



2019 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE (DRI)



FOR THE CITIES OF NORTH TONAWANDA AND TONAWANDA, NY







CITY OF **North Tonawanda**



May 28, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
Empire State Development
95 Perry Street – Suite 500
Buffalo, New York 14203

Honorable Council;

On behalf of the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, we are honored to present you with Twin Cities Together, our proposal for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Twin Cities Together represents collaboration across municipal boundaries by our two cities and the culmination of over ten years of comprehensive planning focused on the redevelopment of our historic downtown communities.

The Twin Cities were built as thriving waterfront industrial communities at the confluence of the Niagara River and the Erie Canal. The changing economic landscape of the twentieth century left the Twin Cities with the same challenges as many upstate New York communities including disinvestment, property neglect and abandonment, and population decline. Despite this, the Twin Cities still remained full of unique assets including historic architecture, a compact downtown, developed infrastructure, and most importantly our one of a kind position on the historic Erie Canal. Over the past decade the Twin Cities have begun to invest in and leverage those assets to spark a downtown resurgence.

The Twin Cities have worked extensively over the past decade putting in place the plans and policies necessary to positioning ourselves for sustainable redevelopment. Working closely with the New York State Department of State, both cities have developed multiple plans focused on waterfront and downtown development, each driven by the input of our residents.

North Tonawanda and Tonawanda were each honored to receive Smart Growth Community Fund designations through Western New York Regional Economic Development Council. The investments both planned and underway that this funding supports are poised to transform the public spaces our DRI area including Gateway Harbor, Young Street, and Webster Street, and upon completion the Twin Cities will provide a quality, attractive, comfortable downtown public experience. Beyond these public

improvements there are still many areas that need development, many opportunities for new business, and many challenges to overcome to build a renewed downtown in the Twin Cities.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative is the opportunity to implement the Twin Cities Together project and invest in a great downtown. If awarded, this initiative would mean development along the Niagara River and Erie Canal waterfronts anchored by a historic downtown filled with culture, arts, recreation, tourism, and a great atmosphere in which to live and work. We strongly believe in this community and the potential it has to blossom into one of the great small downtowns in New York.

Thank you for all of the support the Twin Cities has received from this Council and for the opportunity to be considered for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,



Arthur G. Pappas
Mayor, City of North Tonawanda



Rick Davis
Mayor, City of Tonawanda



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Twin Cities Together, a shared Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application for the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda has been developed based on a background of planning and community engagement. The following proposal follows the format of the DRI application and specifically addresses each question.

BASIC INFORMATION

- REDC Region: **Western New York**
- Municipality Name: **City of North Tonawanda & City of Tonawanda**
- Downtown Name: **Twin Cities**
- County Name: **Erie & Niagara**
- Applicant Contact(s) Name and Title: **Michael Zimmerman, Director of Community Development**
- Applicant Contact(s) Email Address: **mzimmerman@lumbercitydc.com**

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.

United by the Erie Canal and their shared history, a new era has arrived in the Tonawandas. With a unique collaborative approach to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative the “Twin Cities” of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda are poised to catalyze dense, walkable, and affordable new development and blossom into an exciting regional hub of activity. Twin Cities Together is an innovative, ambitious goal for collaborative and community-driven downtown revitalization.



JUSTIFICATION

Historically, the Erie Canal allowed the cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda to become a vibrant, livable, walkable, scenic community on the banks of the Niagara River. Over time the Twin Cities were rich with industry including lumber mills, iron and steel factories, rail yards, and innovations such as the carousel, the band organ, and the iconic Wurlitzer jukebox. Where the waterfront was once reserved for commerce and industry, with strong civic leadership and community pride a new generation of residents have worked to transition this industrial heritage to reactivate public access to the waterfront and reinvigorate downtown commercial areas.

Now in 2019, these building blocks serve as the foundation of a uniquely exciting regional destination for outdoor active tourism, recreation, entertainment, dining, and culture – a manifest expression of the goals of Governor Andrew Cuomo’s vision for the Empire State Trail and Empire State Waterway, which comes into the downtown center of the Tonawandas and continues to the mighty Niagara River.

No other Erie Canal downtown offers recreational tourism access and connection to the diversity of amenities available in the Tonawandas. Situated between Buffalo and Niagara Falls, the Tonawandas are well connected to the region via the Shoreline Trail and across the state via the Erie Canalway Trail. Once fully developed into a regional hub, the Tonawandas will host more residents and visitors seeking a quality urban waterfront experience. Visitors will come to eat, drink, shop, listen to music, experience art and culture, and find new adventures on the Empire State Trail and along the beautiful local waterways.

The Tonawandas seek to continue the momentum of investments made to date including Comprehensive Plan and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program updates, Brownfield Opportunity Area plans, zoning modifications, and Smart Growth Community Fund awards. All of these investments provide the essential foundation to further well planned, incremental, and sustainable growth that will make our communities and neighborhoods stronger.

The Smart Growth Community Fund, awarded to North Tonawanda in 2017 and Tonawanda in 2018, is poised to invest \$5 million into the downtown area with the large majority of that funding going to make the public spaces more attractive, accessible, and walkable. A Tonawandas DRI award would catalyze private development projects to take advantage of the Smart Growth Community Fund by bringing their projects into a new, healthy, vibrant, growing downtown.

An innovative joint DRI investment in the Tonawandas will provide the connectivity and development momentum to cohesively blend the Twin Cities into one contiguous downtown campus and create a distinct experience for visitors, residents, and businesses. Using the DRI, the Tonawandas will leverage existing investments and the significance of the Empire State and Shoreline Trails to implement transformational projects which will make this the greatest “Trail Town” in New York State. The Tonawandas are poised for DRI investment and will meet the vision of both cities to foster a unified, distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place in the Western New York region.



WITH TWO CITIES, TWO COUNTIES, AND TWO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS WORKING TOGETHER, THE TWIN CITIES ARE POSITIONED TO CATALYZE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REGIONAL WATERFRONT DESTINATION.





DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1) Boundaries of the proposed DRI area.

Detail the boundaries of the targeted downtown area or neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the area should be concentrated and well-defined. Neighborhoods beyond traditional central business districts are eligible if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment. Include a map that clearly delineates the area to be included in the downtown revitalization area.

The boundary of the proposed DRI area surrounds the compact and walkable shared downtown waterfront of the Twin Cities, featuring the Erie Canal and Gateway Harbor Park as the central focal point. Within this boundary are portions of both the City of Tonawanda and the City of North Tonawanda, capturing regional opportunities for downtown waterfront revitalization in Erie and Niagara Counties. As shown on the DRI Area Map, the target area is bounded to the north by Veterans Park, to the east by Ellicott Creek and the railroad and surrounding area, to the south by Fletcher Street and Niagara Street and to the west by the Niagara River and includes Tonawanda Island.

Incorporated within the boundary are key planning areas including: North Tonawanda's Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) plan, which includes Webster Street, River Road, Tonawanda Island, Main Street, a portion of Oliver Street and Sweeney Street; the Waterfront Revitalization Area of the City of Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP); and the Tonawanda Main Street Area. Jointly, this proposed DRI Area is founded in locally driven plans and meets the vision for waterfront and downtown development shared by both communities.





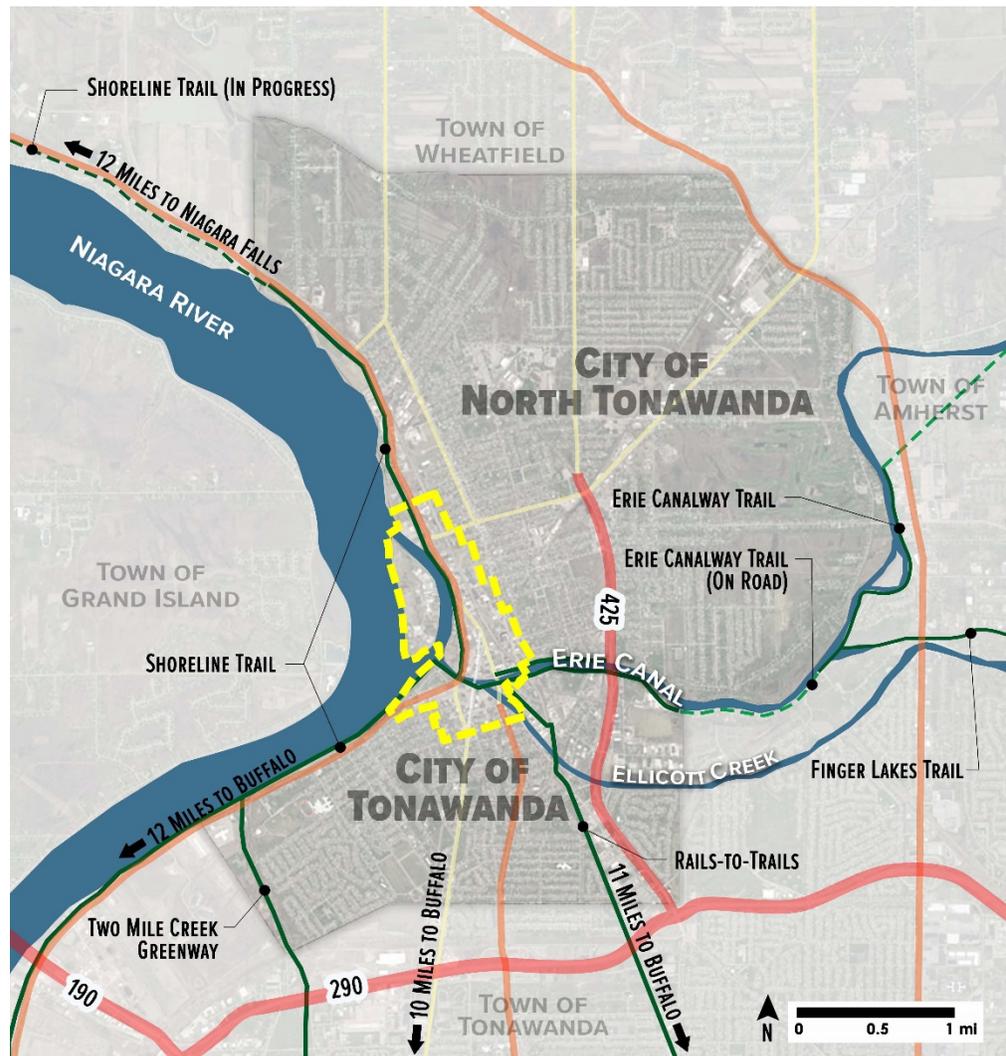
Local and Regional Context

The Twin Cities are nestled between two bodies of water and are rich in natural, cultural, and historic resources. The Tonawandas are composed of a variety of land uses including residential, retail, entertainment, waterfront, manufacturing, commercial and historic downtown business districts. The two cities are physically connected by River Road, the Renaissance Bridge, and the Delaware Street bridge.

A unique feature of the Tonawandas DRI is Tonawanda Island. An 80-acre island in the Niagara River, adjacent to the traditional downtown core and accessible by River Road, this area has extraordinary potential for development that is connected to the downtown. Historically, Tonawanda Island was the hub for the local lumber industry as it provided easy access for water transport. Today, Tonawanda Island is underutilized and contains some industrial and marine dependent uses, while much of the island consists of vacant brownfield sites.

Regionally, the Twin Cities are located between Buffalo and Niagara Falls and are central to the entire Buffalo-Niagara MSA. This location makes the area an accessible destination for residents across the region with its easy access to major routes. Approximately 10 miles from each of these major cities, the area is key to a cyclist-friendly region. The Tonawandas are connected to adjacent communities by a series

of bicycle paths including the Empire State Trail, Erie Canalway Trail, Tonawanda Rails to Trails, and the Shoreline and Riverwalk trails. These trails play an integral role in connecting the Tonawandas to Western New York and beyond.





2) Past investment, future investment potential.

Describe how this DRI area will be able to capitalize on prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas. Describe recent planning efforts that support public and private investment in the proposed DRI area.

