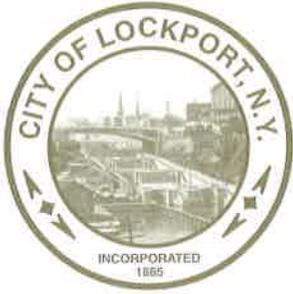


# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative



City of Lockport  
Planning and Development



# Office of the Mayor

Anne E. McCaffrey, Mayor



LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING

One Locks Plaza

Lockport, NY 14094

P: (716) 439-6665

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May 30, 2016  
Christopher Schoepflin  
Regional Director  
Empire State Development  
95 Perry Street, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

Re: Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Mr. Schoepflin:

As you know the City of Lockport takes an aggressive and thoughtful approach to economic development and downtown revitalization. Thanks in large part to our partnership with and support from Empire State Development, we have recently begun to see the fruits of many years of labor. Signature projects like Cornerstone CFCU Arena and the Flight of Five Locks restoration have created a buzz, and the private sector is taking notice as evidenced by the millions of dollars of investment Sinatra & Company and Iskalo Development have recently made and/or committed to in Lockport's downtown.

The City of Lockport is at a tipping point. Funding and technical support through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will allow us to capitalize on all of the recent positive activity, while significantly accelerating new programming to create and implement impactful development. I am certain that through DRI support, the City of Lockport will reach a point where market forces will begin to demand quality and sustainable development in and around our downtown, benefiting existing residents and business owners and leveraging new investment.

We have a strategic location on the Erie Canal, in the heart of Niagara County, and we have a compact downtown with tremendous character featuring many developable properties. We also have the organizational capacity and community support needed to make the most of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Lockport is a special place that is overcoming decades of struggle- the result of forces from without and within. I believe that Lockport's rebirth will need to follow suit. We have made the commitment as a community and we're making positive change from within - the Downtown Revitalization Initiative is the perfect outside force to accelerate the implementation of Lockport's vision as an increasingly vibrant, dense, walkable, and beautiful community.

Lockport would be proud to be nominated to represent Western New York and to demonstrate just how effective this program can be. I believe you will see that we are well positioned to be a standard bearer for the region, and I would be thrilled to work with other Western New York communities and share any and all lessons we learn through the DRI planning and implementation process.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne E. McCaffrey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Anne E. McCaffrey

Mayor



May 26, 2016

Christopher Schoepflin  
Regional Director  
Empire State Development  
95 Perry Street, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

Re: Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Mr. Schoepflin:

This letter is to notify the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council that the Greater Lockport Development Corporation is committing operational and organizational resources to the development and implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative should Downtown Lockport be nominated as the region's representative for the program. Our Board passed the following resolution this morning:

**Whereas, the City of Lockport is seeking nomination for the Department of State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative; and**

**Whereas, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation (GLDC) is a local development corporation with the mission of spurring economic development within the City of Lockport; and**

**Whereas, the GLDC has effectively implemented recent, significant economic development initiatives varying in size and scope;**

**Therefore, let it be resolved that the GLDC does hereby commit to allocating organizational resources, including, but not limited to, staff-time, operating funds, and project delivery funds for the development and ongoing implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative should Downtown Lockport be selected for the program.**

The Greater Lockport Development Corporation's mission and recent activities are in complete alignment with the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. We have been laying groundwork and implementing a vision that is perfectly attuned to Regional Council priorities and the goals and objectives outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. For these reasons, it is natural for the GLDC to take local ownership of the process, not only during the planning and implementation stages, but also in the years to come.

We look forward to the opportunity to work together through this process. Please feel free to let me know if you require any additional information about the City of Lockport, the GLDC, or this application.

Sincerely,

  
Joan Aul, Chairwoman

  
Brian Smith, President/CEO

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

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# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

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# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Basic Information

**Regional Economic Development Council:** Western New York

**Municipality Name:** City of Lockport

**Downtown Name:** Downtown Lockport

**County:** Niagara

**Point of Contact:** Brian M. Smith

**Title:** Director of Planning and Development

**Phone:** (716) 868-4441

**Email:** [bsmith@lockportny.gov](mailto:bsmith@lockportny.gov)

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## **Downtown Description:**

Downtown Lockport is a vibrant community rich with economic development assets that anchors the eastern end of Niagara County. Several recent economic development successes and ongoing impactful projects have built positive momentum in the City of Lockport and has Downtown Lockport trending in the right direction poised to make a serious comeback.

Downtown Lockport was originally formed in the early 1800s as a direct result of the Erie Canal and the series of locks built so the connecting waterway could navigate up and down the Niagara Escarpment. This engineering marvel, now known as the Flight of Five, created hydropower opportunities that fueled a surge in industry immediately adjacent to the locks and the canal.

Almost 100 years after the opening of the Erie Canal, another industrial giant, Harrison Radiator, would begin operating in Downtown Lockport. Even while industry throughout the Rust Belt began to decline in the mid-1900s, Harrison Radiator employed thousands of employees right in Lockport's downtown into the 1980s before building a new facility in the City's west end and slowly beginning to reduce employees.

For the next two decades, unable to accept that times were changing, Downtown Lockport declined. In 1998, however, the City of Lockport developed a comprehensive plan that outlined a new direction and renewed vision for the future of Lockport. The 480,000 square foot facility, a blighted reminder of industry that abandoned the City, was now seen as a tremendous asset to capitalize on. The Flight of Five locks, which Lockport was built around but had been in disrepair since more modern locks constructed in 1918 rendered them useless, were recognized as an Erie Canal heritage attraction that could drive tourism in Lockport.

Presently, the old Harrison Radiator plant, now called Harrison Place, is home to almost 50 businesses and approximately 225 employees. The Flight of Five has had two of its five locks fully restored, was named a "regional priority project" by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, and has been awarded a \$1.3 million grant through Empire State Development and a \$200,000 National Maritime Heritage grant through the National Park Service for the next phase of restoration. Teams of volunteers perform demonstrations of how the locks were operated in the 1800s for visitors and Erie Canal enthusiasts throughout the tourism season. To complement the established tourism season is Lockport, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, a state-of-the-art ice skating facility, was built in 2014 to continue to drive people to Downtown Lockport and has already been used for several tournaments drawing teams from across the globe.

These successes have demonstrated that Downtown Lockport is ripe for development and have driven private developer interest in downtown properties. In the last calendar year, Iskalo Development has

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

purchased two under-performing properties and just recently received planning board approval for the first investment into the buildings they will be making. Downtown Lockport has an inventory of vacant or underutilized properties that offers opportunities for mixed-uses that would breathe new life into the downtown. Lockport is a perfect candidate to demonstrate how public investment can leverage private investment and transform a city's downtown.

The success of these projects and new investments is crucial for the Lockport community because there are certainly areas that need improving. The neighborhoods closest to Downtown Lockport were hit the hardest when industry left. The City's poverty rate has risen to almost 20% and the poverty rate immediately surrounding downtown is 35%. The City of Lockport received a \$50,000 grant through the Office of Community Renewal to undertake a Community Needs Assessment to determine how to best connect unemployed and underemployed individuals to the new opportunities being created in Downtown Lockport.

Lockport has positioned itself and made the strategic investments necessary to begin immediate planning and implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Lockport has the tools for effective economic development, the need for improvement, the ability to administer major initiatives, and the pieces in place to ensure the benefit is felt by the entire community. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative would fast-track results with significant impacts on Downtown Lockport and beyond.



Sound economic development practices in Downtown Lockport have made significant positive changes. Pictured here is a photo of then Richmond Avenue in the 1990s compared to what is now Canal Street. The entire block was vacant and had serious environmental concerns.



Canal Street is now the site of the Lockport Community Market, Locktoberfest, and is the community events epicenter of Lockport. Iskalo Development just recently purchased 57 Canal Street (the largest building in each photo). Each building on Canal Street is now privately-owned.



Above is a rendering of 57 Canal Street Iskalo Development presented to the City of Lockport planning board earlier this year. A single vision and plan for economic development in Downtown Lockport and its effective implementation has built momentum and leveraged private investment that would have been inconceivable fifteen years ago (see top photo).

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Downtown Lockport



Attachment A: Map of Downtown Lockport

### **1. Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood**

Downtown Lockport is easily identifiable as a traditional downtown or central business district in Western New York. The boundary of downtown begins along South Transit Road at State Road and moves north before going west on West Genesee, north on Hawley, east on Park, north on North Transit, east on Ontario, north on Lock Street to the Falls Road Branch Line. The boundary then crosses the Erie Canal to Market Street, moves east along Union, south on Washburn, west on South Street, north on Pine Street, and west on Walnut back to South Transit. Parcels on either side of the boundary are considered to be Downtown Lockport.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 2. Size

At about 15 city blocks, the downtown is a compact central business district, but large enough that it includes a number of economic and community development assets that is sufficient to support a vibrant downtown year-round. These assets include: the Erie Canal Locks, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, a winery on the Niagara Wine Trail, Harrison Place, The Historic Palace Theatre, other cultural attractions like Lockside Art Center, and an inventory of underutilized or vacant mixed use properties with the potential to have an impact.

While the City of Lockport's population has been shrinking, the Town of Lockport, which surrounds the City, has doubled its population since 1970. Other nearby communities that would also consider Downtown Lockport its downtown, like Pendleton, Cambria, and Newfane, have all grown over the last 30 years. In addition, Downtown Lockport has an increased daytime population as it is an employment center in and of itself. As the seat of Niagara County, Downtown Lockport plays host to a number of municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations that employ many. Harrison Place, located right in Downtown Lockport, is now home to approximately 225 employees. Other nearby and highly accessible employment centers like the Transit corridor and the Lockport IDA Park are growing and Downtown Lockport would be the primary downtown for these employees as they decide where to eat, drink, shop, and live.

As trends change, individuals, especially young adults, are choosing to move to walkable downtowns rather than suburbs. Lockport is already on a path to become that downtown for eastern Niagara County. A successful DRI program, however, would accelerate that trend immensely by, among other things, filling the gap in housing opportunities in Downtown Lockport by utilizing the inventory of vacant or underperforming mixed-use properties to create apartment units for varying income levels, and capitalizing on the existing amenities within the confines of the downtown.

# Downtown Lockport

## Revitalization Initiative

### 3. Past Investments & Future Investment Potential

*Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.*

Downtown Lockport is positioned to build upon recent successful economic and community development projects and initiatives by leveraging existing local and regional assets, realizing the potential of underutilized mixed-use properties, meeting the need for market rate housing, and enhancing the historic resources along, and contributing to, the Erie Canal. All of which will incentivize additional public and private investment and ensure new initiatives extend to nearby neighborhoods. This will be accomplished by capitalizing on past and current planning activities and through close coordination with stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels.

Lockport is unique in that, for a relatively small community, the economic development assets it contains in its downtown rival much larger municipalities. The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council is intimately familiar with two of them, Lockport's historic Flight of Five Erie Canal locks and Cornerstone CFCU Arena, as both were named "regional priority projects." There are, however, others with the potential to impact downtown as significantly.

The Historic Palace Theatre, for example, anchors an important section of downtown. For many downtown neighborhoods in Western New York, their local community theatre is the only economic driver. In Lockport, it is just one of many quality economic development assets that can be improved upon and taken advantage of to enhance not just downtown, but the entire community.

A consistent vision for economic and community development has been formed around capitalizing on existing and under-performing assets in downtown Lockport. This vision was initiated in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, tweaked and improved in the 2005 Downtown Plan, and updated again in the 2010 Local Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. Most recently this vision has been enhanced through the process of designating Downtown Lockport as a Brownfield Opportunity Area in 2015. This sound method of economic development was recently recognized by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission by awarding Downtown Lockport the 2015 Erie Canalway Heritage Award of Excellence.

Downtown Lockport has a number of vacant or underutilized mixed-use properties that represent awesome, impactful development opportunities. Many of these properties are iconic, character buildings that could be utilized for a blend of affordable, market-rate, and luxury housing right in downtown. These buildings include the F&M Building, the Bewley Building, the Old Post Office, and Building 3 of Harrison Place, among others. Brief synopses of several of these have been provided following this section.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

In addition to having the stock of existing developable mixed-use properties, there is a demonstrated demand for market-rate housing in Downtown Lockport. In 2015, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the City of Lockport's economic development agency, commissioned GAR Associates to perform a market analysis on the feasibility of market rate apartments in downtown Lockport. The findings of this report identify a conservative demand for 154 new market-rate apartments in Downtown Lockport. In fact, the first key recommendation from the report is to, "Work with the existing physical inventory including vacant and underutilized buildings to create market rate housing." An executive summary of this report has been included as Attachment H (page 58).

This region has seen first-hand how the creation of downtown living units can transform a city. Downtown Lockport is the type of vibrant, walkable environment people are choosing to live in. The demand for market rate apartments in downtown has been demonstrated. There are less than 10 market rate apartments currently located in downtown. There is, however, an inventory of underutilized, iconic buildings that are primed for successful mixed-use redevelopment. Lockport is poised to capitalize on all of these factors and transform its downtown.

