prepared for review. The draft was sent to the entire Steering Committee and posted to the wiki site ([www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com](http://www.groundworkbuffalo.wikispaces.com)). The Steering Committee was asked to review the draft, and send comments to Jajeon ([jr58@buffalo.edu](mailto:jr58@buffalo.edu)) by Wednesday, November 19.

#### Action items

Review and comment on the draft.

#### Person responsible

Steering Committee

#### Deadline

11/19/08

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**Agenda Item: Proposed Initial Project Initiatives****Discussion and Conclusions:*****Vacant Property and Brownfield Conversions***

Groundwork Buffalo should work within a small segment of the focus area on a property-by-property strategy that could include various forms of green infrastructure on vacant land. The initial location for this strategy can be the neighborhoods surrounding Artspace, including City Honors and Performing Arts (BAVPA). Discussion included:

- This project proposal leads to other greening projects, including urban farms and stormwater management projects.
- The types of projects Groundwork Buffalo can work on will depend on the skill sets of the staff of Groundwork Buffalo.
- Buffalo ReUse is working to develop youth and job training programs. Groundwork Buffalo does not have to duplicate these programs, but can work with partners like Buffalo ReUse.

***Urban Farm***

Vacant land in the focus area can be reused for urban farming. Discussion included:

- Groundwork Buffalo's role may not be managing the urban farm. Instead, Groundwork Buffalo would facilitate the creation of a separate organization to manage the farm, work with the City to find an appropriate location, organize neighborhood residents and organizations, and help the urban farm develop a business strategy and find markets. The individuals interested in farming may not be the same people that can facilitate the creation of an urban farm, and may not have the skills required to do both.
- Some Steering Committee members felt Groundwork Buffalo could actually manage the farm, and that it will not be enough to act as an intermediary.
- Curbside Croft should be considered a potential partner on the urban farm project.

***Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Management***

Groundwork Buffalo should work to use green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, bioswales, and constructed wetlands to reduce the amount of stormwater entering storm sewers and combined sewer overflows. Discussion included:

- Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper feels that most greening projects can have stormwater components. Collaboration with Groundwork Buffalo would be mutually beneficial. Matching resources and collaboration can help leverage additional funding for both organizations. The stormwater problem in the city is so great that some duplication of projects is desired.

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**Agenda Item: Other Issues****Discussion and Conclusions:*****Collaboration***

- Groundwork Buffalo can work to develop projects that are close to being implemented but need a catalyst to "push it over the edge." Groundwork Buffalo may not have the capacity initially to start projects that have no existing momentum.
- Groundwork Buffalo can develop criteria to determine whether or not to work on an existing initiative.
- Some existing organizations with existing project initiatives include:
  - Martin Luther King, Jr. Park community association.
  - 50 Women with a Vision.
- Partnership for the Public Good is a potential partner.

***Funding***

Additional funding opportunities include:

- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation grants.
- Environmental justice grants.
- Corporate donations

***Launching Strategies***

- Groundwork Buffalo may launch by convening all organizations within the focus area working on greening projects.
- Groundwork Buffalo should complete an easy, small project first.
- Groundwork Buffalo needs to establish a relationship with the City to help make land use decisions in the focus area that are more in line with Groundwork's mission of greening vacant land. This includes decisions regarding city properties and *in rem* properties.

- Groundwork Buffalo will need to get buy-in from city government, including local Council members.

### **Board of Directors**

As a non-profit, Groundwork Buffalo will need to have a Board of Directors. Often, Steering Committee members from Groundwork Trust Feasibility Studies transition into a Board of Directors. Groundwork Buffalo's Board of directors could comprise of:

- 4 Steering Committee members.
- 4 focus area neighborhood representatives.
- 4 people who are technical experts, City representatives, or have access to fundraising resources.
  - Some Steering Committee members are also neighborhood representatives, technical experts, city representatives, and have access to resources.
  - Representatives from private foundations may help Groundwork Buffalo access more resources.