The Tonawandas have been a beneficiary of a number of public investments in recent years in infrastructure, real estate development, and business assistance which has leveraged millions of dollars of private development. These investments have had a significant impact in the downtown area by bringing new vibrancy and economic activity, and this success has catalyzed new investments as evidenced by projects currently under development.

The Tonawandas DRI seeks to accelerate the development of the Twin Cities by leveraging these past investments, focusing on unique existing assets, and highlighting and incentivizing the redevelopment of key properties. The result will be economic development projects that feed one another, strengthening the local economy and building a sense of place in the Tonawandas that is attractive to new residents of all ages, income levels and backgrounds.

Example of Public Infrastructure Leveraging Private Development: *East Niagara Street*

Construction of the highly utilized Rails-to-Trails extension has driven interest from developers in the properties along the Erie Canal on East Niagara Street. One example of a successful private development is the transformation of an aging automotive repair shop at the corner of Fillmore Avenue and East Niagara Street into Prescott's Provisions, an upscale eatery that caters to boaters and cyclists. With an investment of a \$650,000 building renovation, the restaurant was opened in 2018. Due to the success of the restaurant a further \$350,000 expansion including outside patio is underway. Developers have also expressed interest in 20-30 Fillmore Avenue which is a former warehouse and scrap yard located across the street from Prescott's Provisions and 72 East Niagara Street a former private school building located just one block away.





PAST IMPROVEMENTS AND FUTURE INVESTMENTS MAP



- SMART GROWTH COMMUNITY FUND**
- 1 Downtown Placemaking*
 - 2 Gateway Harbor Park Improvements*
 - 3 Main Street Streetscape*
 - 4 Young Street Redevelopment*
 - 5 YWCA of the Niagara Frontier*

- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS (Continued)**
- 7 Intermodal Hub
 - 8 Long Homestead Pedestrian Bridge Improvements*
 - 9 Main & Young St Corridor Improvements*
 - 10 Manhattan St Green Infrastructure
 - 11 Niagara River & Ellicott Creek Docks*
 - 12 Oliver St Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation
 - 13 Rails to Trails Extension*
 - 14 Sanitary Sewer Improvements
 - 15 Sweeney St Improvements
 - 16 Tonawanda Island Bridge Reconstruction
 - 17 Webster St Green Infrastructure

- PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS**
- 1 Atomic Barbershop & Salon
 - 2 Billygans Cafe
 - 3 Canal Club 62
 - 4 DestinatioNT/54 Webster St
 - 5 Deyo's Bar
 - 6 Dockside Bar & Grill
 - 7 Enterprise Lumber & Silo
 - 8 Erie County CCIP
 - 9 Koenig Building
 - 10 Legion Bar & Lounge
 - 11 Martinsville Soapworks
 - 12 Microenterprise Business Assistance Program
 - 13 NYMS Redevelopment Program
 - 14 Prescott Provisions
 - 15 Remington Lofts & Tavern
 - 16 Riviera Theatre Expansion
 - 17 Teddy Bear Building Redevelopment
 - 18 Toggery Building
 - 19 Webster's Bistro & Bar
 - 20 Webster's Kitchen
 - 21 Webster St Facade Improvements
 - 22 110 Sweeney St
 - 23 48 Main Street Building
 - 24 60 Main Street
 - 25 600 River Rd Apartments

- LEGEND**
- DRI Boundary
 - Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path
 - Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path Underway

*In Progress, Funded or Planned Project
 **Multiple Locations within the DRI Area

- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**
- 1 ADA Compliant Fishing Pier
 - 2 Canal Statue*
 - 3 Community Peace Garden
 - 4 Empire State Trail Connection
 - 5 Empire State Trail Gateway*
 - 6 Erie Canalway Trail Extension & Kayak Launches



Smart Growth Community Fund

The shared downtown of the Twin Cities serves as a destination for thousands of residents and visitors throughout the region and beyond. Investments in the North Tonawanda and Tonawanda sides of the downtown are implementing smart growth principles through the utilization of existing infrastructure, brownfield reuse, and adding density to a traditional downtown core.

The Twin Cities have many of the ingredients necessary to create a unique sense of place. Few other communities are lucky enough to be home to historic architecture, an arts and cultural anchor such as the Riviera Theatre, both canal and river waterfronts, an island, a strong festival and event calendar, a summertime population of boaters and tourists, and a robust core of local businesses. Couple these assets with existing development opportunities, a strong infrastructure of vested local stakeholders, and the Twin Cities are uniquely positioned to capitalize on the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

In 2017 and 2018, the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council recognized the Tonawandas downtown revitalization efforts by awarding each city \$2.5 million through the Smart Growth Community Fund. This funding is based on the principle that walkable and attractive downtowns will build prosperity and further fuel the renaissance of Western New York. Additional public improvements from numerous other funding sources will enhance investment made through the Smart Growth Community Fund.

2017 Downtown Placemaking Enhancements (\$1,600,000)

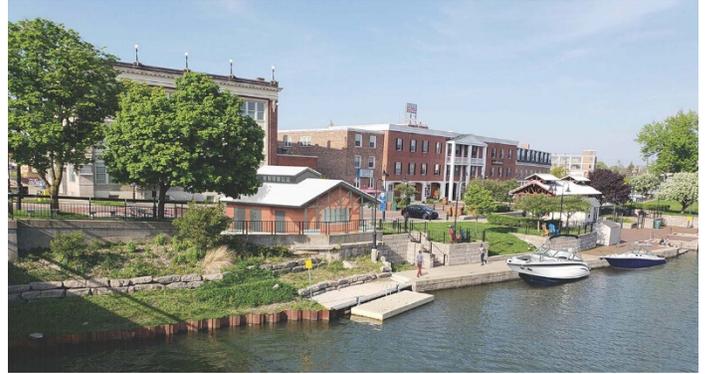
Downtown Placemaking Enhancements through the Smart Growth Community Fund will have the largest impact on the physical environment of North Tonawanda. Through this funding, North Tonawanda hired a professional team of architects and engineers in early 2018 to lead the project. This project had a robust public engagement process which included meetings with the City of Tonawanda to align efforts, an open public meeting held at the Carnegie Art Center, multiple walking tours of Oliver Street, Downtown, and River Road, and community conversations at local businesses. These public engagement sessions have taken a community driven-new urbanism approach to development and have been well attended by members of the community. Projects to be completed through the Downtown Placemaking Enhancements include: enhancements to a municipally owned walkway, improved pedestrian crossings, curb bumpouts, signage and visual improvements at strategic gateway sites, and expansion of Charles Fleishman Park to include seating and a clock feature. These projects are well underway and construction is expected to begin fall 2019.





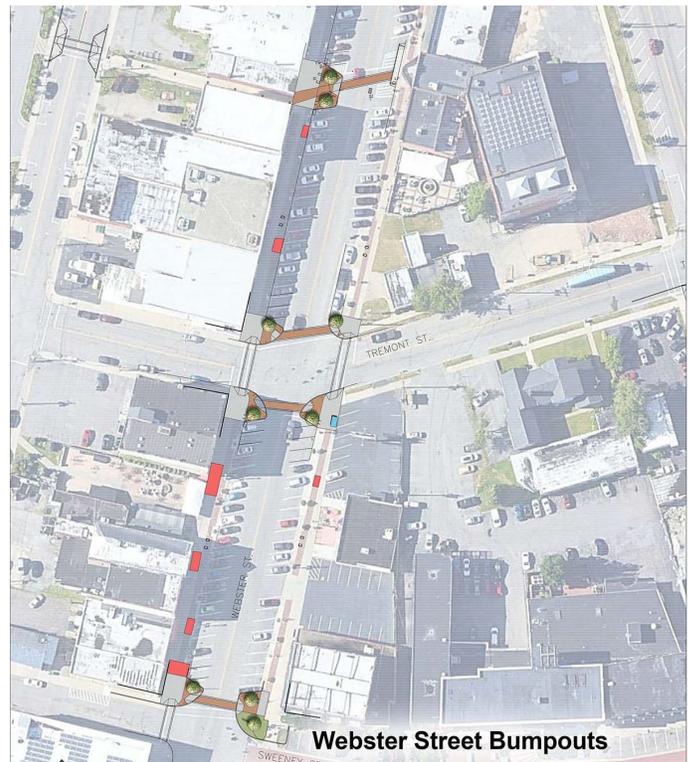
2017 Gateway Harbor Park Improvements (\$1,700,000):

Gateway Harbor on the Erie Canal has become the centerpiece of downtown and a tourist destination for people throughout Western New York. Offering scenic views, direct water access, recreational amenities, and a rich cultural history, Gateway Harbor has become a hub for kayakers, pedestrians, and bicyclists via the adjacent Erie Canal Bike Path. Gateway Harbor is also known for its plethora of events including a summer concert series, Canal Fest, food truck events, holiday celebrations, and a craft market featuring local artisans. As Gateway Harbor increases in popularity, there became a critical need for facility improvements in order to handle the increase in visitors and ensure a high-quality public experience. Upgrades through the Smart Growth Community Fund include: expanded Canal dock space to allow for more boaters; utility upgrades for boaters; a new restroom facility; and park overlook seating areas. Construction is underway and is expected to be completed in July 2019. These enhancements will continue to allow Gateway Harbor to become a regional destination while fostering continued investment in the adjacent downtown area.



2017 Main Street Streetscape Enhancements (\$1,200,000):

North Tonawanda is already a uniquely “green” downtown with rain gardens and bioretention units handling all stormwater management on Webster Street and the large municipal parking lot on Manhattan Street. As private development begins to spread north on Main Street there is a critical need for streetscape improvements to leverage private investment and further enhance the pedestrian friendliness of the area. Northern Main Street, between Island and Thompson Streets is lacking in both pedestrian amenities and necessary municipal infrastructure. Upgrades through the Smart Growth Community Fund include: a green infrastructure project through the use of permeable pavement, bioretention units, and rain gardens; installation of new lighting, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, striping and tree plantings. This project is currently in the final design stage and construction is expected to begin fall 2019.





2018 Young Street Redevelopment

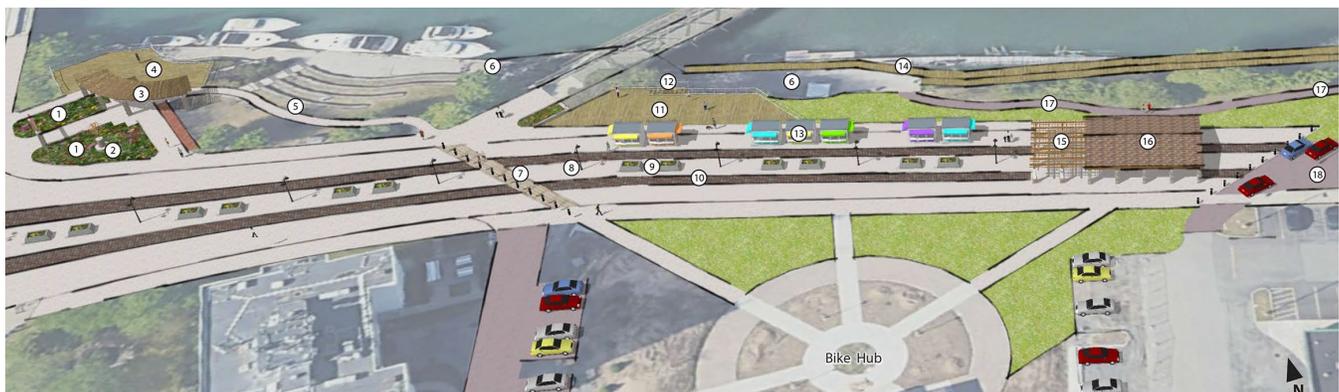
This central downtown waterfront property between Main Street and Delaware Avenue, adjacent to Gateway Harbor Park, has incredible potential to connect with the Erie Canal, Ellicott Creek and the multi-use trails that converge in the Twin Cities. With the development of the Intermodal Hub and the permanent closure of Young Street, this area is ready for the infusion of the \$2.5 million in Smart Growth Community Fund dollars that was awarded in 2018.