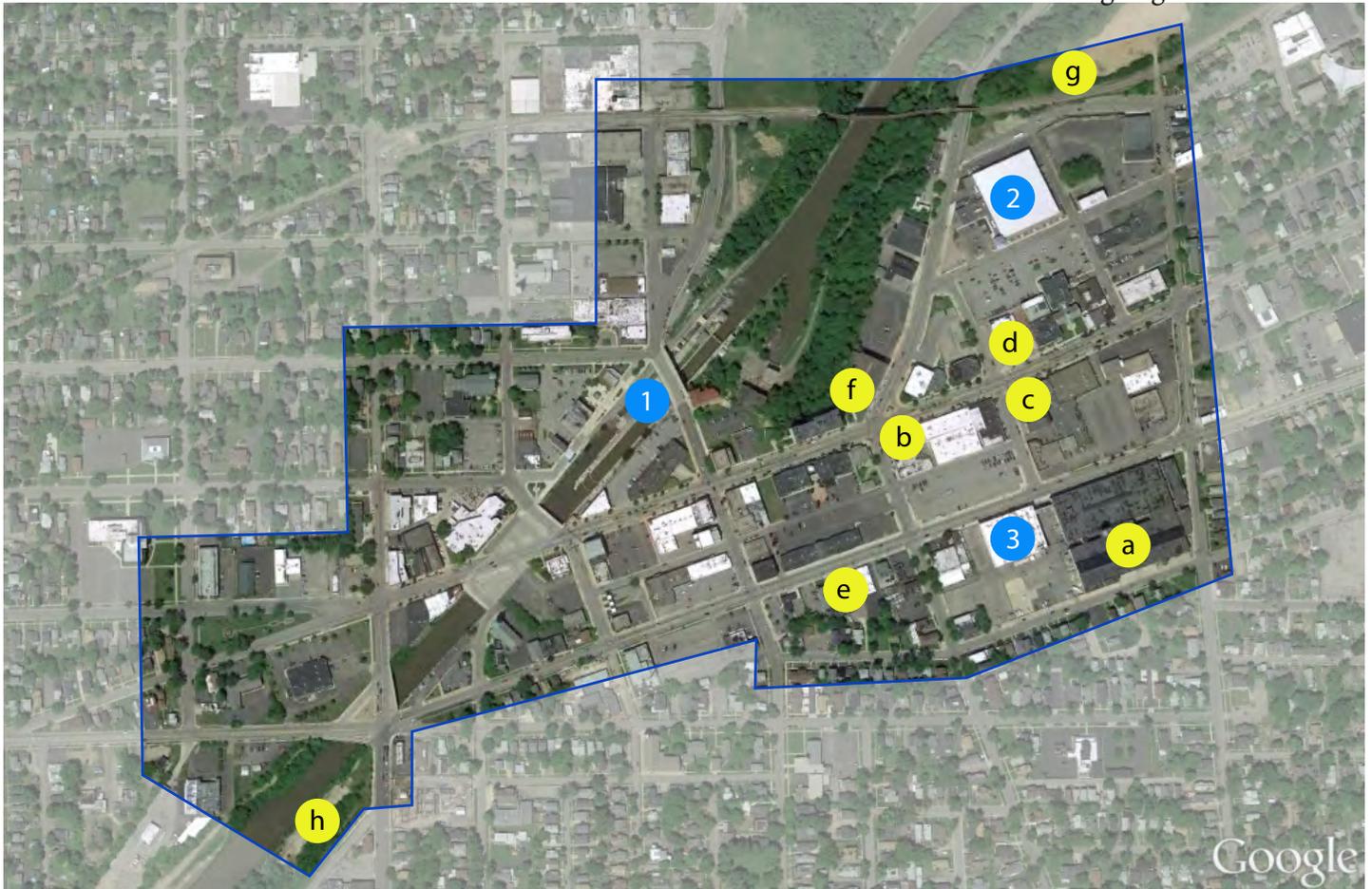
Lockport has demonstrated in recent years that it can deliver significant economic development initiatives that positively impact the community. Between Lockport's Community Development Department, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, and Lockport Main Street, the City of Lockport has the ability to effectively administer any economic development initiative. Built around vision, direction, and organizational capacity, the City of Lockport can capitalize on previous investments the WNY REDC has made in Lockport, with the Flight of Five and Cornerstone CFCU Arena, as well as other public investments such as capital improvements at Harrison Place and programmatic funding like Microenterprise programs to leverage future investments through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The City of Lockport is currently performing a Community Needs Assessment titled the "South Street Neighborhood Initiative" funded by a \$50,000 grant through the NYS Office of Community Renewal. The purpose of this assessment is to leverage the growing economic development assets nearby this neighborhood, located just outside of Downtown Lockport, for community development.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Recent and Future Investments

Attachment B: Key Properties  
Including Pages 9-21



Recent investments in three of the major local economic driving forces, the Flight of Five Locks, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, and Trek’s move to Harrison Place (labeled 1, 2 and 3 respectively) have positioned other projects in Downtown Lockport to take place. Pictured in the above map are a number of these projects including Building 3 at Harrison Place (a), the F&M Building (b), the Historic Palace Theatre (c), as well as others. The following pages highlight these investments and opportunities that a successful Downtown Revitalization Initiative would capitalize on and implement.

# 1. The Flight of Five Locks



The Flight of Five is the marquee tourism economic development project in the City of Lockport. In 2014, Phase I of the project was completed through a \$3 million grant through the Department of Transportation that was freed up by then House Representative Hochul. Also in 2014, the project was deemed a “regional priority project” and in 2015 was awarded \$1.3 million to begin Phase II of the project.

Once completed, the project is expected to draw 230,000 visitors annually. This project adds a legitimate new attraction to Western New York and will bring more people to the region and keep visitors here longer. While the recent investments and momentum have been tremendous for this project and the businesses nearby, funding to complete the project must be identified so the full benefit can be reached.

## 2. Cornerstone CFCU Arena

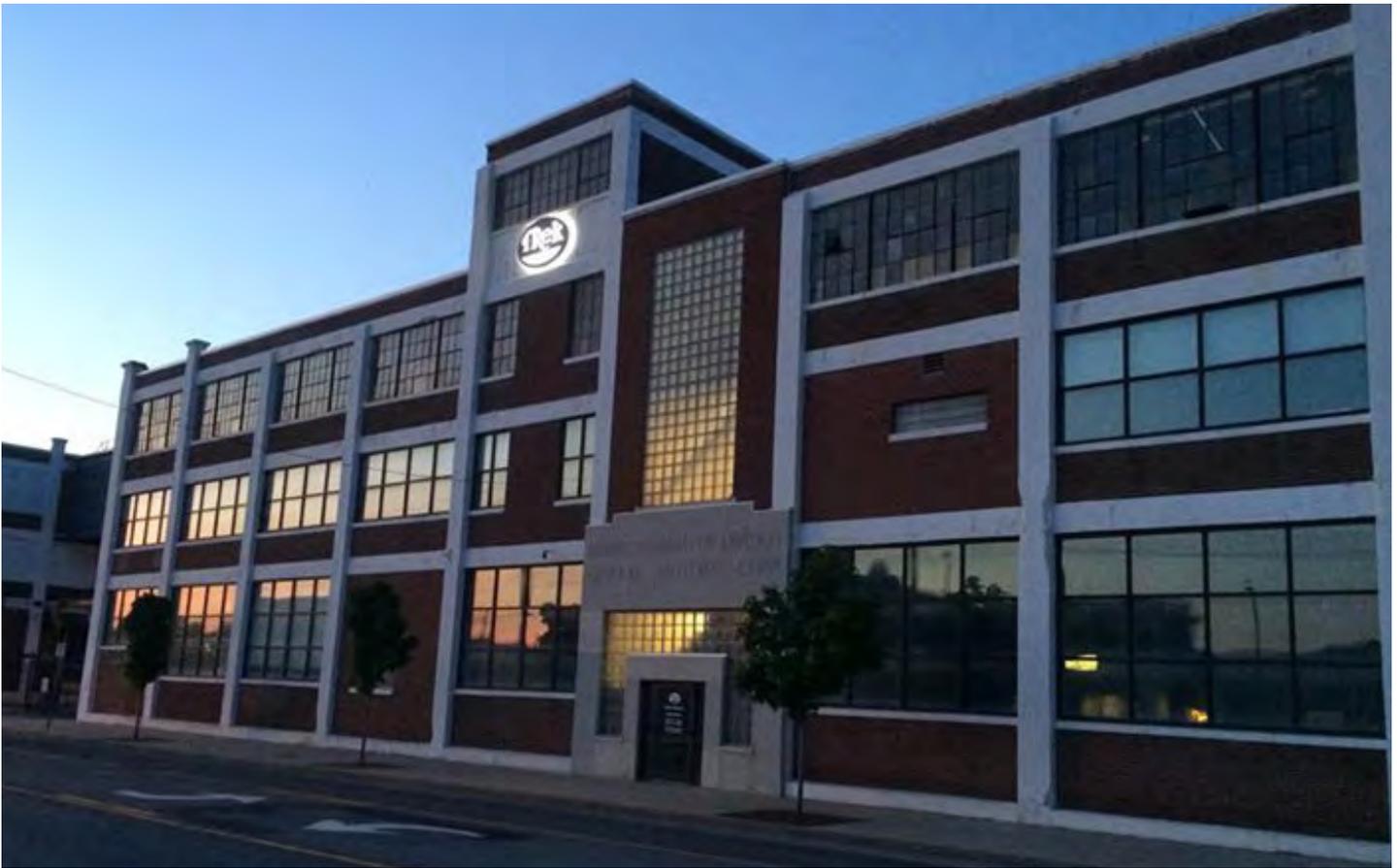


Cornerstone CFCU Arena is a state-of-the-art ice skating facility that has already had a noticeable impact on Downtown Lockport. Completed in 2014, the arena draws over 150,000 people each year. The project was named a “regional priority project” for the potential impact these new visitors can have on the Lockport community and beyond.

Already, the facility has hosted tournaments with teams from around the world. Cornerstone CFCU Arena has two Junior A hockey teams that compete with teams from around the region and the country. The Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation has booked tournaments at Cornerstone and the local businesses, especially restaurants, bars, and hotels, are benefiting from the events.

As the arena continues to grow its programs and events, the business community must find ways to continue to draw visitors out of the arena and into Downtown Lockport and throughout Western New York.

# 3. Harrison Place: Trek



Harrison Place now has 48 businesses and approximately 225 employees on the campus. Trek, Inc. located here in 2013 during a \$4 million renovation project that built out 48,000 square feet. In 2015, Trek expanded through a \$1 million project that now gives them 64,000 square feet of space in a once blighted and completely vacant structure in Downtown Lockport.

None of this would have ever been possible without the guidance of Tom Mancuso, who manages the GLDC-owned facility. While Trek is far and away the largest employer on the campus, many of the small businesses at Harrison Place have been success stories. As a WNY Innovation Hot Spot, Harrison Place continues to be an asset for entrepreneurs, and thus for Downtown Lockport, as new businesses and jobs start and are created here.

# a. Harrison Place: Building 3



Building 3 at Harrison Place is one of the most captivating properties in Downtown Lockport. At 140,000 square feet, the property offers opportunities for a year-round market, upper floor residential space, and a myriad of other uses throughout. It is the proposed home of the Lockport Works project, a collaborative effort between BOCES, Isaiah 61, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension, to make Downtown Lockport a workforce development hub for the region.

The property is owned by the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the City of Lockport's economic development agency, which has already committed funding to future projects at the site.

## b. The F&M Building



The F&M Building was the original Farmers and Manufacturers Bank before it later became Lockport Savings Bank and eventually First Niagara Bank. Now completely vacant, the architecturally significant structure is an iconic building that shapes Downtown Lockport and offers some of the greatest potential impact on the community if renovated and revitalized properly.

The F&M Building has tremendous views of Downtown Lockport, including the Bewley Building, and Toronto can even be seen on clear days. The property is in the heart of Downtown Lockport, Harrison Place is in walking distance, as is the bus stop for the NFTA and Rural Niagara Transportation. The highest and best use for the F&M Building is mixed-use with residential on the upper floors.

# c. The Palace Theatre



The Historic Palace Theatre sits 1,100 people and shows musicals, plays, and movies. It is also the site of many other types of events like weddings, debates, and stand-up comedy. The Palace is an economic driver in Downtown Lockport that can be enhanced to maximize its impact on the community.

The Palace is located in the heart of downtown, immediately across the street from the Old Post Office and very close to Cornerstone CFCU Arena. The building has two storefronts in addition to the entrance to the theatre. It also has to potential for upper floor apartments.

The board that governs The Palace, a nonprofit organization, is working to restore the interior of the theatre and secure funding for an expansion project that would allow the facility to host more events and bring even more people to Downtown Lockport.

## d. Old Post Office



The Old Post Office was on the market for over a year before Iskalo Development purchased it in 2015. The City of Lockport is pleased that it is the hands of a capable and established developer, however, the second and third floors remain vacant. The property is directly between two economic development anchors: The Palace and Cornerstone CFCU Arena.

The City badly wants to see properties such as the Old Post Office, the F&M Building, and others, redeveloped with residential units on the upper floors. Unfortunately, the math does not always work as far as justifying the construction costs associated with creating those units. The Greater Lockport Development Corporation commissioned a feasibility study to determine the demand for market-rate apartments in Downtown Lockport and the demand is indeed there. We need to find ways to incentivize the creation of apartment units, on a scale greater than the New York Main Street program currently does, so that the City can offer market-rate apartments for young professionals working in and around Downtown Lockport to consider.

# e. Tuscarora Club



The Tuscarora Club is owned by the Greater Lockport Development Corporation and is the prime location for a much-needed boutique hotel in Downtown Lockport identified in a report by Interim Hospitality Consultants that determined the demand for hotels in Lockport.

The GLDC is currently going through a feasibility study to estimate the cost of renovation and has committed funds to a rehabilitation project at the “T Club” should a buyer for the property not emerge.