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### **Agenda Item: Next Steps**

#### **Discussion and Conclusions:**

Jim O'Connell from the National Park Service described the next steps in the Feasibility Study process. These next steps include:

- Getting the city to sign on to the Feasibility Study. This includes the cooperative agreement and the dedication of funds.
- Getting approval from the National Park Service and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Getting approval from groundwork USA.
- Receive funding for Groundwork Buffalo's start-up.
  - The conduit for this funding does not have to be the city. It can be LISC, CFGB, or another existing organization, although the city is preferred.

<b>Action items</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Meet with the City	UDP	ASAP
Schedule a Steering Committee meeting in December	UDP	ASAP

# DRAFT Groundwork Buffalo Feasibility Study – Meeting Summary

RFQ Committee Meeting

November 25, 2008

8:30 AM

901 City Hall

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**RFQ Committee**

- ☐ Anthony Armstrong
- ☐ Ivan Lee

- ☐ Brian Dold
- ☐ Kirk Laubensteinl
- ☐ Kerri Bentkowski

**Urban Design Project**

- ☐ Jajeane Rose-Burney
- ☐ Lynda Schneekloth

- ☐ Taryn Weaver
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## **Agenda**

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**Agenda**

1. Update on Meeting with the City
2. Review Feasibility Study Content
3. Discussion-
  - a. Updated Initial Project Proposal
  - b. Organizational Structure-Board of Directors
  - c. Funding Strategies-Proposed Budget
4. Next Steps
  - a. Feasibility Study Submission Schedule

# Minutes

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## Discussion

### **Updated Initial Project Proposal**

- Lynda described the final project proposal. Doug Evans from EPA has many questions about the urban farm as an initial project and so it was taken out except as a future project. By taking out the farm, it left vacant properties as the number one priority and a subarea selected between Best, W. Ferry, Main and Masten. . Groundwork USA suggests a demonstration project the first year and it was suggested that ArtSpace would be a good beginning. If more funding becomes available (the City was requested to provide an additional \$75,000 for implementation), Groundwork Buffalo could do between 5 and 10 properties during 2009The final table of contents was passed out and most comments were that it was easy to read and that overall the most significant change was that Chapter five was revised. Ideas were to work with the MLK Coalition to synergize with the groundwork voice.
- Overall comments on the plan proposal were to make sure that groundwork did not overtake already existing efforts in the neighborhoods, but rather create a better management to boost success. Other comments were to address enough lots at once to show the commitment towards the whole area.

### **Organizational Structure: Board of Directors**

- The board would have to be made up of: 4 neighborhood members, 4 professional members and 4 of the steering committee members.
- A question was if the final proposal would need the list of potential candidates, even though it was not mentioned during the revisions of the document.
- Candidates could be people from the following organizations:
  - ArtSpace
  - RiverKeeper
  - Buffalo ReUse
  - GreenGold
  - M&T Bank (possibly the manager of the one in the neighborhood)
  - Hamlin Tax. Occ.
  - Canisus
  - Grass Roots Garden
  - MAP
  - Muesum of Science
  - BOPC
  - Microparks

### **Funding Strategies-Proposed Budget**

- The budget was passed out and certain aspects were pointed out.
- Estimated cost of cleaning and greening one vacant lot would be around \$3,000
- If there was interest in putting in a rain garden, considering the professional help needed, estimated cost: \$10,000
- Breakdown was that without the City's help, we would estimate that it would cost around \$5,000/lot, Keeping in mind the funding for long-term maintenance would be around \$0.13/ft^2.
- Given the possibility of more funding from the city, the question was raised as to which budget should be sent. Schneekloth would ask for advice from Jim O'ConnellQuestions of who would be of interest for Executive Director, which would be a 9 month, full-time position in the first year, 12 month for the years to follow.

## Action items

## Person responsible

## Deadline

### **. Circulate email list of potential board members**

Ask Jim about which budget to include in proposal

Think about who would be of interest for Exec.

Director.

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**Agenda item: Next Steps**

**Discussion and Conclusions:**

***Submission Process:***

- The first week of December the document will be overviewed.
- Groundwork USA will also review, and will give a quick turnaround.
- Could possibly know by the end of January if the proposal was passed or not.
- There will be no meeting until January.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Email Lynda with any questions of concerns.		
Email photos of area projects to Jajeon.		