Funding will be used to fundamentally alter and improve Young Street, transforming what was a cut-through street and parking lot into a premier downtown waterfront attraction for the community. Specific project elements anticipated include:

- A four-season public pavilion
- Reconfiguration of Young Street into a public plaza with appropriate street lighting, picnic areas, and community space
- Thematic pedestrian connection between the Intermodal Hub and the entrance to the Empire State Trail at the Long-Homestead Bridge

The expanded green space and plaza areas will serve as a destination for public gathering that is connected to the downtown, complements the northern and southern sides of Gateway Harbor Park and improves the connection and accessibility to the Intermodal Hub.

The Young Street project will spur continued enhancement of the waterfront for residents and visitors, while providing opportunities for nearby private development projects to take place that are compatible with a Smart Growth downtown. Design will begin in 2019 with the majority of these projects expected to be completed in 2020.



Notes

- | | |
|---|---|
| ① Remove birch trees to open up view | ⑩ Proposed paver strips collect and infiltrate stormwater runoff (typical) |
| ② Planned copper tree and canal boat sculpture | ⑪ Proposed upper level promenade/overlook, wood with steel cable railings |
| ③ Proposed pergola over existing plaza | ⑫ Proposed stairs from upper level to existing lower level plaza and dock |
| ④ Proposed mid-level overlook, wood with steel cable railings | ⑬ Proposed Caribbean style boardwalk stands |
| ⑤ Existing walkway and amphitheater | ⑭ Proposed dock expansion (per LWRP) |
| ⑥ Existing lower level promenade | ⑮ Proposed pergola |
| ⑦ Proposed "wood plank" style concrete pavers in line with spokes from Bike Hub | ⑯ Proposed pavilion |
| ⑧ Proposed LED Gas Town style pedestrian light posts, double heads (typical) | ⑰ Existing asphalt path |
| ⑨ Proposed large planters, moveable for events (typical) | ⑱ Proposed angled parking and slip lane to connect parking areas to Delaware Street |



2017 YWCA of the Niagara Frontier (\$3,000,000):

The YWCA of the Niagara Frontier is well respected as an organization that strives to empower women, strengthen families, and promote social justice in our communities. The YWCA located on Tremont Street in North Tonawanda has always hosted a number of annual events as well as on-going programming that supports the organization’s mission. The YWCA has committed to a redevelopment project at their North Tonawanda location. This multi-million-dollar project will convert the existing structure into a mixed-use facility featuring 12 studio apartments, programming space, and a social enterprise retail bakery and café space. The addition of new housing units in the area, which will be affordable permanent housing for women, adds critical density as well as adding to the diversity of housing options available in downtown. The project also features a unique social enterprise component in the retail space which will foster the job skills of disadvantaged members of the community. The YWCA, through its robust workforce training capabilities, plans to staff this café and bakery with women in their programs who will be receiving assistance with job training, skills development, and future job placement. This model has been very successful at other YWCA projects in both Niagara Falls and Lockport, and has proven to have very successful impacts on the community. Construction is expected to be completed in 2020.



49 Tremont



Summary of Smart Growth Community Fund Projects

Project	Total Project Cost	Estimated Completion
Downtown Placemaking	\$1,610,000	2019
Gateway Harbor Park Improvements	\$1,700,000	July 2019
Main Street Streetscape	\$975,000	2020
YWCA of the Niagara Frontier	\$3,000,000	2020
Young Street Redevelopment	\$2,500,000	2020



Public Investments

In addition to the Smart Growth Community Fund projects, there are a variety of other public investment projects that have prepared the Twin Cities for a DRI award. The following describes some of these key investments:

Empire State Trail Bike Path Connection (In Process)

With funding awarded in 2019 through NYS DOT and the Niagara River Greenway, a small but critical bike path connection is slated for completion in 2020. Currently the Shoreline Trail along River Road is cut off from downtown and is not functionally connected to the rest of the trail system. This project will extend a dedicated bike path from River Road along the water, connecting to Gateway Harbor in North Tonawanda and also extending over the Renaissance Bridge and connecting to the Intermodal Hub in Tonawanda. Once complete this project will address a critical missing link in the Empire State Trail system and allow regional cyclists a safer, more attractive, and more accessible option for visiting the Twin Cities.

Intermodal Hub

The Twin Cities are uniquely positioned to take advantage of the Blueways and Greenways that pass directly through the downtown urban core. The Intermodal Hub was constructed to capitalize on the City's proximity to the Erie Canal, the Niagara River and Ellicott Creek as well as its prominent location at the nexus of the Canalway trail to the east, Tonawanda Rails to Trails which runs south through both the City of Tonawanda and the Town of Tonawanda into the City of Buffalo, the Shoreline Trail (Erie County Section) which heads west along the Niagara River to Buffalo, and the Shoreline Trail (Niagara County Section) which heads north through the City of North Tonawanda to Niagara Falls. The facility is uniquely positioned to serve residents and tourists arriving by automobile, pedestrians and cyclists utilizing the trail network, boaters docked at Gateway Harbor, and those arriving by bus to the Niagara Street Metro Station located one block away.

The project included construction of an architecturally pleasing comfort station with lockers, bike racks, bicycle fix-it station, vending machines, and water bottle fill station. The Intermodal Hub included creation of public greenspace, on what was a crumbling parking lot, complete with benches and picnic tables to promote public gathering. The facility gives pedestrians, cyclists and boaters an opportunity to stop, refresh and patronize local businesses that surround the area. The project has allowed the Tonawandas to capture trail users who would otherwise pass through the area without stopping to explore downtown to see all that we have to offer. Available parking surrounding the facility has also positioned the site to act as a trailhead where users can start and or finish their journey along the extensive Empire Trail network. The hub has been and continues to be utilized to host various public events run by the City of Tonawanda as well as those run by local non-municipal organizations.





Long Homestead Bridge (In Process)

The City of Tonawanda, with funding assistance through New York State, is set to begin rehabilitation of the Long Homestead Bridge. The historic iron trestle walk bridge serves as a vital connection for pedestrians and bicyclists using the New York State Empire Trail system including the Erie Canalway Trail, Tonawanda Rails to Trails, and the Shoreline/Riverwalk Trail that traverse through the City. The City's recently constructed Intermodal Hub, located across from Gateway Harbor and the walk bridge, offers direct access to bicycle-related amenities, in addition to the numerous restaurants and commercial establishments within the Twin Cities.



The Shoreline/Riverwalk Trail through Niawanda Park is the most heavily utilized Erie Canalway segment in the State, seeing over 600,000 visitors annually according to a NYS Canal Corporation study conducted in 2011. The Long Homestead Bridge represents a vital link between the most highly utilized portion of the Canalway trail network and destinations to the west. The bridge rehabilitation project will ensure that pedestrians and cyclists will have convenient and safe access to the City's economic, recreational, historic, and cultural amenities located on both sides of Ellicott Creek along the Erie Canal.

Oliver Street Redevelopment

Oliver Street Redevelopment has become a key priority for the City of North Tonawanda. By leveraging public and private funds, Lumber City Development has been able to renovate 21 commercial facades on Oliver Street through the New York Main Street Program in 2015 and through the OATH Community Benefit Fund in 2019. The CDBG Microenterprise Assistance program has assisted many Oliver Street businesses including Brownie's Sports Bar & Tavern, Not 2 Shabby, and Superior Tool, all of which have added jobs to our local economy. In early 2018, Lumber City Development completed an Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment through the CDBG Planning program. This robust plan analyzed current market conditions and trends and provided action-oriented strategies for revitalization. Included in the analysis were redevelopment scenarios of key anchor properties in the corridor, which all demonstrated a positive return on investment. Many of the recommendations set forth in the plan have been implemented including a community garden, streetscape enhancements, and a public art project.





Tonawanda Rails to Trails

Erie County, the Town of Tonawanda and the City of Tonawanda have completed construction of the Tonawanda Rails to Trails multi-use path which originates at Kenmore Avenue along the Town of Tonawanda and City of Buffalo border, and runs north through the Town and City of Tonawanda where it ties in to the Erie Canalway Trail at the foot of Fillmore Avenue and East Niagara in the City of Tonawanda's urban center. The multi-use trail connects the region to a beautiful waterfront setting along the Erie Canal and to the future Empire State Trail Gateway. Renewed interest in developing the area demonstrates how public infrastructure investment can be used to spur privately funded development activity.

TONAWANDA RAILS TO TRAILS

This 4.8 mile trail is composed of two segments on top of a former railroad bed in the Town of Tonawanda and the City of Tonawanda. The railroad corridor was operated for both freight and for passenger service dating back to the 1800s. Two track systems were in place. A secondary set of tracks was primarily operated for passenger and freight service by a succession of companies beginning with New York & Erie Rail-Road Co., then the Erie-Lackawanna Railway to 1908. The International Railway Company operated passenger service between Buffalo and Niagara Falls from about 1918 to 1937 on the eastern set of tracks. In 1938, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) acquired the right-of-way (ROW) from the Consolidated Rail Corporation thru New York State legislation. This trail is constructed atop the westerly railroad bed.

In 2002, Erie County initiated the rail to trail project, seeking federal funding and working with partners at the New York State Department of Transportation, NFTA, Town of Tonawanda and the City of Tonawanda on the project planning and funding mechanisms as well as the operation and maintenance needs. This trail, constructed in 2019 by Erie County, is operated by the Town of Tonawanda and City of Tonawanda in their respective jurisdictions thru a cooperative agreement with the NFTA.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 1 City of Tonawanda Offices
- 2 Glendon Park
- 3 Eastern Park
- 4 Ives Park
- 5 City of Tonawanda Library
- 6 Long Homestead
- 7 Gateway Harbor
- 8 Central Business District
- 9 Intermodal Hub
- 10 Cardinal O'Hara High School
- 11 Brighton Park
- 12 Elmwood Cemetery
- 13 Kenney Field/Veterans Memorial
- 14 St. Amelia's School
- 15 Kenmore East High School
- 16 Edison Elementary
- 17 Aquatic & Fitness Center
- 18 Herbert Hoover Elementary & Middle Schools
- 19 Town of Tonawanda Police Department
- 20 Curtis Playground
- 21 Kenmore West High School
- 22 St. John's School
- 23 Elwood Playground
- 24 Ben Franklin Elementary & Middle Schools
- 25 Kenmore Branch Library
- 26 Lincoln Park
- 27 Kenworth Playground
- 28 Kenworth Branch Library
- 29 Town of Tonawanda Offices
- 30 St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute

TRAIL LEGEND

- Tonawanda Rails To Trails
- Trail Access Point
- P Parking

Summary of Public Investments

Projects	Total Project Cost	Completion Status
ADA Compliant Fishing Pier	\$360,000	Completed
Canal Statue	\$30,000	2020
Community Peace Garden		Complete
Empire State Trail Connection	\$490,000	2020
Empire State Trail Gateway	\$500,000	2020
Erie Canal Bicycle Path Extension	\$299,000	Completed
Erie Canal Public Kayak Launches	\$142,000	Completed
Intermodal Hub	\$1,430,000	Completed
Long Homestead Pedestrian Bridge Improvements	\$2,100,000	2021
Main & Young Improvements	\$450,000	2020
Manhattan Street Green Infrastructure	\$265,000	Completed
Niagara River and Ellicott Creek Docks	\$850,000	2020
Oliver Street Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation	\$400,000	Completed
Tonawanda Rails to Trails	\$3,850,000	Completed
Sanitary Sewer Improvements (Phase 7)	\$1,250,000	Completed
Sanitary Sewer Improvements (Phase 8)	\$1,950,000	2019
Sweeney Street Improvements	\$750,000	Completed
Tonawanda Island Bridge Reconstruction	\$3,000,000	Completed
Webster Street Green Infrastructure	\$575,000	Completed



Private Investments

DestinatioNT/54 Webster Street Redevelopment (In Process)

DestinatioNT is the latest private redevelopment project currently happening in downtown North Tonawanda. Located in the former G.C Murphy's department store on Webster Street, this 30,000 square foot building was underutilized for decades. Now, the property is undergoing significant renovations to become three floors of mixed-use professional, retail and office space. Spot Coffee has been secured as an anchor Webster Street tenant and is scheduled to open in summer 2019.