# f. Bewley Building



The Bewley Building is another underutilized property in Downtown Lockport with the potential for mixed-uses. The first floor is primarily retail space, with office uses on the second and third floors. The fourth floor is largely vacant and the fifth floor is entirely vacant. These floors offer Erie Canal views and would be an excellent fit for residential units in the City's downtown.

# g. Dussualt Foundry Site



The Dussualt Foundry site is approximately 20 acres and has been completely remediated. Located along Union on the northern boundary of Downtown Lockport, the property is very close to Cornerstone CFCU Arena and has been the interest of a number of hoteliers. While no hoteliers have made any offers on the site, because it is city-owned, Lockport has the ability to control the site's destiny and ensure that any future developer shares in the City's vision for the site.

# h. 33 State Street Site



The State Street site is 5.5 acres along the Erie Canal and State Street at the southern boundary of Downtown Lockport. The waterfront property is City-owned and has been of interest for a signature mixed-use project including market rate apartments or a boutique hotel.

While the previously mentioned properties are the most often referenced for next important steps in Downtown Lockport, there are many others that would greatly benefit the community. A few of these projects are pictured here, with a more complete list attached in the Brownfield Opportunity Area attachment at the end of this application.



Infill development along Walnut, streetscaping improvement on the Pine Street Bridge, new pedestrian and bicycling trail connecting the Dussault Foundry Site to Market Street.



Improvements to Union Station, artistic enhancements to industrial structures such as Harrison Place, and traffic calming and pedestrian/bicycle pathways in difficult intersections like Lock Street.



The Niagara County-owned and vacant Niagara County Bank Building, rail connection to Niagara Falls and Medina, and properties like Kenzie's offer redevelopment opportunities and projects to capitalize on.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 4. Job Growth

*Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.*

Recent job growth within Downtown Lockport and at nearby employment centers is attracting young professionals to work in this area of the region. These individuals working in and around Downtown Lockport represent a demographic available to tap into to support existing businesses within the central business district and a market to support a sustainable, vibrant downtown.

Harrison Place, once derelict and vacant after Harrison Radiator left the property for new construction projects in the 1980s, is now home to almost 50 businesses that employ a total of approximately 225 individuals. The vast majority of these are employed by Trek, Inc., who located at Harrison Place, in part because of Downtown Lockport's proximity to the University at Buffalo's North Campus, in 2013 and just completed its first expansion project. Since 2015, a microenterprise program through the Office of Community Renewal has supported 11 new startups or expanding small businesses, most of which are located right in downtown, which has led to the creation of over 50 jobs. The diversity of these businesses, which ranges from a comic book store and bubble tea cafe to a machine job shop, creates a vibrant downtown attractive to individuals searching for a place to live and also offers a variety of jobs with varying levels of qualifications that are available for people to pursue.

Recent economic development projects, like the restoration of the Flight of Five and the presence of Cornerstone CFCU Arena, are driving thousands of visitors to Downtown Lockport that were not coming here even just two or three years ago. This additional foot traffic is not only supporting the existing businesses here, but also creating a demand for more and different new businesses. As Downtown Lockport continues to capitalize on the successes of those projects, more businesses will start up or expand to answer the new demand and jobs will be created offering new opportunities and adding to the vibrancy of downtown.

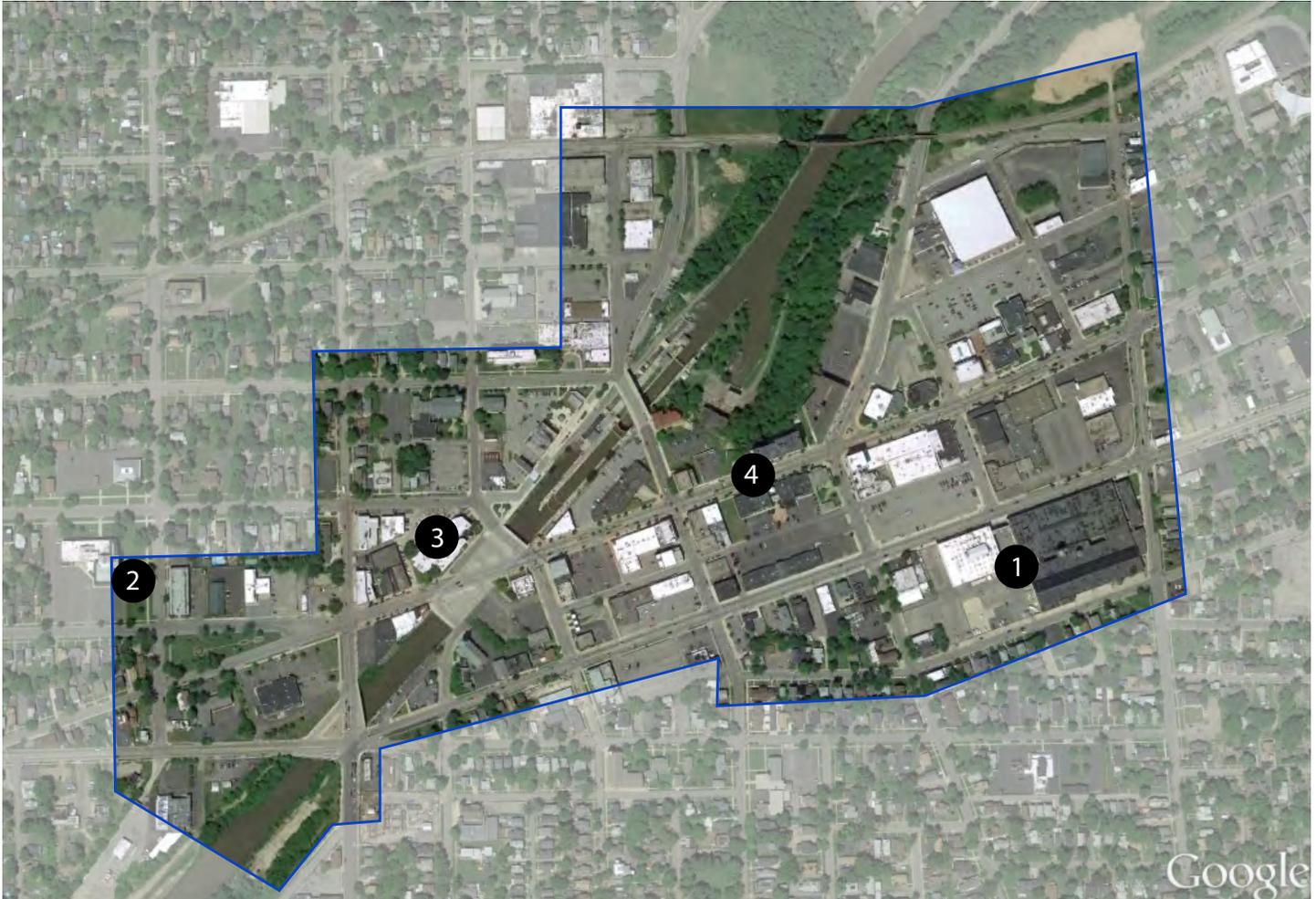
Both the Transit corridor and the Lockport IDA Park, two of the largest employment centers in Niagara County, along with Eastern Niagara Hospital and recent developments like the Yahoo facility and the New York Beer Project brewery, are in very close proximity to downtown- all of which are accessible via public transportation. The job opportunities at each of these employment centers makes Downtown Lockport a natural candidate for young adults and others who are hired to fill the positions created and are determining what their options are regarding where to live.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

The Lockport Tourism Focus Area Brownfield Opportunity Area nomination report states that five industry clusters were identified on which to target business recruitment efforts: tourism, advanced manufacturing, professional services/entrepreneurial networked professionals, healthcare, and urban agriculture/agribusiness. The report states these clusters were identified based upon synergies between target industry sectors and several indicator criterion, such as: location quotients; local presence; growth trends; and export industries. This section of the BOA has been included as an attachment to this application.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Employment Centers in Downtown Lockport

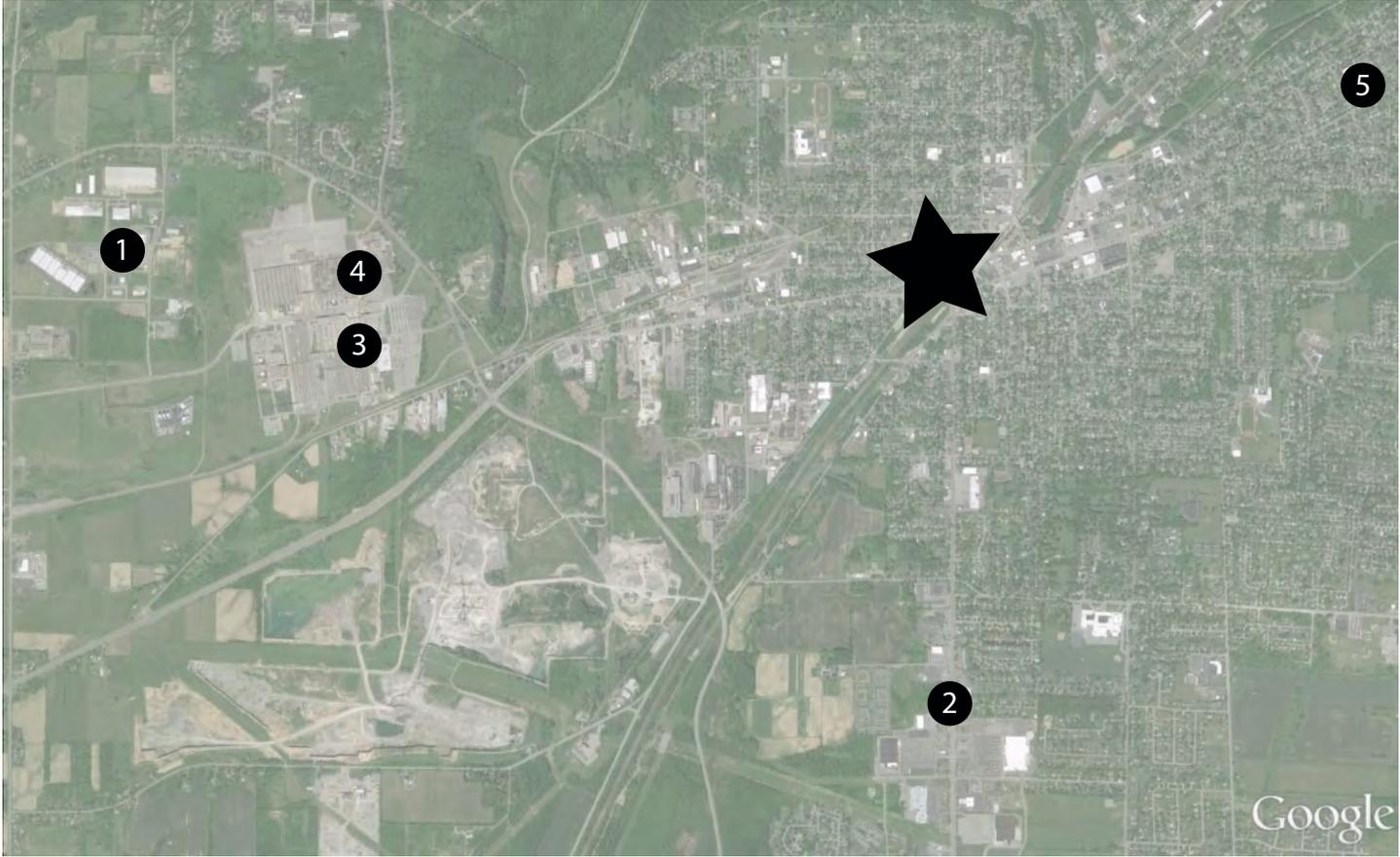


Attachment C: Map of Employment Centers  
in Downtown Lockport

1. There are 48 businesses located within Harrison Place, a 480,000 square foot campus with plenty of room to grow into. Approximately 225 employees work here.
2. The City of Lockport is the seat of Niagara County and the County employs an estimated 400 people in downtown.
3. The Lockport Municipal Building is located in downtown and employs over 200 individuals.
4. Downtown Lockport is an employment center in and of itself with over 200 businesses and other organizations located here ranging from a comic book store to machine job shops to workforce development organizations.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Employment Centers in Close Proximity to Downtown Lockport



Attachment D: Map of Employment Centers near Downtown Lockport

- 1. The Lockport IDA Park has been steadily growing over the last decade. The most notable business on the campus is Yahoo, which employs over 200 people.
- 2. The Transit Corridor is an important commercial strip in Niagara County where many national chains choose to locate.
- 3. & 4. General Motors and MAHLE (formerly Delphi) anchor the west end of Lockport and combine to employ almost 2000 people.
- 5. Eastern Niagara Hospital employs approximately 400 people.

# Downtown Lockport

## Revitalization Initiative

### 5. Attractiveness of the Downtown

*Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.*

Downtown Lockport has all the tools necessary to be an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of all ages and socioeconomic standing. It does, however, need support to enhance these tools to accelerate Downtown Lockport's development to reach its full potential.



A recent public art piece, titled Mural on Main, brought the City of Lockport's extensive but under the radar art scene out of the woodwork. Lake Effect Ice Cream's signature scoop shop is located along the Erie Canalway Trail on Canal Street.

One major component to the development of Downtown Lockport, and a tremendous asset to the community, is the inventory of vacant or underutilized mixed-use properties that could have a great contribution to the future of Lockport if their potential is reached (see pages 13-21). These are beautiful, historic, architecturally significant properties, located in a walkable community with lots of amenities, that young professionals are searching for when selecting where to live. As previously mentioned, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation conducted an apartment feasibility study that determined there is a significant demand for apartment units in the downtown. We have the demand, we have the stock, we just need to help spur the investment necessary to create new units so they are available for individuals searching for a place to live to locate to.

The current number of market-rate apartments in Downtown Lockport is in the single digits. Urban Park Towers, located at 77 Main Street in the city's downtown, is a 150 unit low-income housing property. With underachieving and vacant mixed-use properties that make intriguing prospects for residential units, and a demonstrated demand for new units in place, Downtown Lockport is in a position to greatly enhance the vibrancy of the community by bringing new apartments online that are geared towards those

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

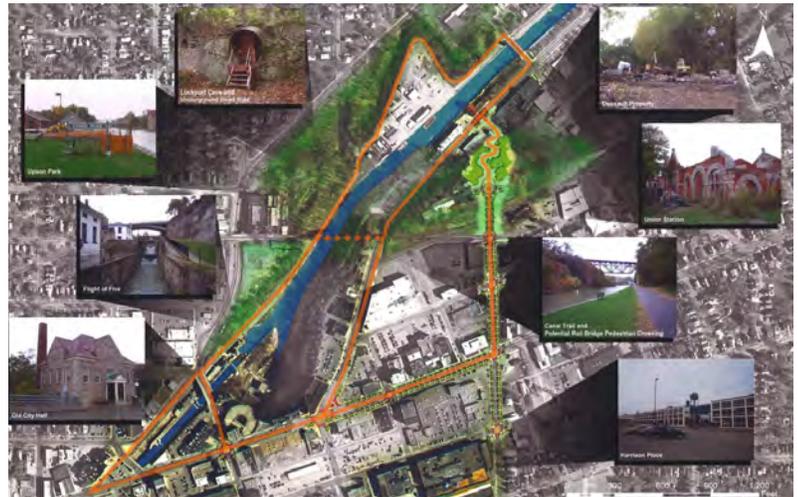
searching for market-rate, affordable, and even luxury residential units.

Another aspect that makes Downtown Lockport attractive is the commercial and retail businesses located here. People working or living in downtown can walk to an ice cream shop, a theatre, a winery, a comic book store, several restaurants and bars, a grocery store, an ice skating arena, two major regional tourist attractions, a public library, banks, churches, and professional services of a wide variety. Canal Street, formerly known as Richmond Avenue, has become an events center for the community. Currently, a “place-making” project called the Locks District Gateway Exhibit is being constructed on Canal Street that will contribute to the sense of place in Downtown Lockport along the Erie Canal. During the summer there is a farmers market located on Canal Street that offers the SNAP program, making affordable, healthy food easily accessible to the community in addition to Niagara Produce, the local downtown grocery store. The amenities not available in downtown, such as big box stores and chain restaurants, are accessible via public transportation along Transit Road that has a stop directly in the center of Downtown Lockport.

Downtown Lockport prides itself as being both walkable and bikeable. Complete streets that have sidewalks, on-street parking, car lanes, medians along Main Street/East Avenue (the main thoroughfare), and crosswalk infrastructure makes it safe for pedestrians and bicyclists alike to travel through the city. The Erie Canalway Trail runs directly through Downtown Lockport, creating a “green ribbon” of park space along the canal and connecting downtown to other local and regional amenities like Upson Park and Widewaters Marina in the City of Lockport, but also the Lockport Nature Trail in the Town of Lockport and a network of bike and



Lt. Governor Hochul and Mayor McCaffrey ride their bikes on the newly completed section of the Erie Canalway Trail after a ribbon cutting this past April.

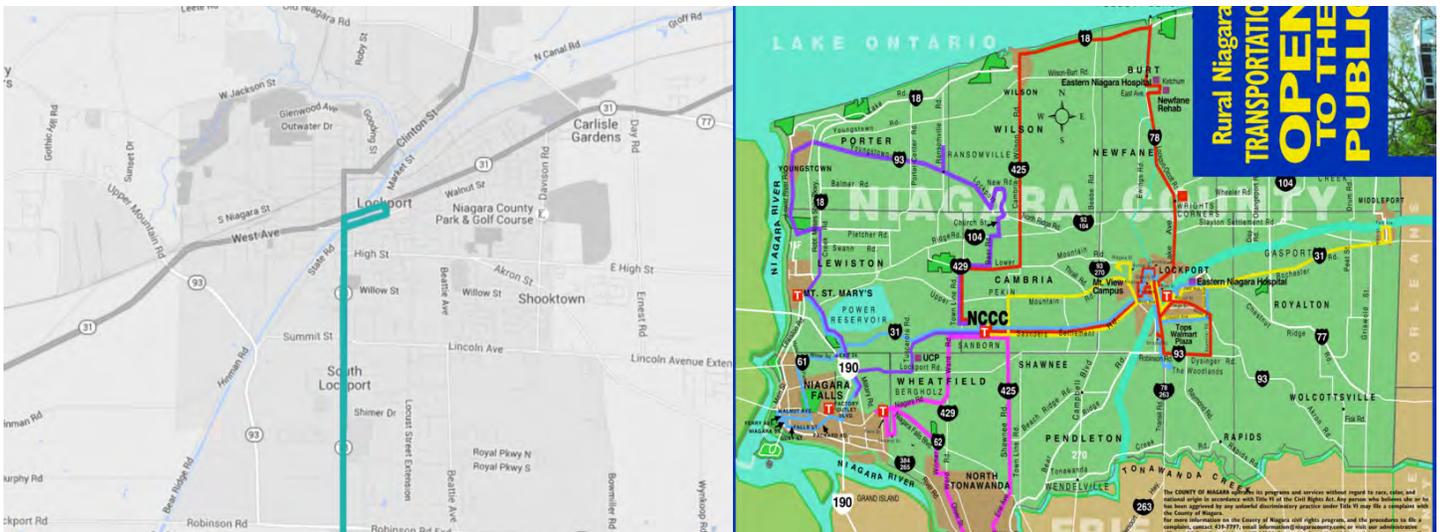


Downtown Lockport’s existing trail infrastructure, especially the Erie Canalway Trail, offers good connectivity to a number of economic development assets and both local and regional attractions. There are, however, ample opportunities to improve upon this network with streetscape upgrades and the creation of new trails. Two projects identified in the BOA master plan, a proposed pedestrian and bicycle path across the Upside Down Bridge and a pathway through the Dussault Foundry Site, are pictured above.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

pedestrian pathways in the Town of Pendleton. Just this past April, a section of the Erie Canalway Trail was opened between the City of Lockport, Pendleton, and Amherst. The next phase of that project will connect the trail entirely between the Tonawandas and Lockport, connecting Downtown Lockport with regional attractions like Canalside in Buffalo, Niawanda Park in the City of Tonawanda, and Gateway Harbor in North Tonawanda.

Other amenities necessary for a livable and vibrant community are also located in or near Downtown Lockport. Eastern Niagara Hospital, located in the City of Lockport just a few minutes outside of the downtown area on East Avenue and accessible via public transportation, recently announced a partnership with Kaleida Health that will strengthen the health care facilities for those in Lockport. Cultural and entertainment fixtures, like the Historic Palace Theatre, the Erie Canal Discovery Center Museum, Lockside Art Center, and even Cornerstone CFCU Arena, offer residents and visitors a lot to take in and explore.



The NFTA Metro connects Downtown Lockport to the NFTA system through a single stop in the central business district along Route 44. The 44 takes riders to destinations along Transit Road, where many employers are located. The NFTA partners with Rural Niagara Transportation for service from Downtown Lockport to other important destinations including Eastern Niagara Hospital, the Industrial Park, NCCC, and others throughout Niagara County.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 6. Policies to Enhance Quality of Life

*Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern codes, complete street plans, or transit-oriented development. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.*

In the last five years the City of Lockport has benefited from professional planning firms facilitating community input through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and, more recently, the Brownfields Opportunity Area Planning process. In 2014 and 2015, as part of the BOA, Bergmann Associates and Camoin Associates began the process of translating the public vision into policy recommendations designed to leverage quality, sustainable development. Specifically, the BOA included recommendations to enhance “place-making” such as the implementation of form-based zoning code and a complete streets policy approach. Additionally, the BOA identified Lockport as a community that would benefit tremendously from the creation of a land bank, as the City has many strategically located opportunities for land assembly and targeted redevelopment.

The timing could not be better for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative as Lockport has the leadership, strong desire, and organizational infrastructure to implement creative, forward-thinking policies in accordance with the BOA recommendations and community planning process. City Leadership instituted a program in 2014 to actively seek out residents with professional design and planning experience to serve on City Boards including, but not limited to, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The City would be an eager partner that would benefit tremendously from both the funding and the technical and professional support available through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in order to flesh out recommended policies to ensure quality, sustainable development throughout the City, and especially in the downtown core.

Currently, Downtown Lockport is located in a number of districts that offer incentives for private sector development. These districts include; the Lockport Tourism Focus Area BOA, which gives developers an added tax credit when developing brownfields; the Niagara County IDA Opportunity Zone, which offers an aggressive five year 100% tax abatement on improvements of properties within the district and notably can be used on mixed-use properties; Niagara County Census Tract 237, which is a distressed area and eligible for IDA incentives for retail use, also has access to federal New Market Tax Credits. While Downtown Lockport is not a designated historic district, there are a number of historic properties that would be eligible for Historic Tax Credits. In the last three years the City’s Historic Preservation Commission has overseen reconnaissance-level survey projects in two historic neighborhoods adjacent to downtown.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Lastly, the Locks Heritage District Corporation has begun a dialogue with the Mayor and Common Council about the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) serving Lockport's Downtown/Locks District. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative could be the ideal opportunity and mechanism to take a meaningful look at the pros and cons of a BID. Mayor McCaffrey has demonstrated in her tenure the willingness to update policies she feels would improve the community, and Common Council President David Wohleben has submitted a Letter of Support stating the same. Both also serve on the Board of Directors of the GLDC.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 7. Local Support

*Set forth the local and community support that exists for the revitalization of this downtown and the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to building and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.*

Letters of support have been submitted by:

Brian Stratton, Director, Canal Corporation

Joel Marten, Supervisor, Town of Pendleton

Mark Crocker, Supervisor, Town of Lockport

Stuart Renaldo, Business Development Director, Iskalo Development

David Wohleben, City of Lockport, Common Council President

Chris Smith, Executive Director, Grigg Lewis Foundation

These letters can be found as Attachment F (page 48). While the support for this submission requesting Downtown Lockport to be nominated for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative includes the usual elected officials and community development agencies that generally express their support for their municipality's efforts such as this, the most telling and compelling support comes from elected officials of other municipalities (Mark Crocker, Town of Lockport Supervisor, and Joel Maerten, Town of Pendleton Supervisor) demonstrating the regional impact this project has on eastern Niagara County. In addition, Iskalo Development, whose private investment in Downtown Lockport over the last year has been highlighted throughout this application as an indicator that Lockport is at a tipping point, has also submitted a Letter of Support acknowledging they have already invested in Lockport but envision further investment sooner should Lockport be chosen for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Other important demonstrated support comes from Common Council President David Wohleben expressing the Council's willingness and excitement to learn about and adopt progressive development policies. Grigg Lewis Foundation Executive Director Chris Smith stated their hope to partner with the City of Lockport to implement a successful, transformational program for the community. The Canal Corporation has also submitted a letter of support for our nomination as they recognize the City of Lockport's strategic location within the region along the Erie Canal and how canal-themed projects, like the Flight of Five and Erie Canalway Trail expansion, contribute to economic development in Downtown Lockport.

The City of Lockport is committed to putting together and implementing a strategic investment plan. In addition to this commitment, the City of Lockport also has the organizational infrastructure in economic and community development to follow through. The local lead for this program will be the City of

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Lockport's Director of Planning and Development, Brian Smith. Mr. Smith is also the President and CEO of the Greater Lockport Development Corporation, the City of Lockport's economic development agency that will be responsible for the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The GLDC is led by President/CEO Brian Smith but also utilizes the consulting services of H. Sicherman, owned by Harry Sicherman, a well-respected economic and community development consulting firm throughout New York State. The GLDC has, even in just the last three years, overseen projects and programs ranging in scope and purpose that demonstrate the organization's ability and experience necessary to implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The most recent of these projects and programs include; a microenterprise grant program for small businesses looking to expand or startup in downtown Lockport, a New York Main Street grant program for facade improvements and the creation of market rate residential units in downtown Lockport, a \$4 million project in 2013 that rehabilitated 48,000 square feet at a previously vacant building at Harrison Place to bring Trek, Inc., to Downtown Lockport bringing with them over 100 jobs, and a \$1 million expansion project for Trek just last year that built out an additional 16,000 square feet that created another 20 jobs. The GLDC is capable and comfortable administering and implementing a wide range of projects.