Additional ground floor tenants are currently being secured including a restaurant and professional office spaces. This building is conveniently located adjacent to the Manhattan Street municipal parking lot and in the heart of Webster Street. Completion of this key anchor building will continue to transform the Twin Cities into a vibrant, 24/7 corridor.

Enterprise Lumber & Silo (In Process)

The Enterprise Lumber and Silo redevelopment project at 211 Main Street includes rehabilitation of a dilapidated former lumber mill into 17,000 square feet of Class A office space. This project is being led by two local women architects who will move their offices into a portion of the building. The developers envision a business-to-business design service collaborative and work environment for emerging businesses seeking office space that is an outward reflection of neighborhood revitalization. This facility will also provide space for larger conversations, community presentations, special interest symposiums, evening lectures and create an educational platform for collaboration with North Tonawanda High School's Architecture and Engineering Academy. The Enterprise Lumber & Silo project advances the NT Momentum plan and upon completion will be the catalyst for development along this northern entrance of Main Street. This project is currently in the Brownfield Clean-Up Program and construction is scheduled to begin in summer 2019.





Historic Riviera Theatre Expansion Project (In Process)

The Historic Riviera Theatre is the cultural, artistic, and economic anchor of Webster Street in the Tonawandas. This performing arts center, built in 1926 was saved from demolition in the early 1980s, and recently celebrated its 90th anniversary. Patrons fall in love with this historic gem attracting over 100,000 visitors to the area each year, directly benefiting the numerous restaurants and retailers throughout the Tonawandas.

However, the Riviera Theatre lacks modern amenities for both patrons and performers, limiting the facility's ability to grow and continue to host national acts. Hence, the Riviera Theatre, in partnership with Lumber City Development Corporation, has embarked on an ambitious expansion project. A \$4.5 million, 13,000 square foot expansion is in development for 2020 and will include full ADA accessibility, modern patron restrooms, much needed equipment storage space, an attractive lobby and bar area, and a new Main Street marquee and entrance.

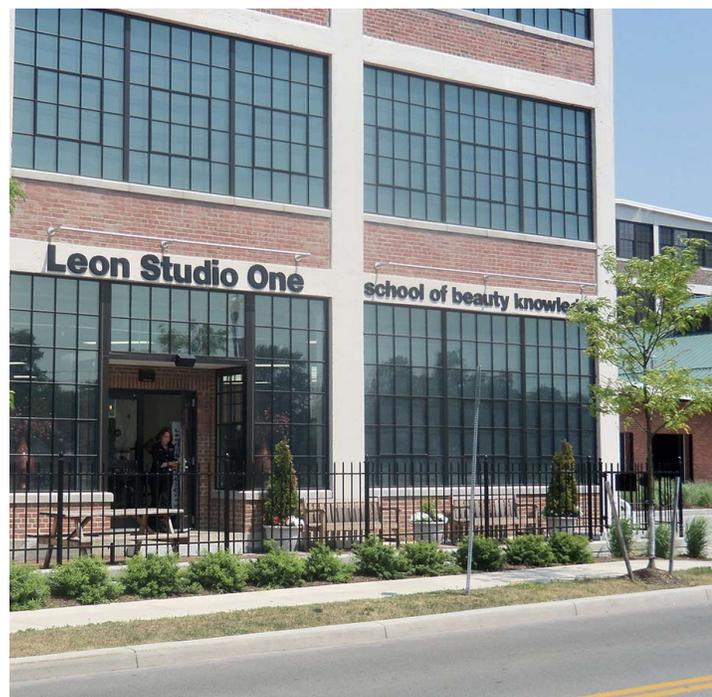
The expansion of the Riviera Theatre is critical to the sustainability of the organization, as well as the long-term economic health of Downtown. Schematic designs and a capital campaign plan have been completed in 2019 and the Riviera Theatre is fully committed to completing this long-awaited expansion and establishing the best performing arts center in the region.





Remington Lofts on the Canal and Remington Tavern and Seafood Exchange

Opened in 2011, the Remington Lofts converted a 175,000 square foot former factory building in 81 high-end lofts and three commercial spaces. Over \$1 million in public investment and access to both historic and brownfield tax credit programs leveraged over \$20 million worth of private investment into a critical historic property on the Erie Canal. The Remington Lofts has established a new, viable market for downtown living and has attracted the interest of new businesses and developers to the area. As the anchor commercial tenant at the Remington Lofts, the Remington Tavern was opened in 2012 and immediately became one of Western New York's hottest restaurants. This 9,000 square foot facility is an adaptive reuse of the oldest portion of the Remington complex, the historic "Power house" building. Development of this restaurant was over \$1 million and was supported by \$250,000 worth of State assistance. Today, the Remington Tavern employs over 40 people and has helped put the Twin Cities on the map as a go-to place for dining and entertainment in the region.



Teddy Bear Building Redevelopment and Canal Club 62:

A 10,000 square foot former Masonic lodge in the heart of Webster Street sat vacant and dilapidated for close to ten years. In dire need of significant renovation, assistance provided by multiple agencies was able to attract a developer and restaurateur to take on this challenging project. \$445,000 worth of grants and low-interest loans leveraged a total redevelopment of close to \$1.5 million. Today this historic property is home to a beautiful restaurant and unique office space.



Webster Street Redevelopment

Leveraging funds provided by previous State programs including the New York Main Street program, the Yahoo Community Benefit Fund for Niagara County, and the CDBG Microenterprise Assistance program, North Tonawanda has been able to assist façade redevelopment at nineteen commercial properties and have also assisted in the start-up or expansion of eleven small businesses on Webster Street. These State assistance programs allowed North Tonawanda to support a group of entrepreneurs including Webster's Kitchen, Pulp

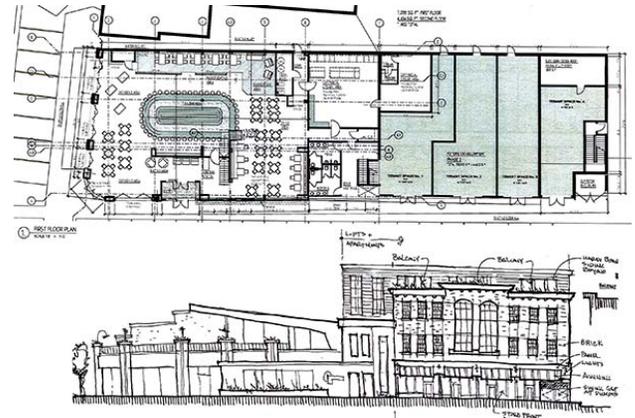




716, Martinsville Soapworks, and Partners in Art, who have developed a strong and committed business community on Webster Street.

110 Sweeney Street Redevelopment (In Process)

Located at a key property adjacent to the Erie Canal and Gateway Harbor, the 110 Sweeney Street project will include 23,000 square feet of new mixed-use space. This vacant eyesore will be transformed into a waterfront restaurant with rooftop dining, 16 market rate residential units, and first floor commercial/retail space. This project will transform the landscape of Gateway Harbor and increase activity and vibrancy along our waterfront. This project is currently in design development and is expected to be completed in 2020.



Summary of Private Investment Projects

In addition to the featured projects described above, there are a variety of private developers and business owners who have invested in the downtown through building improvements or renovations for the opening of a new business. This investment reflects the potential of the area for meaningful revitalization. The following is a summary of these private investment projects.

Project	Total Project Cost	Private Dollars	Public Dollars	Status
Atomic Barbershop & Salon				Complete
Billygans Café				Complete
Canal Club 62	\$500,000	\$365,000	\$135,000	Complete
DestinatioNT- phase 1	\$1,144,000	\$1,144,000	\$0	2020
Deyo's Bar & Grill				Complete
Dockside Bar & Grill Renovation	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$0	Complete
Enterprise Lumber & Silo (211 Main Street)	\$2,300,000	\$1,600,000	\$700,000	2020
Erie County Commercial Center Improvement Program (CCIP)	\$207,423	\$103,712	\$103,712	Complete
Gateway Harbor Center Redevelopment*	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$0	Complete
Koenig Building				Complete
Legion Bar & Lounge				Complete
Leisure Living Redevelopment	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$0	Complete
Martinsville Soapworks (88 Webster Street)	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	Complete
Microenterprise Business Assistance Program	\$1,492,200	\$832,200	\$660,000	Complete



Project	Total Project Cost	Private Dollars	Public Dollars	Status
New York Main Street (NYMS) Redevelopment Program: Main Street (Submitting application)	\$300,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	2019
New York Main Street-(NYMS) Redevelopment Projects: Oliver Street	\$335,000	\$190,000	\$145,000	Complete
Prescott's Provisions Development	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$0	Complete
Prescott's Provisions Expansion	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$0	2019
Remington Lofts on the Canal	\$30,000,000	\$18,850,000	\$11,150,000	Complete
Remington Tavern	\$1,000,000	\$650,000	\$350,000	Complete
Riviera Theatre Site Remediation	\$440,000	\$0	\$440,000	Complete
Riviera Theatre Expansion Project	\$4,500,000	\$3,300,000	\$1,200,000	2020
Simmers Crane*	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$0	Complete
Teddy Bear Building Redevelopment (64 Webster Street)	\$660,000	\$350,000	\$310,000	Complete
Toggerly Building				Complete
Webster's Bistro and Bar	\$550,000	\$415,000	\$135,000	Complete
Webster's Kitchen	\$142,000	\$107,000	\$35,000	Complete
Webster Street Façade Improvements	\$380,800	\$130,800	\$250,000	Complete
110 Sweeney Street	\$3,325,000	\$2,525,000	\$800,000	2020
330 East Niagara Apartments	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	2019
48 Main Street Building Storefront				2019
60 Main Street Building – Initial Improvements	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$0	2019
600 River Rd Apartments	\$20,600,000	\$18,000,000	\$2,600,000	2019
618 Delaware	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$0	Complete



Commitment to Planning Programs

While public and private investment momentum has slowly built in recent years, the Tonawandas have been hard at work planning and preparing for a significant opportunity to grow the community. The Tonawandas DRI is that opportunity.

In the past eight years Tonawanda and North Tonawanda have combined to complete 11 significant plans or programs, each of which has informed the DRI process. These plans are valued at \$1,775,450, representing a significant State commitment to a sustainable development future in the Tonawandas.

These plans not only identify the wealth of development potential in the Tonawandas but were also built through a broad coalition of local stakeholders, residents, and community groups. The end result is a community well prepared to capitalize on the DRI opportunity.

Planning Program	Amount
City of North Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA)	\$598,500
City of North Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)	\$95,500
Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment	\$50,000
City of North Tonawanda Downtown Parking Analysis	\$2,000
City of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan	\$110,000
City of Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)	\$75,000
Niagara Street Corridor Study	\$150,000
City of Tonawanda Central Business District Form Based Zoning	\$10,000
City of Tonawanda Waterfront Mixed Use Zoning District	\$10,000
City of Tonawanda Zombie and Vacant Properties Remediation & Prevention	\$300,000
Tonawanda Main Street Program and Related Technical Assistance	\$374,450

Development Ready

In addition to over a decade of planning, the Twin Cities have the necessary tools and incentives in place to attract future development including:

North Tonawanda:

- Form-based zoning code for Downtown District and incentive-based zoning for Waterfront District;
- Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for Downtown and Waterfront;
- 5% bonus to State brownfield tax credit program through designated Brownfield Opportunity Area;
- Various programs and incentives available from Lumber City Development and Niagara County including PILOT program, low cost hydro-power, low-interest financing, brownfields clean-up program, and microenterprise loan program;
- State and Federal Historic tax credits;
- State low-income housing tax credits;
- Completed economic pro-formas, feasibility studies and marketing analyses for key development sites;
- 3-D Model of NT Momentum redevelopment plan;
- Completed River Road traffic study and North Tonawanda local housing study;
- NT Momentum branding; and
- Site control of key development opportunities.