In addition, the GLDC is involved on some level with all of the major economic development projects that have taken place in Lockport- mainly the construction of Cornerstone CFCU Arena and the restoration of the Flight of Five. The GLDC has representatives on the board for the arena, including two members that were on the arena's construction committee. The restoration of the Flight of Five is largely overseen by the Locks Heritage District Corporation, which is a subsidiary of the GLDC. Lockport has delivered on major economic development initiatives when given the opportunity to access funding. The WNY REDC can feel confident in the GLDC and Lockport's demonstrated track record that we will deliver an effective and impactful Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

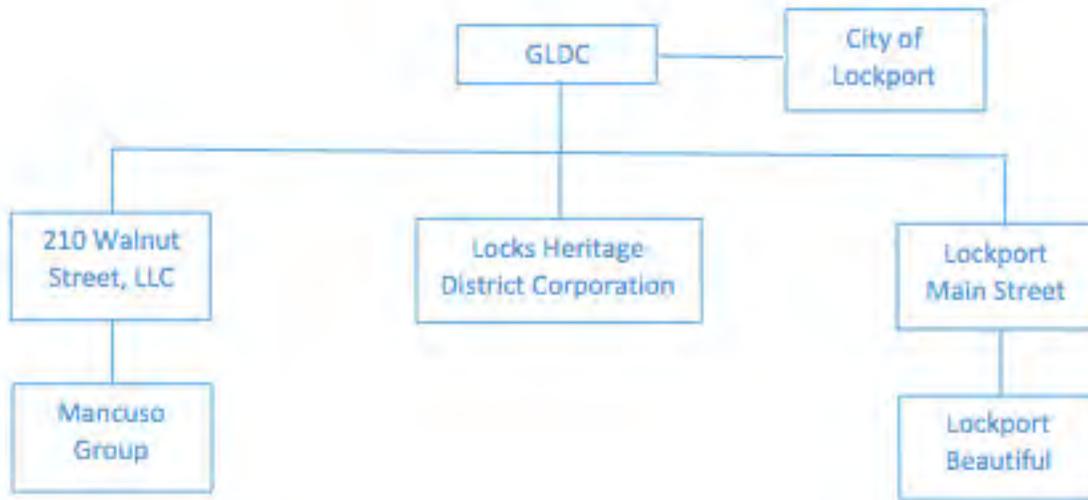
# Program Implementation Plan

The City of Lockport’s economic development agency, the Greater Lockport Development Corporation (GLDC), will be responsible for the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The GLDC serves as the clearinghouse for planning and development initiatives in Lockport.

The GLDC is a local development corporation whose Board members include the Mayor and Common Council President, along with eleven business and community leaders who live and work in the City of Lockport.

In the last ten years the GLDC has taken proactive steps to bring signature developments to Lockport and to help projects overcome negative market forces to reach completion. The GLDC takes a holistic approach to community and economic development and has grown its organizational structure and capacity to fill any identified gaps. As a result, the GLDC and its subsidiaries (described below) are ideally situated to deliver maximum impact through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and to act as an ongoing caretaker for downtown Lockport.

## GLDC Organizational Structure



### *Lockport Heritage District Corporation*

The Locks Heritage District Corporation (LHDC) is a 501(c)3 formed by the GLDC in 2014 to protect the integrity of the “Locks District” while marketing the District to businesses and attractions. The LHDC is working with the New York State Canal Corporation to oversee the reconstruction of the Flight of Five Locks and is responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the restored locks. Recently the LHDC secured two boats that are being used for seasonal demonstrations of the manual lock systems.

The LHDC has undertaken other interpretative activities in and around the Locks, such as developing the Locks Gateway Exhibit signage which is being constructed this summer.

The LHDC fosters strong relationships with the NYS Canal Corporation and State Historic Preservation Office through marketing, branding, and land use partnership essential within the Locks District. In 2015-2016, the LHDC worked with the State on the \$6 million effort to “close the gap” by constructing a new portion of the Erie Canalway Trail between the Amherst Museum and the Erie Canal towpath at the Locks. The LHDC is currently working with the Canal Corporation on the planning of the proposed Lockport Harbor & Marine Center.

210 Walnut Street, LLC is a for-profit subsidiary of the GLDC that was created in 2008 to manage and operate Harrison Place. 210 Walnut contracts with Mancuso Management, who handles day-to-day operations and maintenance as well as much of the leasing.

### *Lockport Main Street*

In partnership with the National Trust for Historic Places and the Western Erie Canal Alliance, Lockport Main Street (LMS) was formed in 2010 to support downtown businesses. LMS provides supportive services ranging from marketing to grant-writing to event development and implementation. Notably LMS created the Lockport Community Market, an outdoor farmers market on Canal Street in the Locks District. The Community Market runs on Saturdays from June through October and is now co-managed by the owners of the County's only urban farm; McCollum Orchard.

LMS has also been the driving force behind the development of Locktoberfest, which began in 2014 as a partnership with the NYS Canal Corporation and NYS Agriculture & Markets to celebrate the Erie Canal and harvest season in New York State.

### *Lockport Beautiful*

Lockport Beautiful was formed in 2014 to undertake beautification projects throughout the City, with a particular focus on the downtown. The group is comprised of volunteers that partner with community organizations ranging from Lockport Rotary to Lockport In Bloom. As the downtown begins to bring in more visitors through the growing attractions and year-round offerings, beautification efforts are receiving more attention in the community and Lockport Beautiful's role continues to grow.

### *Staffing*

The GLDC is staffed by President/CEO Brian Smith and Bookkeeper Madeline Steen. Due to the organization's ongoing and increasing economic and community development activity, the GLDC hired Heather Peck as Vice President, who starts on June 1st. The additional staff support grows the GLDC's capacity to implement new programming such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Lockport Main Street features a full-time Program Manager and benefits from interns funded by the Grigg-Lewis Foundation and a group of dozens of volunteers.

### *GLDC as Clearinghouse for Visioning and Planning*

When the GLDC realized Lockport needed a pro-active push beyond typical development corporation activities, it broadened its mission to add community and economic development visioning and planning to ongoing implementation activities.

In 2011, the GLDC spearheaded the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program administered by the NYS Department of State. Through community forums, surveys, and stakeholder meetings, the BOA fleshed out a positive vision for Lockport that fully embraced downtown development.

From that point on, the GLDC has focused on implementing the vision while refining the plan as trends change and new development occurs. Additionally, the GLDC has brought in experts to determine the market demand for and feasibility of projects and initiatives identified as needs. Between 2014 and 2015, the GLDC commissioned

a Market-Rate Housing Study and a Hospitality Study to gauge demand, highlight community resources, and to serve as tools for investors, developers, and operators.

Now that there is development momentum, the GLDC is looking to ensure that it benefits current residents, especially the less fortunate. The GLDC is currently administering a grant through the NYS Office of Community Renewal to develop an action plan to improve the quality of life of residents of the neighborhood immediately south of the downtown – the poorest neighborhood in the City. The Action Plan will need to improve the neighborhood connectivity to downtown in terms of physical connections and connections to opportunity.

In a related program, the GLDC is working with the Grigg Lewis Foundation on Lockport Works, a program designed to marry workforce training and development with available space in Harrison Place and the residents of the South Street Neighborhood.

### *GLDC as Developer*

The GLDC has shown a willingness to take an aggressive and proactive role in community and economic development, including serving as a property developer. Historically, the GLDC has developed property when:

- 1) Property is in a strategic downtown location
- 2) Market does not support private sector investment
- 3) Property condition has a negative influence on surrounding area leading to the potential for disinvestment

When those conditions exist the GLDC intervenes and implements customized and strategic development solutions, as referenced in the examples below. The GLDC has the experience, successful track record, and capacity to take a proactive role in property development to support the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

#### *Canal Street f/k/a Richmond Avenue*

With the case of the block immediately above the locks in downtown, the GLDC commissioned a redevelopment plan, remediated the property, demolished the unsafe structures, and saved every building that could be saved. The GLDC brought the three signature buildings to “vanilla box” interiors, constructed a pedestrian street and event venue, installed period lighting, and created a pocket park featuring a gazebo with electric and water service.

The GLDC held onto the properties until they found the right user for the community vision and approved redevelopment plan, ultimately selling one building to Lake Effect Ice Cream for their signature scoop shop, and one to a local business owner for upper floor residential and the buildout of Sweet Ride Bicycle Rental on the first floor. The GLDC built out the upper floors of the largest of the buildings, 57 Canal, into office space leased to Trek, Inc. for their technology center housing all research & development, and design engineering. When the building began to cash flow, Iskalo Development purchased 57 Canal and is presenting plans for first floor commercial and retail use.

#### *Harrison Place*

When Delphi and General Motors vacated 480,000 square feet of space in the City’s downtown, it was the GLDC that took the necessary steps of creating a for-profit subsidiary to rename, rebrand, and invest in Harrison Place. Knowing how massive the undertaking was, the GLDC/210 Walnut Street, LLC contracted with the Mancuso Business Development Group to manage and operate Harrison Place through a management agreement. Through steady and responsible investments into the property, Harrison Place became an active center of flex space for small businesses.

These development efforts ultimately positioned Harrison Place as an attractive location for Trek, Inc. to move their manufacturing and corporate operations. Initially a \$4 million project in 2013, 210 Walnut rehabilitated 48,000 square feet of vacant space in Harrison Place to accommodate 100 company employees. The resulting operational efficiencies, along with company growth, lead to a \$1 million expansion project just last year that built out an additional 16,000 square feet and created another 20 jobs.

Throughout the Harrison Place development process, 210 Walnut and the Mancuso Group have ensured that the signature building on the Harrison Campus, Building 3, remains available for higher quality mixed-use. The strategic decision has been made to sign short-term leases in the space and not make leasehold improvements that could limit future development plans or limit Mancuso's ability to relocate a tenant within the campus as needed.

#### *Tuscarora Club*

When this iconic building went into foreclosure, the GLDC purchased it. The former Tuscarora Club lends itself beautifully to boutique lodging or market rate residential development (two identified downtown needs). To date the GLDC has commissioned an architectural and engineering analysis to determine the physical investment needed to effectively market the property to a private sector partner who shares one of those visions for the building.

#### *Other GLDC Projects and Programming*

The GLDC has overseen other projects and programs ranging in scope and purpose that demonstrate the organization's ability and experience necessary to implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The most recent programs include; a microenterprise grant program providing financial and technical assistance to small businesses looking to expand or startup in downtown Lockport, and a New York Main Street grant program for facade improvements and the creation of market rate residential units in downtown Lockport.

In addition, the GLDC committed to provide organization support to the Lockport Ice Arena & Spots Center, Inc when the project began to take hold in 2013. GLDC personnel chaired the organization's fundraising and construction committees and now chair the marketing and operations committees.

Lockport has delivered on major economic development initiatives when given the opportunity to access funding. The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council can feel confident in the GLDC and Lockport's capacity and demonstrated track record; we will deliver an effective and impactful Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 8. Alignment with Regional Strategies

*Describe how your vision and proposed investments will support the following core strategies, target industry sectors, and project criteria.*

If selected, the City of Lockport will incorporate all three of the WNY REDC core strategies in proposed investments. These investments include revitalizing vacant or underutilized mixed-use properties by rehabilitating them for the creation of residential units of every level of affordability; enhancing existing tourism attractions like the Flight of Five, The Historic Palace Theatre, and the Niagara Wine Trail; and implementing the Lockport Works workforce development initiative and other investments at Harrison Place. These projects will bring more people and businesses into Downtown Lockport, support existing businesses and create a demand for additional businesses within the central business district, offer new opportunities and ensure the necessary training is available for people throughout the entire community to capitalize on them.

### ***Implement Smart Growth***

Downtown Lockport is a built up central business district with the necessary supporting infrastructure. All growth experienced will be in the form of either filling vacant or underutilized buildings or infill development that will not require additional infrastructure. One goal of this initiative will be to update the policies necessary to realize the type of development envisioned by the community as identified through the Lockport Tourism Focus Brownfield Opportunity Area. While current zoning throughout Downtown Lockport allows for mixed-use properties, progressive policies including form-based code, setback changes, and aesthetic overlay districts would further the community's vision for future development.

### ***Preparing Our Workforce***

These funds will contribute to workforce development directly. Harrison Place has been identified as a potential location for a workforce development hub and the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will allow for this project to come to fruition. This project, titled Lockport Works, includes BOCES, Isaiah 61 (a Niagara Falls-based workforce development organization looking to expand into Lockport), and the Cornell Cooperative Extension's Food Enterprise Center as partners, and would directly prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals for available jobs.

These individuals would then be qualified to take advantage of the opportunities created by the Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, such as new jobs being offered by startups, or businesses expanding because of an increase in people living in downtown. A description of the Lockport Works project has been included as Attachment I (page 63).

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## *Foster a Culture of Entrepreneurship*

Harrison Place is a designated WNY Innovation Hot Spot which is a significant factor in why the facility is being considered for the site of a workforce development hub that includes the partners listed above. The Greater Lockport Development Corporation, Niagara County IDA, Small Business Development Center, Lockport Main Street, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension will work together to bring various resources to entrepreneurs and business owners in Downtown Lockport. Collaborations between these organizations have done this recently with Microenterprise Programs, gap financing, and tax relief opportunities to create an environment that encourages businesses to startup and flourish.

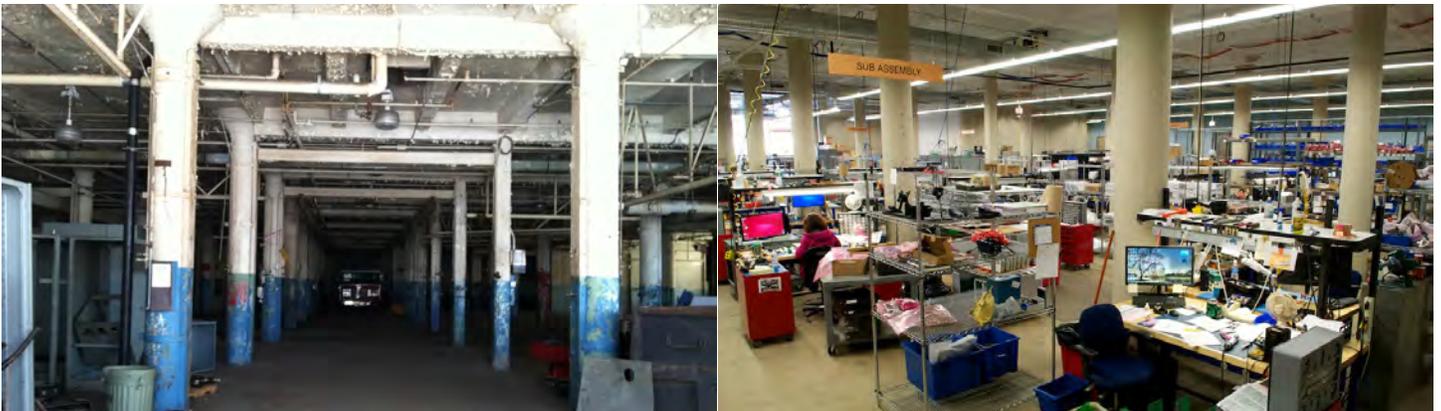
## *Industry Strategies:*

“Five industry clusters were identified on which to target business recruitment efforts. These clusters were identified based upon synergies between target industry sectors and several indicator criterion, such as: location quotients; local presence; growth trends; and export industries. Tourism, Advanced Manufacturing, Professional Services/Entrepreneurial Networked Professionals, Health Care, Urban Agriculture/Agribusiness”

Excerpt from the Brownfield Opportunity Area Tourism Focus Area Nomination Study

Lockport’s downtown development and business recruitment efforts are a direct reflection of the Western New York Regional Economic Development Plan. The similarities are a result of Lockport’s regional approach, as well as the fact that the Lockport downtown is a microcosm of western New York, featuring many of the assets and opportunities that uniquely position the region for sustainable and quality growth.

## *Advanced Manufacturing*



A before and after picture of the space Trek, Inc. renovated at Harrison Place. Trek now has 64,000 square feet of advanced manufacturing space on the campus.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Harrison Place, which has already seen successful advanced manufacturing businesses locate there, still has a lot to offer the industry. Trek, Inc. just completed an expansion project that now gives them 64,000 square feet of renovated space and over 120 employees. Fox Solutions began at Harrison Place with three employees and 1,200 square feet in 2014 and now employs 11 and utilizes over 10,000 square feet of space. Late last year, a new machine job shop called Caron Manufacturing opened. These are just some of the almost 50 businesses that are located at Harrison Place, many of which being either advanced manufacturing or related to and supporting the advanced manufacturing industry.

Harrison Place offers more than just affordable incubator space for businesses. As previously mentioned, it is a designated WNY Innovation Hot Spot managed by prominent business incubation expert, Tom Mancuso. This is one of the main reasons Harrison Place has been identified as the location for a workforce development hub and is pursuing funding opportunities for a collaborative project called Lockport Works. The project includes workforce development and entrepreneurial partners to prepare individuals for jobs available in the region, bettering our workforce and strengthening our local advanced manufacturing industry.

## *Health and Life Sciences*

Eastern Niagara Hospital (ENH) is located just a short distance east along East Avenue from Downtown Lockport and is highly accessible by the Niagara County public transportation system. With a recently announced affiliation with Kaleida Health, new opportunities in the health and life sciences are expected to be available in eastern Niagara County. In fact, partly due to Downtown Lockport's proximity to ENH, one private Buffalo developer that recently invested in Lockport has identified back office medical as a viable industry to target for the office space they own. Recent census data backs up that assertion showing an 11% jump in employment in Health and Life Sciences over a five (5) year period. Additionally, as with Advanced Manufacturing, Lockport's close proximity to the University of Buffalo creates a logical and affordable environment for targeted industry sector investment.

## *Tourism and Arts*

Lockport's most influential industry on the region is in tourism. Niagara Falls visitors are always looking for more places to explore throughout the Niagara USA destination and Lockport offers quality attractions convincing enough to extend the stay of those visitors.

The Lockport Locks and Erie Canal Cruises and the Lockport Cave and Underground Boat Ride are two existing staple tourist attractions that bring in over 100,000 people annually from throughout the region, nation, and even the world. Tourism was identified as a viable industry in Downtown Lockport in the 1998 comprehensive plan on the basis that Lockport was not properly capitalizing on its Erie Canal

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative



Locks demonstrations of the Flight of Five (left) are a new attraction to Downtown Lockport made possible by the restoration of the Flight of Five and teams of volunteers that perform the demonstrations for spectators throughout the tourist season. The Lockport Locks and Erie Canal Cruises (right) is one of the most patronized tourist attraction in Western New York and offer rides through the modern locks.

Heritage for the purposes of economic development. The most notable untapped opportunity was the historic Flight of Five locks, which at that time had been laying in disrepair since 1918. Now, two of the five locks have been completely restored and locks demonstrations are offered throughout the tourism season. The project was deemed a “regional priority” project by the WNY REDC and funding has been awarded through Empire State Development and the National Park Service to restore a third lock. The project has significant momentum right now, but the full benefit of the project will not be realized until the entire Flight of Five is fully restored. The City of Lockport is still working on identifying funding to complete the restoration to ensure the project maximizes the people it attracts to Downtown Lockport and the money it helps capture within the region as it extends the stay of Niagara Falls tourists.

Another WNY REDC regional priority project, Cornerstone CFCU Arena, is contributing to the Western New York tourism scene and having a tremendous impact on Downtown Lockport. An estimated 150,000 people walk through the doors of the arena each year and that number is growing. Tournaments fill the arena, Downtown Lockport, and most importantly hotels during a usually difficult time for hotel owners in the tourism off-season. Cornerstone CFCU Arena is an important supplement to the existing tourism season in Western New York and has already hosted teams from Beijing, Moscow, Quebec City, Austin, Tampa, Los Angeles, and elsewhere around North America. Cornerstone CFCU Arena has an excellent relationship with HARBORCENTER and has already been used as additional ice for sled hockey and other tournaments that have been hosted in downtown Buffalo.

Downtown Lockport is home to the only urban winery on the Niagara Wine Trail, the aptly named Flight of Five Winery, which overlooks the historic locks and the Erie Canal. Downtown Lockport is poised to take advantage of its location as the trailhead or gateway into the Niagara Wine Trail, which has been recognized as an up-and-coming wine region. There are several opportunities to be explored that would allow Lockport to better capitalize on this asset. Niagara Wine Trail tours based out of Downtown Lockport would offer another quality attraction in the region. The Medina Railroad Museum has offered Niagara Wine Trail train rides from Medina to Lockport. The same opportunity exists to connect Niagara

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Falls tourists to Lockport as the new train station in the Falls is on the Falls Road Branch Line which runs to the recently constructed train platform in the heart of Downtown Lockport.

The Historic Palace Theatre is preparing to take on a major expansion and restoration project that will allow the facility to host more and a wider range of events that will strengthen the Palace by making it more sustainable through the creation of new revenue streams. The Palace brings in sold out shows of 1,100 patrons several times each year with its Broadway-style performances, drawing on some of the best regional talent. This expansion project will bring more shows and people into Downtown Lockport and have a serious economic impact on the downtown businesses and increase the quality of life for people living downtown. Funding is being lined up to make this project a reality.

## *Agriculture*



Flight of Five Winery, the only urban winery along the Niagara Wine Trail, is located in the heart of Downtown Lockport overlooking the Erie Canal. Niagara County's only urban farm, McCollum Orchard, is located in the City of Lockport and offers farm-to-table programs.

Agriculture is the leading industry in Niagara County and Lockport sits right in the heart of it. As stated above, Lockport offers opportunities to improve upon the local wine industry, but there are other, more traditional aspects of agriculture that would be enhanced by projects in Downtown Lockport. Lockport Works, the previously mentioned workforce development initiative, includes the Cornell Cooperative Extension's Food Enterprise Center (FEC). The Cornell Co-Op's FEC would offer value-added services, rentable commercial kitchen space, and business development guidance to farmers, food entrepreneurs, and others in the agriculture, food processing, and culinary industries.

The Lockport Community Farmers Market offers affordable food through the SNAP program during the summer months. Opportunities exist to expand the market throughout the entire year in Building 3 at Harrison Place and to offer more farm-to-table connections. Downtown Lockport could play a larger role in enhancing the agriculture industry both locally and within the region.

## *Professional Services*

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

In recent months, there has been an increase in office use interest in Downtown Lockport. Several businesses in the Town of Lockport and others in more industrial buildings in the west end of the City of Lockport are looking at Downtown Lockport as a place to expand into for their office employees. These businesses are attracted to the amenities Downtown Lockport has to offer. As Downtown Lockport continues to attract businesses and private investment, jobs in professional services will become available for the Lockport community. With workforce development initiatives underway and the South Street Neighborhood Initiative Community Needs Assessment taking place right now, we can ensure that these opportunities are accessible to the entire community.

The BOA specifically stated: “this cluster [professional services] includes moderate and high-earning employment opportunities in the finance, insurance, real estate, and administrative industries for both individuals and businesses. The proximity to the Buffalo metropolitan area and the Canadian border provide unique opportunities in this sector.” The data backs up this finding, with the Census showing a remarkable 22% increase in professional services employment in the most recent five year data.

## ***Project Criteria:***

### ***Creates/Retains/Fills Jobs***

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will create and retain jobs by bringing more people to Downtown Lockport, both visitors and new residents, that will support existing businesses and create a demand for new businesses and services within the central business district. The expansion of existing businesses and new businesses starting up will offer new and diverse job opportunities in the community.

The major economic development initiatives currently taking place in Lockport bring thousands of people to downtown that were not coming to Lockport even just a few years ago. The Flight of Five locks and other tourist attractions are bringing a record number of tourists during the summer months. Cornerstone CFCU Arena attracts families from throughout the region and athletes from around the world. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will accelerate the impact on Downtown Lockport by continuing to enhance these existing tourist attractions and bringing more potential patrons to local businesses.

Adding residential units will increase the population within Downtown Lockport. While the daytime population is strong because of the many employees of businesses, organizations, and agencies located in Downtown Lockport, an evening population has been missing in the community. People living in downtown will create new opportunities for local businesses, developers, and potential new business owners to capitalize on.

Lockport Works, the workforce development project referenced throughout this application, will prepare

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

unemployed and underemployed individuals for available jobs within the region. These will include jobs in the trades, STEM fields, customer service, agriculture and culinary services, and others.

## *Maximizes Return on Investment*

Lockport has a demonstrated track record of maximizing public investment in Downtown Lockport. Projects like Trek, Inc. moving to Harrison Place, the restoration of the Flight of Five, and Cornerstone CFCU Arena are all examples of public funding leveraging private investment and significantly impacting the community. Trek, Inc. received a \$500,000 grant for equipment through the Office of Community Renewal that made a \$4 million project take place. Since the Flight of Five restoration was announced, a surge in private investment took place immediately surrounding the locks, most recently with Iskalo Development's purchase of 57 Canal Street. A complete list of major investments in Downtown Lockport over the last five years has been attached.

## *Ready for Implementation*

The framework for implementation of a program like the Downtown Revitalization Initiative is set. Proactive, forward-thinking policy changes, like form-based code and downtown aesthetic overlay districts, have already been developed through the Brownfield Opportunity Area designation. The organizations required to implement such programs are in place as the City of Lockport has a local development corporation, a Main Street program, and a Community Development department, all of which have been involved with the implementation of various economic and community development projects and programs including new construction and other capital projects, facade improvements, creation of downtown residential units, microenterprise business grants, housing rehabilitation, and programs for first-time homebuyers. The Program Implementation Plan (attached) has a comprehensive description of how Lockport plans to implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

## *Is Inclusive*

The City of Lockport received a \$50,000 grant through the Office of Community Renewal to undertake a Community Needs Assessment that will identify ways to ensure that the South Street Neighborhood, a part of the Lockport community that has been hit the hardest by poverty but has tremendous assets including its close proximity to the rebounding Downtown Lockport, is benefitted by the recent economic development growth realized in Lockport over the last few years. The timing could not be better for this Downtown Revitalization Initiative to be available as the Community Needs Assessment will lay the framework for programming, capital improvements, organizational structure, and other ways to include underrepresented segments of the population and enhance their lives in ways that would not otherwise have happened without this effort.

# Downtown Lockport

## Revitalization Initiative

Downtown Lockport is already seeing a marked improvement recently thanks to the successful economic development projects referenced throughout this nomination request. If nominated, however, Downtown Lockport, and in turn the South Street Neighborhood, the rest of the distressed Census Tract 237, and other impoverished populations in the community, will be on a fast track to realize the eventual benefits that we are working hard to achieve.

### ***Promotes Smart Growth***

This program will promote Smart Growth by capitalizing on existing assets and infrastructure in a compact downtown rather than new builds or projects that will require new infrastructure and contribute to sprawl.

Downtown Lockport is a built up central business district dating back to the 1800s with the creation of the Erie Canal and the locks needed to traverse the Niagara Escarpment. All growth experienced will be in the form of either filling vacant or underutilized buildings or infill development that will not require additional infrastructure as the necessary supporting infrastructure is already in place.

The creation of apartment units through the renovation of vacant and mixed-use building promotes Smart Growth by capitalizing on existing assets rather than newly created ones, and encouraging people to live in a walkable downtown with access to public transportation rather than contributing to sprawl.

The rehabilitation of Harrison Place also promotes Smart Growth because it encourages manufacturing businesses to locate in an existing building in a downtown rather than a new build out in an IDA park.

### ***Oriented to Young Adults***

Young adults are choosing to live in character buildings in walkable, vibrant communities. As continued economic growth takes place in Downtown Lockport and nearby along Transit Road and in the Lockport IDA Park, young professionals will look to the central business district as a preferred place to live. The planned investment of bringing more residential units online by rehabilitating vacant or underutilized mixed-use buildings, as recommended in the feasibility study the Greater Lockport Development Corporation commissioned, will prepare Downtown Lockport so that it can be that viable option for young professionals.