City of Tonawanda:

- Formation of a Local Development Corporation (LDC);
- Economic Development Plan;
- Main Street Conceptual Master Plan;
- Complete Streets Action Plan and Policy Guide;
- Downtown Tonawanda Parking Study;
- Preservation Pocket Guide;
- Tonawanda Main Street Historic Resources Survey;
- Vacant Property Strategies and Interventions;
- Tonawanda Main Street Brand Standards;
- Vision Plan for Tonawanda Main Street and City of Tonawanda LDC;
- Various programs and incentives available from Erie County Industrial Development Agency;
- State low-income housing tax credits;
- Completed economic pro-formas for key downtown properties; and
- State and Federal historic tax credits.

City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation

Seeing the positive impact development tools can have on the downtown, the City of Tonawanda has been working to establish a framework for attracting future development. In 2016, Tonawanda Main Street began developing as a sustainable grassroots community organization focused on downtown revitalization in the City of Tonawanda. Funded by the City of Tonawanda, in partnership with the Western Erie Canal Alliance, and a grant from the New York State Department of State under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund, Tonawanda Main Street focused on identifying and implementing the best organizational structure to achieve the vision for downtown revitalization. With careful consideration, it was determined that the City of Tonawanda needed a local development corporation (LDC) to foster economic opportunities in the community. In July of 2017, the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (LDC) was formed and Tonawanda Main Street became a committee of the LDC. With the LDC and Tonawanda Main Street established, the main street program grant was used to prepare the organization to actively pursue opportunities. A range of technical assistance tools were developed including an Economic Development Plan complete with an economic profile and project pro formas, Main Street Conceptual Master Plan and other planning documents that address key issues like parking, complete streets, historic preservation and vacant properties. As a result of this main street program, the City of Tonawanda is prepared to engage development opportunities and work collaboratively with the development efforts of North Tonawanda for a cohesive downtown development strategy.

Federal Opportunity Zone

The large majority of the Tonawandas DRI area was also recently designated within the new Federal Opportunity Zone. The Opportunity Zone program offers a new and innovative tool for driving significant private investment into traditionally underserved and disinvested areas. With all of the development potential in the cities, the Tonawandas are poised to take full advantage of the new Opportunity Zone program.



3) Recent or impending job growth.

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

A century ago the Tonawandas were home to large industrial companies fueled by shipping on the Erie Canal and the Niagara River. These industrial workers raised their families in the dense surrounding neighborhoods and new homes, roads, and schools were built to support the growing population. As the role of the Erie Canal was replaced by rail and industries began to close, both cities experienced significant job losses and decades of economic decline.

While a number of manufacturing and industrial companies remain viable in the Tonawandas, the economic future of the Twin Cities is once again dependent on capitalizing on Erie Canal and the Niagara River. But in this century these waterways will drive new residents and tourists to the area, bolstering an economy built on arts, recreation, entertainment, and tourism.

The success and viability of a community is closely tied to population indicators and various types of employment available in an area. Currently, the employment base in the Twin Cities is diverse and includes well-paying jobs in a variety of industry sectors.

According to the 2012 United States Economic Census, manufacturing still remains a productive industry in the Tonawandas, and employs over 2,277 people, and accounts for 20% of employment. By comparison, manufacturing accounts for 7.5% of employment in New York State, and 11.3%

nationally. In Niagara County, manufacturing is still the largest economic driver, bringing in 953 million dollars annually into the region.

Education, health and social services account for 25.5% of jobs in North Tonawanda, and 20% of jobs in Tonawanda, according to US Census Bureau estimates. In North Tonawanda, DeGraff Memorial Hospital is one of the largest and most stable employers in the city with over 500 employees.

The retail trade industry remains a strong component of the Twin Cities employment base at 11.3% (North Tonawanda) and 12.4% (Tonawanda), which is similar to the nation's retail trade employment level of 11.5% for the 2006-2008 period. Growth in the Tonawandas anchored on a burgeoning arts, culture and recreational economy, will drive future retail growth in the area.

A positive sign for the Twin Cities is the growth of the professional and management industries, which now account for 9% (North Tonawanda) and 5.1% (Tonawanda). Professional and management industries typically offer higher pay and greater benefits, offering a potential increase in disposable income for households and an improved quality of life. The Tonawandas aim to attract these types of industries who are typically comprised of young professionals who want to live, work, and play in downtown as well as spend their dollars locally.

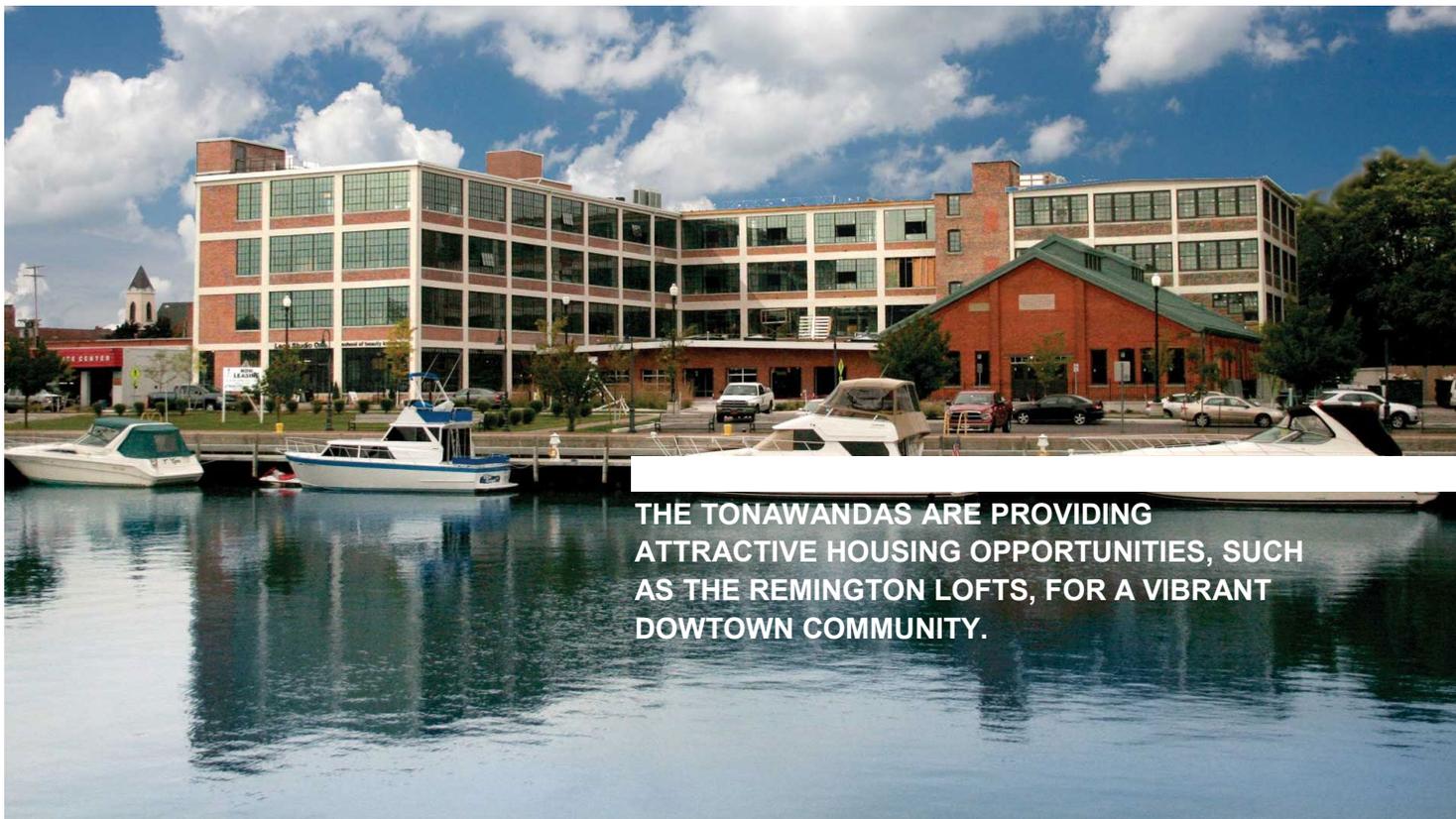


The Enterprise Lumber and Silo development at 211 Main Street will catalyze upon this effort by becoming a hub for design specific industries such as architecture, planning, and design. Included in the project is a co-working space which will allow for creative collaborations amongst these industries. It is estimated that this development will employ 49 people. Existing market rate housing opportunities at the Remington Lofts (80 units), 600 River Apartments (102 units), and the pending Colonel Payne Apartments (37 units) will further attract these professionals who live an active life downtown and support sustainable long-term growth.

Employment in the tourism industry (arts, culture, and recreation) has grown significantly since 2012. The opening of new downtown stores, restaurants, and businesses has brought over 100 new jobs to downtown. Completion of the Riviera Theatre expansion

project, a 2015 priority project for the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, is projected to create 14 new jobs. There have been ongoing efforts to develop a hotel in the downtown core, which would create more job opportunities and compliment the growing tourism industry. According to a professional study, the economic impact of an 80-room hotel would create 21 direct and indirect jobs, as well as invest over \$1.3 million dollars annually into the local economy.

Downtown Tonawanda is home to 37 service-based businesses including an art school, community organizations, daycare center, dental office, medical office, and more, as well as 12 professional offices including law offices, accounting, insurance and real estate. Including 20 restaurants, all of these businesses create significant day time density in the City of Tonawanda.



THE TONAWANDAS ARE PROVIDING ATTRACTIVE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES, SUCH AS THE REMINGTON LOFTS, FOR A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY.



TPW Websites is located at the corner of Main St and Niagara Street in the City of Tonawanda at the foot of the Renaissance Bridge which connects the Twin Cities. The company specializes in publishing K-5 teaching resources and currently operates multiple websites for elementary school teachers. TPW Websites employs computer programmers, content writers, graphic artists, along with marketing and customer relations professionals. The local startup has outgrown its current location at 2 Main Street and wishes to expand into new office space in a former bank building located next door at 6 Main Street. TWP Websites purchased the old bank building, which was constructed in 1929, and has done some work to stabilize the facility. Once renovations have been completed, the firm has plans to add full time staff immediately and will have the room to grow further.

60 Main Street is a currently developing space that will repurpose the former American Legion building into a destination for business development and retail opportunities. Planned to accommodate between 12 and 20 businesses, the developer is creating a space that is a social environment where local residents can gather and socialize alongside resident businesses and they grow and thrive.

In the Tonawanda's catchment area there will be an increase in the number of new jobs available in the next five years. According to a market analysis performed by Camoin Associates, it is projected there will be a 2% increase in job opportunities across various industry sectors. The future economy of the Tonawandas will not likely be driven by one single industry, but will grow and prosper through the provision of safe, convenient, affordable, and high-quality atmosphere that attracts a diverse range of businesses and residents.

Job diversity is abundant in the Twin Cities as there are many opportunities available for those with different skill levels and salary levels. The Tonawandas have a history of a strong workforce and strive to become a beacon in workforce development. Many companies provide valuable on the job training, but also partner with local agencies such as Niagara BOCES, Erie BOCES, Niagara Worksource One, Niagara Community College, Erie Community College, SCORE, and the Small Business Development Center to provide job training and a strong labor pool for local companies.



As previously noted, the Tonawandas are still home to a strong manufacturing economy which provides stable, high quality employment opportunities.

Many of these companies, located within the downtown area, or in the immediate vicinity to downtown, are either working towards or have completed facility expansions. These projects include: a major facility expansion at Armstrong Pumps which would support over 200 jobs; a 40,000 square foot new facility for Taylor Devices; a newly completed headquarters for Ivy Lea Construction which supports over 40 jobs; a 24,000 square foot relocation and expansion of Platter's Chocolate Factory which created 39 new jobs; and a 6,000 square foot new facility for Woodcock Brothers Brewery at the Wurlitzer Building which created 40 new jobs. These companies, large and small, are bringing new jobs to the Tonawandas and it is imperative that the downtown district be prepared to provide the best opportunities for these employees to live, work, and play all in their own community.

The City of Tonawanda is home to the former Spaulding Fibre, a 47-acre property located close to Downtown. The Spaulding Fibre plant operated in the City from 1911 to 1992, at one point employing 1,500 people. After the plant

closed, contamination at the site was remediated with public funds. Today, the Spaulding Fibre site provides a significant opportunity for job growth and revenue generation to benefit the City of Tonawanda. The reuse of this property would attract professionals and other workers to the area, helping to stimulate new business activity in Downtown Tonawanda.

Simmers Crane was the first to purchase land within the newly named Spaulding Commerce Park. Simmers Crane provides design, inspection, and crane repair services throughout the United States. The \$1.3 million Tonawanda facility consists of over 15,000 square feet of warehouse and over 5,000 square feet of office and currently has 35 employees.

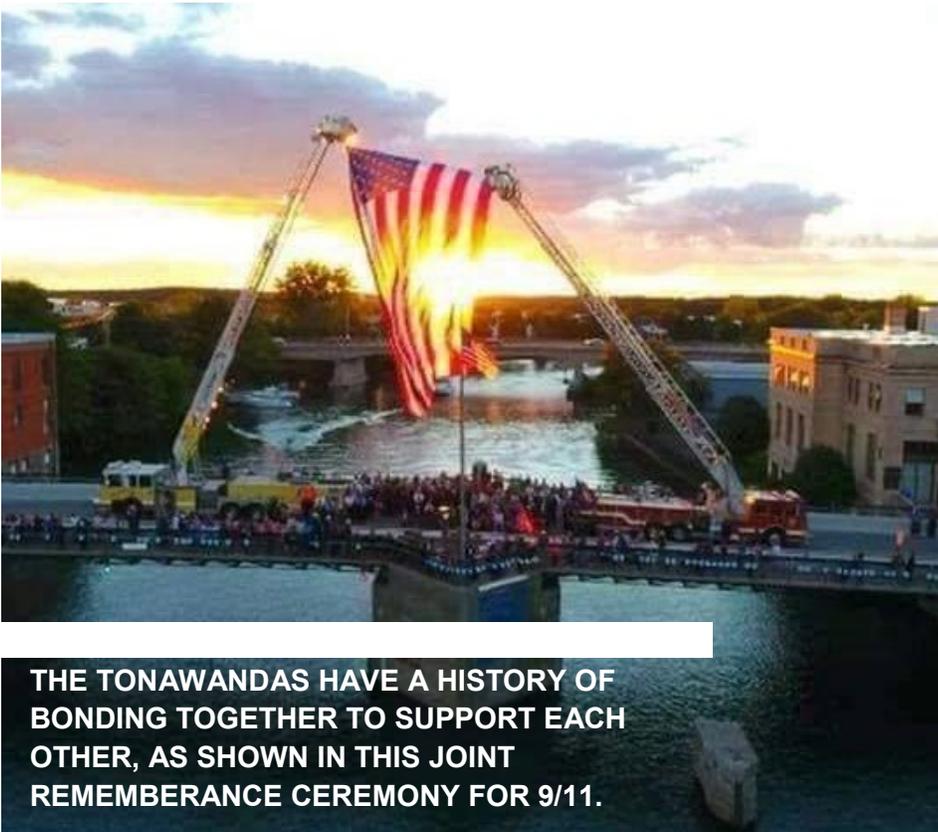
With so many opportunities for job growth in proximity to the Tonawandas, it is critical to the success of the Buffalo-Niagara region as a whole that these employees have access to the type of traditional downtown that is so attractive to the next generation of the American workforce. The Tonawandas accessible location, cultural amenities, waterfront features, and quality of life make it an ideal area for the next generation of western New Yorker to call home.



4) Attractiveness of physical environment.

Identify the properties or characteristics that the DRI area possesses that contribute, or could contribute if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown for a diverse population of varying ages, income, gender identity, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, varied housing types at different levels of affordability, walkability and bikeability, healthy and affordable food markets, and public parks and gathering spaces.

The goal of the collaborative DRI approach between the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda is to leverage public and private investments to create a unified and interconnected environment in and around the central business district, centered around Gateway Harbor, that would be a catalyst for increased tourism, economic development, recreation and public interaction. The Tonawandas greatest asset is being located at the confluence of the Niagara River, Erie Canal, and Ellicott Creek. These waterways are home to public parks and open space that support extensive recreational activity. Both downtown areas have been developed adjacent to the waterfront and provide shopping, commercial, and service establishments that satisfy needs of residents, youth, seniors, workers, and visitors. The unique waterfront access, physical connections, and regional location enhance both downtown areas. However, the Twin Cities still offer a number of opportunities for improvement to allow for the creation of a more prosperous and harmonious city center.

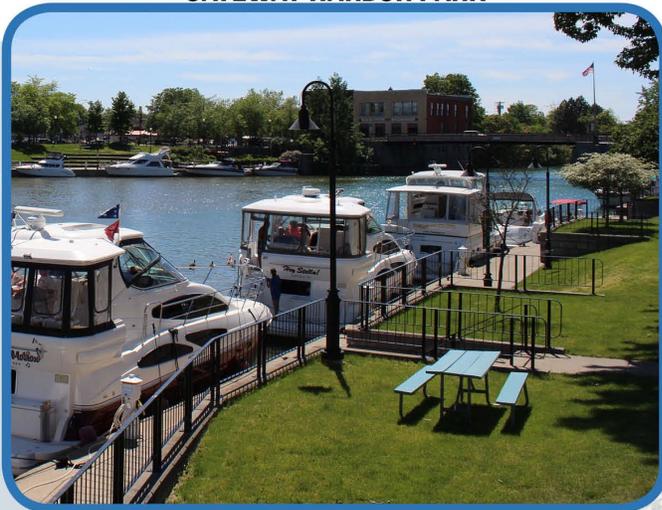


THE TONAWANDAS HAVE A HISTORY OF BONDING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER, AS SHOWN IN THIS JOINT REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY FOR 9/11.



KEY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

GATEWAY HARBOR PARK



CARROUSEL FACTORY MUSEUM



KIDDIELAND



RIVIERA THEATRE



BENJAMIN LONG HOMESTEAD



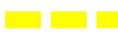
CLINTON PARK



HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM



LEGEND

-  DRI Boundary
-  Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path
-  Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path Underway



Historic Resources along the Erie Canal

From its opening in 1825, the Erie Canal has been an integral part of the development of the Twin Cities. Their position on this extraordinary corridor that connected the bustling harbors of New York City with the Great Lakes, gave the Twin Cities a substantial start in development and commerce. Our two historic downtowns are water focused, each with waterfronts on the Erie Canal and the Niagara River, with historic architecture dating back to the late 19th century. In 2018, the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas created the “Heritage Tour of the Tonawanda’s”. This online narrated walking tour with accompanying map guides users through 26 historic sites throughout the Tonawandas including the Richardson Boat Company, Tonawanda Armory, and various veterans’ memorials.

Gateway Harbor Park

The Twin Cities have a shared urban park, known as Gateway Harbor Park, which occupies a horseshoe area covering both shores of the canal. From both the Tonawanda and North Tonawanda sides of the park, this area is very walkable and provides direct physical and visual connection to the waterfront. Gateway Harbor has become a premier destination for the Western New York boating community and boasts ample recreational amenities such as bicycle path connections, the Greenways/Blueways Intermodal Transportation hub, water bike rentals, and kayak launches.

EVERY YEAR THE TASTE OF THE TONAWANDAS BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER IN GATEWAY HARBOR.





Anchor Attractions

[Historic Riviera Theatre](#)

Downtown is anchored by the Historic Riviera Theatre, home of the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ. This historic movie house, built in 1926 was once slated for demolition but now has become a regional destination and the “face” of Webster Street.

[Arts and Culture Amenities](#)

The Tonawandas have found their niche in the arts and culture amenities, which has become a point of pride in both communities. In addition to the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda, the newly renovated Carnegie Art Center, Ghost Light Theater, and Project 308 Art Gallery have begun to draw the creative professionals that downtowns thrive on. On any night of the week, a downtown visitor can partake in many classes and workshops including stained glass creations at Gleam & Glimmer Stained Glass Studio, art classes at Patrick Sean Daley Studios, soap making at Martinsville Soap works, cooking classes and demonstrations at Webster’s Kitchen, painting classes at Partner’s in Art, a variety of live music at Stamps the Bar, and retro-style in store events at Cats Like Us.

[Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum](#)

The Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum is located in the dense residential area that supports the DRI boundary. This attraction is a premier national historic site and community resource for family recreation and learning that fosters an appreciation for the unique heritage of the carousel and related industries in the Niagara region. Through educational, cultural and recreational programming, visitors will experience the places, people, stories, and artifacts associated with the production of carousels, band organs and amusement devices. Exhibits include a wood carving shop, music roll shop, a full sized 1916 carousel, and an outdoor Kiddieland with restored rides.

[Benjamin Long Homestead](#)

The Benjamin Long Homestead is a historic house museum on a picturesque Long’s Point Park that situated between the Erie Canal and Ellicott Creek. This 3-story, 10-room house, was built in 1829 along the towpath of the 1825 Erie Canal. Maintained by the Historical Society of the Tonawandas, the homestead offers a glimpse into the life of a prosperous family in that era with guided tours through the fully restored house that has been decorated antique furnishing of the Empire and Early Victorian period.

[Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum](#)

Home to the Historical Society of the Tonawandas, this historic train station houses numerous semi-permanent and rotating exhibits that cover the local history of the Tonawandas. Located at the southern gateway to the downtown, the 1886 New York Central Railroad Station welcomes visitors to this historic canal community.

A UNIQUE ATTRACTION IN THE TONAWANDAS





Commercial Corridor

The corridor of Webster and Main Streets is the heart of downtown activity in the Twin Cities. This historic core features the quintessential “Main Street” urban form of buildings close to the streetline, mixed-use retail and residential properties, on-street parking, active sidewalks, appropriately scaled streetlights, and crosswalks. This downtown area is comfortably walkable and centered on Gateway Harbor Park.

Year-round Events

Although the Tonawandas see the greatest influx of visitors in the summer months, there is certainly no lack of events year-round. In addition to Canal Fest, Haunted Harbor, Taste of the Tonawandas, a weekly concert series, and Food Truck Thursdays, the Webster Street Downtown Merchants Association and Tonawanda Main Street have been instrumental in organizing events such as the Lumber City Winterwalk, Tonawanda Main Street and the City of Tonawanda’s ‘It’s a Wonderful Night’ Main Street Celebration with the annual tree lighting ceremony at Clinton Park, adopt a planter events, Small Business Saturday, and many more.

Smart Growth Community Fund

The Tonawandas have been the beneficiary of the Smart Growth Community Fund. This funding has allowed the Tonawandas to enhance the public realm to promote walkability, bikeability, and user friendliness. Numerous streetscape enhancements projects are underway including: the closure of Young Street to further connect users to the waterfront, Webster Street pedestrian improvements, the expansion of Charles Fleischman park, alleyway improvements, Gateway Harbor enhancements, and Main Street green infrastructure. Through these Smart Growth Community Fund projects, the Cities have already begun to plan together, as is shown in the photograph below of a share community planning event where participants considered the Renaissance Bridge as a connection between the communities.