### ***Builds Upon Strengths***

As stated earlier in the submission, the City of Lockport, and particularly Downtown Lockport, is rare in that it has a large quantity of quality economic development assets that can be capitalized on for its size. Each of these assets can be enhanced to maximize their potential impact on Downtown Lockport, the entire Lockport community, and even the region.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

These strengths include; the downtown inventory of vacant and underutilized mixed-use properties; Lockport's Erie Canal Heritage assets, including the Flight of Five, the modern locks, locks cruises and underground boat rides and other opportunities to experience and interpret the history of the Erie Canal; Harrison Place; proximity to population and economic growth; the existing diverse group of businesses that contribute to Downtown Lockport's vibrancy already; access to Niagara Falls and Medina via railroad; The Historic Palace Theatre; and others.

## *Regional Impact*

Downtown Lockport is the downtown for all of eastern Niagara County including sprawl communities like Pendleton and the Town of Lockport and rural communities like Cambria, Royalton, and Newfane. This investment in Downtown Lockport will raise the quality of life for residents throughout this part of the region and reduce sprawl by bringing people back living into the community's downtown neighborhood.

The restoration of the Flight of Five offers another quality attraction in the region and makes Lockport a natural fit as a "stay extender" for Niagara Falls visitors. An economic impact analysis performed by Camoin Associates estimates that, once fully restored, the Flight of Five will attract 230,000 people annually to Downtown Lockport. It is this draw, and the estimated \$17 million in spending each year in Niagara County alone that comes with these visitors, that qualified the restoration of the Flight of Five as a "regional priority project." If nominated, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will capitalize on the existing tourism assets in Downtown Lockport and have an ever greater impact on tourism throughout the region.

Lockport has the ability to be a workforce development hub for this part of the region. With a history of manufacturing, a healthy advanced manufacturing industry nearby, and assets like Harrison Place's WNY Innovation Hot Spot, workforce development organizations like BOCES, the YWCA of Niagara, and now Isaiah 61, Downtown Lockport can provide the region with quality potential employees prepared to enter the workforce, strengthening Western New York's ability to attract business.

## *Improves Region's Image*

The City of Lockport is on its way to being quite the comeback story and can provide another example in the region (see Buffalo) of a Rust Belt community that bounced back. The restoration of the Flight of Five, once completed, will be a world class attraction. Improvements at Harrison Place will bring mammoth industrial buildings back to life in an impressive way. Already, Cornerstone CFCU Arena is a state-of-the-art facility that puts the region's best foot forward when welcoming visitors to Downtown Lockport. Architectural gems, like the F&M Building and the Old Post Office, will be stunning examples of historic preservation once rehabilitated.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 9. Opportunity Agenda, Inclusivity, and Context-Sensitive Planning

*In an effort to prevent unintended consequences of revitalization such as projects out of scale with the neighborhood and/or displacement of current residents or businesses, please explain how you will include existing residents and businesses, particularly traditionally underrepresented groups, in the planning process and highlight any policy action that would ensure equity, diversity and opportunity for those already living in or invested in your targeted downtown neighborhood. Refer to the WNY REDC Opportunity Agenda for more information on these regional priorities.*

The South Street Neighborhood Initiative, a Community Needs Assessment funded through the Office of Community Renewal, has the sole purpose of ensuring that no part of the Lockport community is left behind as opportunities become available through successful economic development.

Lockport has a lot of momentum with some of the economic development that has taken place in just the last few years. With the continued restoration of the Flight of Five, the presence of Cornerstone CFCU Arena, and new businesses moving to and starting up in downtown Lockport, we must ensure that these opportunities can be taken advantage of by individuals of every socioeconomic circumstance. Lockport took proactive steps to secure funding for the South Street Neighborhood Initiative Community Needs Assessment. The South Street Neighborhood, located just outside of Downtown Lockport, has a startling poverty rate of 35%, but the unique quality of being within walking distance of a rebounding downtown offering opportunities to capitalize on in order to better the community.

The City of Lockport's stance is that, with the momentum downtown is already garnering, neighborhoods like the South Street Neighborhood will see a measurable impact if the right policies and efforts are in place. After all, what good is economic development if it does not lead to neighborhood revitalization? If, however, Lockport is nominated for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, instead of only a measurable impact, the South Street Neighborhood will once again be a thriving community, capitalizing on its proximity to a Downtown Lockport that offers opportunities to everyone.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## 10. Summary

The City of Lockport is ripe for development.

The Flight of Five restoration and Cornerstone CFCU Arena's presence are bringing more people to Downtown Lockport than ever.

Projects on the horizon, like The Palace Theatre's expansion, have the potential to attract even more people.

Downtown Lockport is the kind of vibrant, walkable community young professionals are choosing to live in. There are, however, virtually no market-rate apartments in downtown despite the demand found in a feasibility report for an estimated 154 residential units.

The existing inventory of vacant or under-performing, yet architecturally significant, buildings offer mixed-use opportunities that would be attractive locations for young professionals to live in if the residential units were available.

The City of Lockport's recent designation in 2015 as a Brownfield Opportunity Area has a number of recommendations regarding policy updates and other actionable items to better prepare Downtown Lockport for the community's vision of future growth.

Positive impacts are beginning to take place, but the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would accelerate these so they may be realized significantly faster.

There is no shortage of impactful projects that can be undertaken in Lockport to benefit the community, such as Lockport Works, the workforce development project in Building 3 of Harrison Place.

The City of Lockport has the organizational capacity and the track record that demonstrates the ability to implement a successful Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The Community Needs Assessment currently taking place is the perfect complement to the Downtown Revitalization as it will ensure the progress made through the program will benefit the entire community.

Downtown Lockport is the right community at the right time to be Western New York's Downtown Revitalization Initiative representative.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Attachment F - Letters of Support



# Canal Corporation

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

JOANNE M. MAHONEY  
Chair

BRIAN U. STRATTON  
Director

June 1, 2016

Honorable Anne McCaffrey  
One Locks Plaza  
Lockport, NY 14094

Dear Mayor McCaffrey:

The New York State Canal Corporation is pleased to provide this letter of support for the City of Lockport's application for designation as a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) community, which is being administered through the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (REDC).

Over the past several years, the City of Lockport has demonstrated a strong commitment to focusing its community and economic development strategies around the Canal System and the historic "Flight of Five" locks in the center of downtown. I believe Lockport's remarkable progress is reflective of what the DRI initiative aims to achieve in attracting young professionals and families to live and work in New York's dynamic urban neighborhoods.

Our partnership in restoring the 19<sup>th</sup> century Erie Canal locks has created a unique destination along the Canal corridor for people to live and recreate. Thanks to your administration's efforts, and the dedication of numerous community volunteers, Lockport is bringing the Canal legacy to life to create a one-of-a kind tourism destination.

I was honored to join you and Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul recently to open a new four-mile section of the Erie Canalway Trail between Lockport and Pendleton. I am confident the cycling and hiking connector will not only provide community benefits, but will also generate further economic impacts by increasing downtown visitation. I was also pleased to recently read that your efforts to develop properties at the Canal Place business district continue to be successful, which will further enhance the economic renaissance within Lockport's downtown core.

In closing, the Canal Corporation believes that the City of Lockport is worthy of the Regional Council's strong consideration for designation as the Western New York region's DRI community.

Sincerely,

Brian U. Stratton  
Director



**TOWN OF PENDLETON**  
Joel Maerten, Supervisor

6570 Campbell Blvd. Lockport, NY 14094  
Phone: 716-625-8833 Fax: 716-625-6295  
jmaerten@pendletonny.us

May 8, 2016

Brian M. Smith  
Director of Planning and Development  
City of Lockport  
1 Locks Plaza  
Lockport, NY 14094

Mr. Smith:

Please accept this letter as an expression of the Town of Pendleton's support of the City of Lockport's nomination for the Department of State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

As you know, the Town of Pendleton has collaborated with the City and the Town of Lockport since I have taken office on a number of economic development initiatives, including the Transit North project. Downtown Lockport anchors the northern end of the Transit North corridor, and is really the downtown not just for the City of Lockport, but for all of eastern Niagara County, including communities like Pendleton.

If improvements are made to downtown Lockport, that is an amenity that will be accessible and utilized by the residents of Pendleton, raising our quality of life as well.

I whole-heartedly support your submission and sincerely hope you are successful in nominating downtown Lockport. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Joel Maerten

**SUPERVISOR**

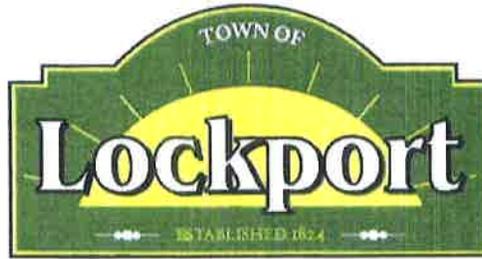
**MARK C. CROCKER**

**TOWN CLERK**

**NANCY A. BROOKS**

**SUPERINTENDENT OF HIGHWAYS**

**DAVID J. MILLER**



**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**PAUL W. SIEJAK**

**PATRICIA DUFOUR**

**THOMAS KEOUGH**

**DARLENE DICARLO**

**TOWN ATTORNEY**

**MICHAEL NORRIS**

May 06<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Brian M. Smith  
Director of Planning and Development  
City of Lockport  
1 Locks Plaza  
Lockport, NY 14094

Mr. Smith:

Please accept this letter as an expression of the Town of Lockport's support of the City of Lockport's nomination for the Department of State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

As you know, the Town of Lockport surrounds the City entirely. As you have seen, the Town of Lockport has experienced a dramatic increase in economic development both along the Transit corridor and in our IDA Park that has led to exponential job growth in our community.

If nominated for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and awarded \$10 million, improvements in the City's downtown will increase the quality of life of our residents and the individuals who work in the jobs that have been created through our economic successes.

I whole-heartedly support your submission and sincerely hope you are successful in nominating downtown Lockport. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark C. Crocker".

Mark C. Crocker  
Town of Lockport Supervisor



May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Brian M. Smith  
Director of Planning and Development  
City of Lockport  
1 Locks Plaza  
Lockport, NY 14094

Mr. Smith:

Please accept this letter as an expression of Iskalo Development's support of the City of Lockport's nomination for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

As you know, Iskalo Development has already invested over \$700,000 to acquire two staple properties in downtown Lockport, 57 Canal Street and 1 East Avenue, which is the historic former post office, and we plan on spending significant funds over and above that to restore them and utilize them for what we believe are their highest and best uses.

We invested in downtown Lockport because we can see the potential here. We identified Lockport as an up-and-coming market based on progress with certain projects, including the Flight of Five restoration and the city's new hockey arena. We are still looking at other opportunities to invest in Lockport, and may even have a few projects lined up for when we believe the market is ready.

Should Lockport be the recipient of this funding, we see that as a big win for this community that will make it more market-ready for additional investment. We sincerely hope you receive this funding and look forward to working with you further.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Stuart Renaldo  
Business Development Manager  
Iskalo Development Corporation

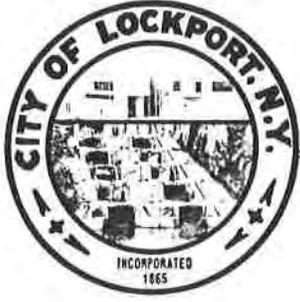
# CITY OF LOCKPORT, NEW YORK

LOCKPORT MUNICIPAL BUILDING

ONE LOCKS PLAZA

LOCKPORT, NY 14094

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Brian Smith  
Director of Planning and Development  
City of Lockport  
Lockport, NY 14094

Re: Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Mr. Smith:

Allow me to express the Common Council's support for the City of Lockport's nomination for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The Council recognizes the successes that have been taking place in our downtown and is focused on ensuring future development takes place in a way that is desirable to stakeholders throughout our community as expressed in recent planning initiatives such as the BOA.

The Common Council is excited to learn more about and implement progressive policies that aid effective development in our downtown.

I look forward to working with you to continue to better the community we are working so hard improve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Wohleben".

David Wohleben  
City of Lockport Common Council President



# GRIGG LEWIS FOUNDATION, INC

76 WEST AVENUE LOCKPORT, NY 14094  
PHONE 716-478-0002 FAX 716-478-0281 WWW.GRIGGLEWIS.ORG

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William B May Dan L Wilson Christa Caldwell  
R. Thomas Weeks Mary F. Murphy Brian F. Costello Eric Connor

May 26, 2016

Mayor Anne McCaffrey  
City of Lockport  
Lockport, NY 14094

Re: Lockport Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Mayor McCaffrey:

The Grigg Lewis Foundation is pleased to offer its support for the City of Lockport's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application. We have partnered with the city on a number of projects that have benefitted the community including the construction of Cornerstone CFCU Arena, the planning stages of the Flight of Five project, and projects throughout downtown Lockport by many nonprofit organizations.

If the City of Lockport is awarded funding, the Grigg Lewis Foundation would like to have a role in implementing the projects and programs identified through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. We look forward to working with you to continue to better our community.

Regards,  
GRIGG LEWIS FOUNDATION, INC.

Ms. Chris Smith  
Executive Director

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Attachment G:

### List of Major Investments in Last Five Years

2011:

The stage is set for future development through three grants and an announcement:

The Office of Community Renewal awards Harrison Place a \$250,000 capital improvement grant to create ready-to-rent spaces in portions of the 480,000 square feet facility.