Healthy Food Options

The North Tonawanda Farmers Market, located in the residential neighborhood that supports downtown, is one of the largest farmers markets in Western New York. Bustling with local vendors, residents of the Tonawandas are able to obtain healthy and affordable food. Adding to the availability of healthy and affordable foods downtown, the City of Tonawanda hosted a Saturday morning farmers market last year along Young Street between Gateway Harbor and the Intermodal Hub and this year is incorporating this feature as a mini farmers market during the Food Truck Thursday events that take place at this location throughout the summer. In addition, the area is home to two community gardens including one along the Oliver Street corridor and one along the Main Street corridor. A community garden was developed along Oliver Street in 2018 through collaboration between the City of North Tonawanda and the faith-based community. Within an identified food desert, the vegetables cultivated at this site are directly given to families in need and local food pantries. The community garden also hosts various programming events to teach people how to cook food and lead healthier lifestyles. Along Main Street a community garden was developed in 2013 by local residents in partnership with the property owner, Stamps...the Bar. Envisioning the potential of an underutilized area next to Stamps, the Tonawanda Community Peace Garden was developed for everyone on a take what you need basis. Finally, the downtown is fortunate to be served by a major regional store with Tops Market located along Niagara Street.



Diverse Housing Options

The Tonawandas provide a variety of flexible housing options for residents varying in affordability and type, and conveniently located on NFTA bus routes. In downtown North Tonawanda, there are approximately 120 residential units ranging from luxury waterfront lofts to studio apartments. New projects currently under construction will add over 100 units to the area including both market rate and affordable housing options. Within downtown Tonawanda, 27% of their buildings include either single, duplex, mixed-use, or multifamily residential units. Housing is extremely affordable in both communities, making it attractive for young people looking to purchase their first home, or empty nesters who want to downsize.

Centrally Located

Being geographically located between Buffalo and Niagara Falls, easily accessible via major routes, and having a diverse range of housing and recreational amenities, the Tonawandas have established themselves as becoming a premier live, work, and play destination in Western New York.



Bicycle Connectivity

The Twin Cities are positioned as the nexus between the Empire State and Niagara River Shoreline Trails. Both cities are interconnected to each other and linked to the region via a series of bicycle and pedestrian paths. This infrastructure makes the Twin Cities more attractive, enhances public space, draws visitors to the area, and spurs related commercial activity.

Through public and private partnerships and funding from the Niagara River Greenway Commission, The Ralph Wilson Foundation, New York State Department of Transportation, City of North Tonawanda, City of Tonawanda, and New York State Canal Corporation, the Twin Cities have been able to establish themselves as a premier biking and recreation hub in Western New York.

[Empire State Trail & Erie Canalway Trail](#)

The Empire State Trail was announced by the Governor in 2017 as an initiative and investment to create a continuous off-road trail framework across the State of New York, with much of the route following the Erie Canal. In filling the gaps of the Erie Canalway Trail, the 750-mile Empire State Trail is making it possible to travel across the State – from New York City or the Adirondacks to Buffalo and Niagara Falls. This trail allows for connection onto Canada both in the North Country and in Western NY while also facilitating future opportunities for connections south into Pennsylvania. In Western NY, the Tonawandas are a critical juncture in the Empire State Trail, recognized as one of its gateways. It is in the Twin Cities that the trail meets the Shoreline trail, following the Niagara River, and allowing for connection south to Buffalo or north to Niagara Falls.

[Shoreline Trail and Niagara River Greenway](#)

The Shoreline trail is a multi-use trail along Lake Erie and the Niagara River stretching from Southern Erie County to Lake Ontario. The section of this trail which follows the Niagara River, from Buffalo to Youngstown, is the Niagara River Greenway.

Articulated in a 2007 Vision and Implementation Plan, the Niagara River Greenway is a corridor of parks and amenities alongside of the Niagara River linked by a continuous multi use trail. The purpose is to advance environmental protection and conservation, provide recreation access to the river, improve quality of life as well as to stimulate economic development of the river communities. In this plan, the Tonawandas were recognized as the strategic hub for the trail as it sits between Buffalo and Niagara Falls. It is at the point a cyclist, boater or paddler travel the Erie Canal from East arrives in the Buffalo Niagara metro region to enter the Niagara River Greenway.



A well-connected destination for cycling.



North Buffalo and Tonawanda Rail to Trail

In 2016, a 3.7-mile multi use trail was established in an old railway corridor through the Town of Tonawanda into the City of Tonawanda. The Tonawanda Rails to Trails extension was completed in 2019 extending the original Tonawanda Rails to Trails project from the Young & State Street trailhead approximately 1 mile north to the Canalway Trail at the intersection of Fillmore Avenue and East Niagara along the Erie Canal within the Twin Cities urban center. The new Tonawanda Ralph C. Wilson Gateway (see below) will be located at the juncture of the Tonawanda Rails to Trails project and the Canalway Trail. The City of Buffalo created an extension trail at the southern end of this same corridor from the city line at Kenmore Avenue to Shoshone Park in North Buffalo.

Tonawanda's Ralph C. Wilson Gateway

The Ralph C Wilson Jr Foundation has provided \$500,000 in funding via NYS Parks, the Natural Heritage Trust and the Empire State Trail to construct five key trail gateways in the Western NY Region. One of these is now under development, to be constructed Spring 2020, in the City of Tonawanda as an added amenity and wayfinding component of the City of Tonawanda Intermodal Hub, which includes a comfort station with restrooms, seating as well as bike racks, wayfinding signs and bicycle repair station.

The Twin Cities are a hub for multi-use trail connections.



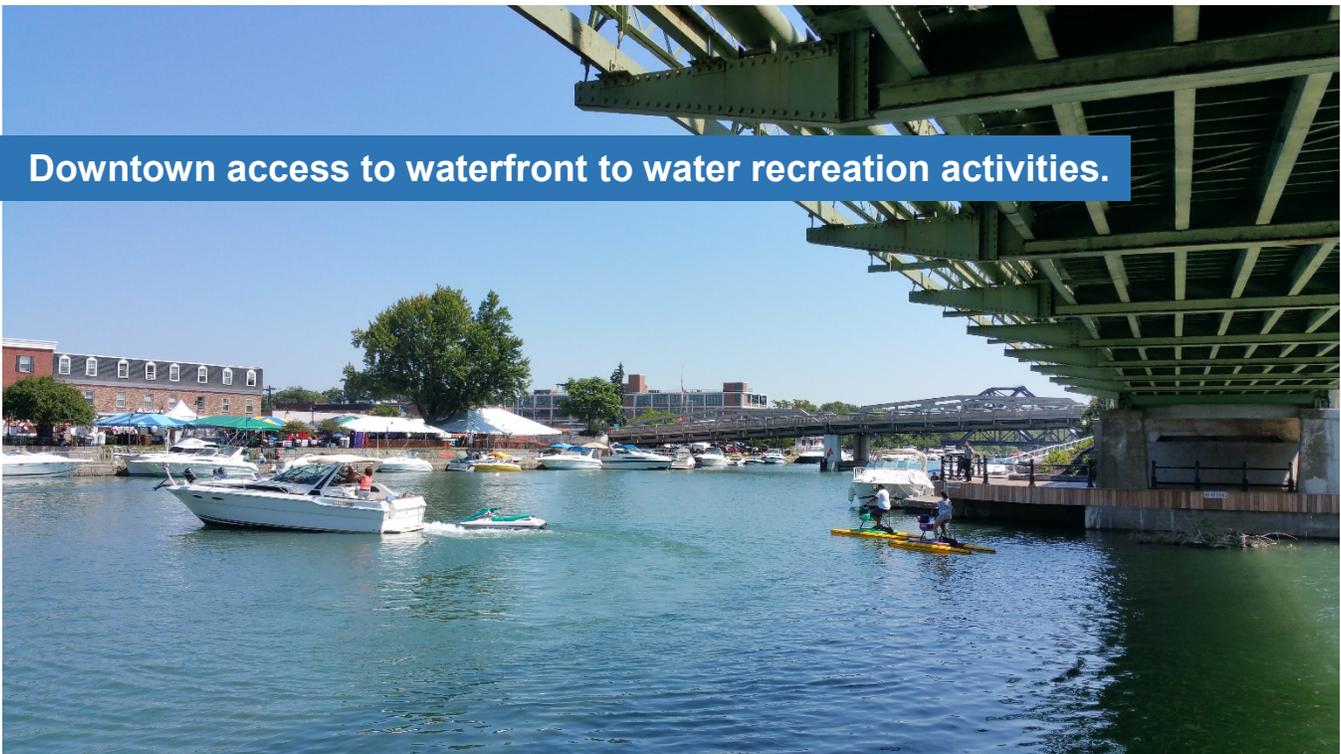


Water-based Recreation

The Twin Cities serve as a meeting point and hub of water based recreational activity as well. Personal non-motorized watercraft such as kayaks and canoes can travel through the Canal, Ellicott Creek and Niagara River – all of which meet in the Twin Cities. There are opportunities to launch personal boats as well as rental opportunities, drawing more visitors into downtown. Similarly, motorized watercrafts travel off the Niagara River to dock along the canal and seek various dining and entertainment options downtown. The Erie Canal also attracts boats traveling its length staying overnight in various towns and cities, similar to cyclists traveling the length of the canal.



Downtown access to waterfront to water recreation activities.





The Twin Cities are an attractive regional destination for recreation and entertainment center.





5) Quality of Life policies.

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 zoning codes, comprehensive plans, complete streets plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies.

The Tonawandas are committed to planning for and implementing downtown redevelopment. The ongoing momentum in each community has pulled the cities together, fueling a new era of collaboration and partnerships. Recognizing that quality of life improvement provides shared benefits, the Twin Cities often work collaboratively on many different projects and funding applications. In 2018, the cities partnered on an application to the New York State Canal Corporation for the “Re-Imagine the Canals” competition. This exercise presented a proposal for physical concepts and programming initiatives to further the efforts of both communities to reinvent and reinvigorate their shared waterfronts and downtown canal communities for generations to enjoy. The Twin Cities DRI application builds on the “Re-Imagine the Canals” proposal and other efforts that have demonstrated the potential for innovation and efficiency working together can create.

Together, the cities are heavily focused on revitalizing the downtown waterfront business district to improve livability, overall quality of life, and tourism as evidenced by the years of planning and refinement of their community vision. Prepared to move forward with the DRI program, the Twin Cities have quality of life policies integrated into the use of area planning, local regulations, historic preservation standards and guidelines, land bank rehabilitation strategies, housing stabilization programs, bicycling friendly programs and local development corporations.

Area Planning

The Twin Cities have laid out a number of policy areas that direct City activities in the Comprehensive Plans, Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) plan, and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans. Both downtown areas are the focus of many of these policies including concentrating economic development efforts downtown, improving the availability and diversity of housing options, fostering the Twin Cities identity as a unique waterfront destination, and enhancing the small city atmosphere through public space, walkability, and overall character. A brief summary of the relevant area plans and their corresponding vision and impacts are provided in the table below:

Each of these plans has emphasized the importance of undertaking projects that improve the quality of life for North Tonawanda residents. Policies focusing on improvements to parks, waterfront amenities, school and youth programs, and housing equity can be found throughout these planning documents.