The City of Lockport announces publicly its effort to fully-restore the historic Flight of Five locks. The Grigg Lewis Foundation funds an economic impact analysis performed by Camoin Associates that identifies a potential impact of 230,000 Downtown Lockport visitors each year if the project is completed.

The City of Lockport is awarded \$200,000 for a Microenterprise Program. This program eventually assists eleven businesses and lays the groundwork for a downtown retail business district around the City's tourism district.

Lockport Main Street, Inc, is awarded \$250,000 for a New York Main Street program focused on Downtown Lockport. The program goes on to assist six property owners with facade improvements and creates three upper floor apartment units. The first market-rate downtown apartment units in Lockport since urban renewal.

2012:

Lake Effect Ice Cream, a now staple Lockport business, takes on a \$400,000 project to locate at 79 Canal Street. The business is supported by both a Microenterprise and New York Main Street grant. Most importantly, the business plants a stake right in the City's tourism district, overlooking the Flight of Five and the Erie Canal.

Two more businesses invest private dollars to get closer to the Flight of Five. The Lockport Caves and Underground Boat constructs a new building adjacent to the Erie Canal at about \$150,000. Flight of Five Winery invests \$200,000 to move into one of the most historic buildings in the City of Lockport, Old City Hall. The business overlooks the Erie Canal and the Flight of Five locks.

Trek, Inc., an advanced manufacturing company in the circuit board industry, moves into another prominent building in Downtown Lockport. The company's research and development department is looking for space and eventually the Greater Lockport Development Corporation invests \$500,000 into 57 Canal Street.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Attachment G (*continued*):

### List of Major Investments in Last Five Years

2013:

Trek, Inc., having outgrown its previous location and been convinced of the benefit of locating to an existing building in a downtown versus a new build in a rural area, takes on a \$3.5 million renovation project, rehabilitating 80,000 square feet of the former Harrison Radiator plant. The Harrison Place project is funded through a \$500,000 Niagara County Economic Development Fund loan and a convention loan through Five Star Bank. Trek, Inc. also received a \$500,000 grant through the Office of Community Renewal to purchase equipment. The project brings over 100 employees to Downtown Lockport and sets the stage for additional businesses to move into Harrison Place, which now boasts almost 50 businesses, including several who located to the site solely because they are Trek, Inc. vendors.

2014:

Cornerstone CFCU Arena, a WNY REDC designated “Regional Priority Project,” is constructed in Downtown Lockport. The \$15.5 million project was funded through a \$4 million grant through the Grigg Lewis Foundation, a \$1 million grant through Empire State Development, a \$500,000 grant through the Oishei Foundation, a \$489,000 grant through New York State Electric and Gas, a \$400,000 grant through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, a \$200,000 grant through NYSERDA, a \$1.2 million grant through the Kenan Trust Fund, other smaller sources of grant funding, and conventional financing through then First Niagara Bank.

Phase I of the restoration of the Flight of Five, a \$3 million project funded through the Federal Department of Transportation, the City of Lockport, and the Canal Corporation, is completed.

The WNY REDC names the restoration of the Flight of Five a “Regional Priority Project” and Empire State Development awards a \$1.3 million grant to begin Phase II.

The Office of Community Renewal awards the City of Lockport two Microenterprise Programs totaling \$380,000 to incentivize the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing small businesses in Downtown Lockport. To date, eleven businesses have utilized these funds and have created over 50 new jobs.

The Greater Lockport Development Corporation is awarded a \$250,000 grant through the Office of Community Renewal for a New York Main Street Program. Thirteen downtown property owners have been awarded funding for facade improvements.

Harrison Place eclipses the 200 mark for total employees that work on the campus.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Attachment G (*continued*):

### List of Major Investments in Last Five Years

2015-present:

Trek, Inc. expands 16,000 square feet, adding another 20 jobs immediately and schedules to add more in the next few years. Total project costs is just shy of \$1 million and is funded through equity investments by Harrison Place and the Greater Lockport Development Corporation as well as a \$288,000 Empire State Development loan.

Iskalo Development purchases an iconic, historically significant building in the heart of Downtown Lockport for \$360,000. Iskalo Development also purchases 57 Canal Street, which overlooks the Flight of Five and the Erie Canal, for \$375,000. The prominent Buffalo developer plans to invest over \$2.5 million into the two properties over the next year.

The National Park Service announces the restoration of the Flight of Five is the recipient of a \$200,000 National Maritime Heritage Grant.

# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

Appendix H:

Lockport Market-Rate Apartment Feasibility Study

**PRELIMINARY MARKET ANALYSIS  
DOWNTOWN LOCKPORT MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING MARKET  
CITY OF LOCKPORT, NIAGARA COUNTY, NEW YORK**

**DATE OF ANALYSIS: APRIL 2015**

**PREPARED FOR:** Mr. Brian Smith  
Greater Lockport Development Corporation  
City Hall  
One Locks Plaza  
Lockport, New York 14094

**ANALYST:** GAR ASSOCIATES, INC.  
2399 Sweet Home Road  
Amherst, New York 14228

David M. Carlon  
Analyst

Joseph D. Sievert  
Analyst

M. Scott Allen  
Review Analyst / Vice President

**GAR FILE NO.:** 2015127



**GAR ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
*Real Estate Appraisers and Consultants*

April 13, 2015

Mr. Brian Smith  
Greater Lockport Development Corporation  
City Hall  
One Locks Plaza  
Lockport, New York 14094

Re: Preliminary Market Analysis  
Downtown Lockport Multi-Family Housing Market  
City of Lockport, Niagara County, New York  
GAR File No. 2015127

Dear Mr. Smith:

At your request, GAR Associates has completed the work effort necessary to provide a preliminary analysis of multi-family housing trends impacting the City of Lockport, specifically related to the need for market rate apartments in the downtown corridor. The results of this study have been compiled based on our proposal which indicated that the report would not apply to any particular location or project but rather applies to the general market needs in the City of Lockport.

The goal is to begin the process of gathering and analyzing a wide variety of data and informational resources that can be used to evaluate current and future development plans for market rate apartments in various physical settings.

The compilation of our work efforts will be presented in a narrative document which follows. We will present some of the supporting data and informational resources as addendum items to the narrative report. Within the document we will provide a summarization of the following:

- A general summary of our findings and conclusions relating to different housing needs and prospects.
- An overview of the economics of the area and summarization of key demographics/employment trends.
- General summarization of demographic data for the local market and county as it pertains to the local family (age 18-54) and senior 55+ population. We have not identified any other markets per se, as we have focused our efforts on the rental housing market in Lockport.
- A summarization of the local market rate housing supply, and comparable projects in the greater Western New York area that are loft rehab-style buildings including Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda and Buffalo.
- Analysis of market rent thresholds and levels that can be achieved based on the various options identified.
- An analysis of demand that demonstrates potential support for new multifamily market rate housing.
- A summarization of our general recommendations and conclusions.

**CORPORATE OFFICE:**

2399 SWEET HOME ROAD AMHERST, NEW YORK 14228 TEL.716-691-7100 FAX.716-691-7770 TOLL FREE: 1.800.836.0382

**ALBANY OFFICE:**

915 BROADWAY ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207 TEL.518.694.3770 FAX.518.694.3773 TOLL FREE: 1.800.836.0382



April 13, 2015

Mr. Brian Smith

Page 2

***It is important to note that the preliminary nature of the report and scope of the assignment did not include a site visit as there is no specific site or building included as part of this analysis. We have relied on information from local comparables updated to current, while some of the secondary data reflects verification from the previous 3 to 9 months.***

### ***Key Conclusions***

The City of Lockport market can best be described as a typical Western New York community with an aged housing stock that has seen some recent job growth, but has not seen much activity related to rental housing development. We do however believe there is support for additional market rate multifamily housing in and around the downtown core in a variety of physical structures that could potentially be available. Items to recognize include:

- The demand models and variables that we will present throughout show support for upper end market rate units in smaller mixed-use, commercial and residential walkup buildings, as well as larger loft rehab style buildings similar to existing projects in Buffalo and North Tonawanda.
- We have not considered affordable family or senior housing for this report, and instead have focused solely on market rate housing in the downtown core of Lockport.
- There appears to be an adequate amount of inventory to progress into feasibility for any intended development, but we have no direct knowledge of particular buildings that are for sale or have been acquired for this purpose.

The results may not be surprising. The issue at hand remains how to advance and improve the downtown housing stock with the reality of the economic demographic characteristics impacting the market. We will end up making various recommendations within the context of this document but some of the ***key recommendations*** are:

- Work with the existing physical inventory including vacant and underutilized buildings to create new market rate housing. For the ***conventional renovated apartments***, we recommend utilizing some of the smaller mixed-use, residential and commercial buildings in/around downtown for smaller unit count projects. This will conform with recent trends of existing building renovations to create physically superior rental units on the upper floors of smaller buildings which are gaining an increasing share in many nearby markets. We believe there is support for up to ***70 units*** of unrestricted market rate housing of this type. This would consider redevelopment of many of the existing downtown buildings to create conventional apartments, with good quality finishes and features, but not upscale, availability of parking, and other amenities that typify good quality urban housing. We will provide examples of these housing types for comparison in the supply section later in the report as there are only a few of these apartments currently occupied in the City of Lockport.



April 13, 2015

Mr. Brian Smith  
Page 3

- In regards to **loft rehab buildings/complexes** we again recommend utilizing the existing building inventory to create a larger unit count building/complex which would be similar to some of the most recent projects in North Tonawanda and Buffalo. Our focus of this type of housing product would be on the Harrison Place complex or similar type buildings. We anticipate support for up to **62 units** with one and two bedroom. The features and amenities that will make this project unique to the local market and attract higher rent thresholds would include:
  - High ceiling clearance of 9' to 15'
  - Covered or secured surface parking provided
  - High speed internet and cable available (additional fee discounted bulk rate)
  - In unit washer/dryers
  - Upper end finishes and appliances
  - Hardwood flooring
  - Large windows, exposed walls and duct work, and other loft features.
- A third type of housing, **Live/work lofts** would be supported in this market as a standalone building with up to **22 units**, or these units could be incorporated into a larger loft rehab style project, and would offer very similar design and amenities as the loft rehab project. These would be larger units from a physical size perspective and with higher rent thresholds.

We recommend that the documentation and the information throughout the remainder of this report be reviewed in light of the efforts undertaken. This is a complicated analysis in that the study can advance in many directions and be used as a marketing tool for potential developers. We have attempted to identify the key and core elements to assist your group moving forward and are more than willing to advance the findings, and/or expand the analysis into housing needs as identified by priority for a particular development or project.

On the following pages we will present the results of our analysis in a summary report. Again it is iterated that the results of this analysis should not be used for any specific development objective, project or financing mechanism. Rather, this is more of a broad based study designed to evaluate next steps, and determine which options are best and most favorable for the City of Lockport and local market.

Respectfully,

**GAR ASSOCIATES, INC.**

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# Downtown Lockport Revitalization Initiative

## Appendix I: Lockport Works Description

## **Lockport Works: Workforce Development at Harrison Place**

### *Project Description*

This project will renovate 16,000 square feet of space at Harrison Place that will allow for three impactful community organizations, Isaiah 61, BOCES Literacy Zone, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension's Food Enterprise Center, to locate and expand in downtown Lockport.

Isaiah 61 uses the rehabilitation of blighted homes as a classroom setting for training individuals in the trades. This has a two-fold impact, including developing the workforce for available jobs and enhancing neighborhoods in the community by eliminating blight. Up to this point, Isaiah 61 has only operated in the City of Niagara Falls. By expanding into Lockport at Harrison Place, Isaiah 61 will target dilapidated homes in struggling neighborhoods in Lockport as their next training grounds for individuals struggling to find employment. Harrison Place is immediately adjacent to the neighborhood in Lockport that needs the most attention in this regard. Also, Harrison Place has rehabilitation needs of its own that Isaiah 61 will be able to help with and use as training opportunities for its students. Isaiah 61 will be a driving force behind visual and actual change in the Lockport community once located at Harrison Place.

BOCES Literacy Zone runs a number of successful programs, including helping individuals achieve their high school diplomacy and job placement support. They have outgrown their current space, and have aspirations to bring other programs online, including nursing and training in welding and on CNC machines. A move to Harrison Place means space designed to maximize their programs and the ability to expand into other space should they grow.

The Cornell Cooperative Extension recently received a \$1 million grant through the US Department of Agriculture to perform a feasibility study for a Food Enterprise Center. The Food Enterprise Center's main goal is to grow food-related companies by offering resources and services, including a shared commercial kitchen, culinary workforce development opportunities, and marketing and production support. Originally planned to be located on the Niagara County Fairgrounds, the Food Enterprise Center's impact on the community increases dramatically when located in the heart of Lockport where food access is limited. A location in Harrison Place means potential to grow, space for storage, and an incredible venue in Building 3 for a potential winter market that would support food entrepreneurs and eliminate the void in food access in the South Street neighborhood.

Lockport Works takes these three separate organizations and brings them together in the community that needs them most where they can have the greatest impact possible: Harrison Place. In addition to its impactful location, Harrison Place has assets that are valuable for these organizations. Isaiah 61 will be engaged in the build out of space on the campus- a valuable

training tool for its students and an obvious benefit to the campus to have more space rehabilitated. Businesses that spinoff from the Food Enterprise Center will be in close proximity to H. Sicherman [the Harrison Place Studio], a prominent economic development consultant firm that assists businesses in implementing their projects by accessing public funding. BOCES Literacy Zone has the space to grow into as they identify and execute new programs.

Harrison Place may never be a factory again, but it can produce new businesses and the people those businesses will employ.