Summary of Local Planning Documents

Plan	Results
Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) for the City of North Tonawanda (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the North Tonawanda's downtown and waterfront areas that were selected as a BOA through the nomination process in 2012. • Certified designation for the BOA in 2015. • Officially designates projects within the BOA plan as priorities for State funding. • Qualifies BOA projects applying for the State Brownfield Cleanup Tax Credits to receive a bonus 5% development tax credit. • Establishment of the NT Momentum brand to emphasize the resurgence of a downtown community that is built upon waterfront, arts and cultural, and historical assets. Specifically designed to draw attention to the downtown area and get prospective businesses and developers excited about the opportunities available.
Comprehensive Plan for the City of North Tonawanda (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the water as a key community driver of economic development and recreation and focuses economic development on areas such as the downtown and Tonawanda Island.
Comprehensive Plan for the City of Tonawanda (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envisions this historically rich waterfront community with a vibrant, active and prosperous downtown and provides detailed recommendations to achieve the vision and planning themes.
Downtown Redevelopment Plan for the City of North Tonawanda (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a basic analysis of existing conditions that has laid a roadmap for redevelopment.
Economic Development Plan for Tonawanda Main Street (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a clear strategy for redevelopment and economic growth in the downtown based on existing conditions and an economic profile. • Identified key priority projects and development opportunities in both the public and private sectors and prepared proformas for private development projects.
Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for the City of North Tonawanda (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes goals and detailed policies for the waterfront revitalization area, including a goal focused on working with the Town and City of Tonawanda, as well as the Erie Canal Corporation, to promote the canal as a resource and destination.
Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for the City of Tonawanda (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known as "Living Niawanda," the LWRP provided the City with analysis of current waterfront and downtown conditions and robust policy guidelines and standards to achieve an appropriate balance between economic growth and development that will enable beneficial use of Tonawanda's waterfront.
Main Street Conceptual Master Plan (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines general design guidelines and streetscape features to capture opportunities and address challenges identified in the public outreach program including connectivity, public art and gathering spaces.
Niagara Street Corridor Study (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for comprehensive connectivity between the adjacent neighborhoods, waterfront, City parks, Shoreline Trail, and Downtown Tonawanda through new pathways, road enhancements, and intersection improvements.
Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the corridor's strengths and limitations and recommends action-oriented implementation strategies to meet community needs. Completed strategies based on this plan include the development of a community garden, a public art initiative, and a facade program.



Local Regulations

The Twin Cities are able to support and foster the Downtown Revitalization Initiative through the implementation of modern waterfront and downtown district zoning, including modern form-based zoning. In North Tonawanda, the Downtown Mixed-Use district and Waterfront District was codified through the NT Momentum BOA process and aligns the City's zoning code with the community's long-term vision for a vibrant downtown that offers a mix of housing choices, retail, and services all while maintaining the local historic character. In Tonawanda, based on the LWRP, a Waterfront Mixed Use Zoning District was established to implement the new planning policies. In addition, implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Tonawanda incorporated form-based code provisions into the central business zoning district to foster a greater mix of uses and make the area more attractive for infill investment.

Historic Preservation

Downtown North Tonawanda is a local historic preservation district, governed by the North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission follows guidelines set forth by NYSHPO in determining if property developments in the area are consistent with historic integrity. Marrying the Commission's expertise with compatible zoning codes will ease the burden on developers and provide anyone interested in investing in downtown North Tonawanda with a clear, concise road map to successfully complete their project. Downtown Tonawanda has been developing its historic preservation efforts with the development of a Pocket Preservation Guide to help building owners make renovations in a manner that respects historic integrity. In 2018, a historic survey identified a downtown district and individual as eligible for listing on the national registry.

Complete Streets

As part of the Main Street Program for the City of Tonawanda, a Complete Streets Policy Guide and Action Plan was established to serve as a tool to incorporate the planning and implementation of complete streets.

Land Banks

Tonawanda and North Tonawanda are both fortunate enough to be members of regional land improvement corporations, or Land Banks. While operating separately, both communities have directed their respective Land Banks with the same mission: to revitalize vacant homes in the most vulnerable neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown district. North Tonawanda's association with a Land Bank is relatively new, less than two years old, but has already seen the successful rehabilitation of two properties with more in progress. Since 2015, the City of Tonawanda has received assistance from the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC), which has acquired, renewed and sold seven distressed properties.

The City of North Tonawanda has partnered with the recently formed Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation. Through this land bank North Tonawanda is able to combat neighborhood blight perpetuated through abandoned properties. The Oliver Street neighborhood is a key focus area for the land bank, which is the supportive residential area adjacent to the downtown core



Zombie 2.0 Housing Program

In early 2019, both cities jointly applied to the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Housing Stabilization Fund for the “Zombie 2.0” program. This program is aimed to assist communities with combating the issue of vacant and zombie properties in their communities. This successful \$285,000 joint application made the program more efficient, and allows for opportunities to partner for on-going training and educational seminars for code enforcement and residents at risk of foreclosure.

Bike Friendly New York

Bike Friendly NY is a program of Parks and Trails NY which was established in 2017. The program works to both highlight businesses that have bike friendly amenities – such as bike parking, minor repair stations, water refill stations etc. – and to encourage more businesses to provide such amenities. The program focuses on attracting businesses that are along a trail so that cyclists have options that meet their needs while on a day trip or riding the length of the Erie Canal. Businesses are given decals to display and promoted on an interactive trip planning map and in statewide published materials.

The Niagara River Greenway is working to enroll North Tonawanda and Tonawanda businesses in the program to take advantage of the economic opportunity afforded by being located along the Empire State Trail. This programming is part of a larger effort to make the Twin Cities, which have been established as a hub of the New York State Trail system, attractive for cyclists.

Local Development Corporations

Lumber City Development Corporation (LCDC) formed as North Tonawanda’s local development corporation in 2004. Over fifteen years LCDC has implemented 110 economic development projects, assisted with the creation and retention of 598 jobs, and leveraged \$44 million in development. LCDC has also led the City’s community planning efforts, managed a variety of grant programs, and has become the leading advocate for downtown revitalization in the Tonawandas. Recognizing the success Lumber City has facilitated, the City of Tonawanda has been working to build its capacity for economic development with the formation of the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (COTLDC) in 2017. A result of the main street program that was initiated in 2016, it was determined that the local development corporation would serve as best organizational structure to address city economic development needs and would incorporate the newly formed Tonawanda Main Street organization as a committee of the COTLDC. Already the COTLDC has seen success in the development of a positive relationship with the business community, organization of a robust volunteer capacity and pursuit of development opportunities with the City of Tonawanda. Together the LCDC and the COTLDC are working to reach the extraordinary potential of this regional waterfront destination.



6) Public support.

Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to develop the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Characterize the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan.

The Tonawandas have strived to make community planning an inclusive process and at each step have convened citizen steering committees to direct the planning process. These committees have included local business leaders, non-profit organizations, community groups and concerned citizens. Workshops and design charrettes have been held to direct all local planning activities, ensuring that the plan produced for the redevelopment of the Tonawandas is driven by a community consensus and has strong local support.

To implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative both cities will enlist a team of local professionals and citizens with diverse skill sets and a vested interest in the growth of the Tonawandas. The team will be led by Lumber City Development Corporation (LCDC), in collaboration with the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (COTLDC). LCDC's mission is to stimulate economic and community development in North Tonawanda by creating new employment opportunities, strengthening existing businesses, fostering entrepreneurship, revitalizing the downtown core, and planning for future growth in North Tonawanda. LCDC's overlapping role in community and economic development makes it an ideal organization to lead and implement this initiative. A partner organization with a complementary focus on economic and community development strategies in Tonawanda, the COTLDC has a positive working relationship with the LCDC that will further the efforts of the DRI process.

To help facilitate implementation of the DRI process, both cities have recruited a strong collaboration of business organizations, arts and cultural groups, service organizations, and citizen community groups. These groups represent a diverse spectrum of community interests and bring a wide variety of skills to assist in project implementation. Specifically:

The Boards and officers of the Tonawanda Council on the Arts, Herschell Carrousel Museum, and Riviera Theatre have combined decades of experience in tourism and hospitality. Their work and perspective supports the artistic economy in North Tonawanda and bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to the area each year.

The Downtown Merchants Association, Tonawanda Main Street, and Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor organizations are primarily responsible for organizing dozens of annual events in the downtown area on both sides of the canal, and drive the year-round tourism sector. These groups, along with the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas, also provide critical business support to new and growing Downtown businesses and act as advocates to the Tonawandas on behalf of the Downtown community to ensure responsible growth and development of the area. In addition, the historic downtowns are supported by a volunteer Historical Society of the Tonawandas that provides a wealth of historic information that is



featured in local walking tours, the Benjamin Long Homestead historic house museum and the historical society museum.

In North Tonawanda local community groups, including the Historic Preservation Commission and the Brownfield Opportunity Area Steering Committee, are important volunteer organizations that drive the local planning process. These dedicated citizens assist the City by providing review, oversight, and input into development plans and projects to ensure that the public interest is at the heart of North Tonawanda's future. Citizen interest in being a part of North Tonawanda's redevelopment is on the upswing as evidenced by the recent reorganization of Project Pride, a volunteer community beautification group, and the Oliver Street Merchants Association, a new merchants group working to improve business conditions in the Oliver Street corridor.

LCDC, COTLDC and the Cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda also work on a daily basis with a number of State, County, and local agencies. These partners will play a vital role in ensuring that the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the Twin Cities is consistent with and be beneficial to the on-going developments in Erie and Niagara Counties and throughout the region.

Similar to other planning processes in the Tonawandas, community involvement will be a key component to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to ensure an inclusive revitalization program. The Tonawandas will make every effort to include under-represented groups such as minorities, senior citizens, low income individuals, families living in poverty, and individuals with disabilities in the planning process. In order to coordinate this, both cities will collaborate with key local non-profit service organizations such as the John R. Oishei Mobile Safety Net Team, Twin City Community Outreach, City of North Tonawanda Senior Center, City of Tonawanda Senior Center, Aspire of WNY, the YWCA, the Dale Association, and Lumber City Church and other community and faith-based organizations. In alignment with the Western New York Opportunity Agenda, education, transportation, and affordable housing will be key discussion themes to ensure context-sensitive planning, equity, diversity and opportunity for the entire community.

Both Cities have worked to actively engage its citizens for community revitalization. In 2018, these efforts were recognized with an award from the Western New York American Planning Association for Public Outreach.





The Tonawandas have had many successes with community driven planning processes.

Re-Imagine Oliver Street

In North Tonawanda, a “Re-Imagine Oliver Street” initiative was launched in 2015. Oliver Street is a depressed, lower income area of North Tonawanda and revitalization has become a priority for Lumber City Development Corporation and City officials. In order to truly investigate the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of the corridor, a series of public forums were held. With over 75 residents in attendance, these forums were targeted towards underrepresented groups by holding the meeting at a community anchor on Oliver Street, as well as targeted advertising at the local library, Carousel Apartments, and free community newspapers. The community meetings were just the starting point for Oliver Street revitalization. Since the meetings, Oliver Street businesses have created an Oliver Street Merchants Association which has been successful in street beautification projects, clean up events and other various events to boost community pride.

Brownfield Opportunity Area

Another example of successful community planning in North Tonawanda was through a unique public forum held for the Brownfield Opportunity Area program. Following numerous traditional public meetings, the NT Momentum team collaborated on holding a unique ‘hands-on’ public event to better help the public explore the NT Momentum master plan. In order to share the plan and vision with the public, bicycle trolley tours were held which visited key redevelopment sites within the area. These tours were very impactful and helped the public understand the plans in a physical manner. Residents and stakeholders experienced their community from a new perspective which will allow the City to further refine the redevelopment plan.

Smart Growth Community Fund

The most recent community engagement process has been initiated via the Smart Growth Community Fund with the goal of bringing an innovative, robust approach to community engagement. As opposed to a typical open-forum style meeting, more hands-on methods to reach the public such as walking tours, community conversations, and games to spark ideas and creativity were utilized. A steering committee comprised of individuals from the City Council, cultural institutions, city departments, LCDC, business owners, and the faith-based community was formed to establish project scope and process. The consultant team then hosted a joint meeting with the City of Tonawanda. This meeting helped establish that both communities share a similar downtown vision. The public was then invited to the Carnegie Art Center for a forum that included giving participants the opportunity to design their ideal downtown gateway. Well attended walking tours of Oliver Street, River Road, and Webster Street were then held which gave individuals the opportunity to see these areas firsthand on foot and learn more about the proposed street enhancements.





Business and Property Owners Meetings

Most recently, North Tonawanda hosted an open forum with business and property owners in the River Road and downtown corridors in March, 2019. About twenty private stakeholders attended and voiced their ideas about the future of our waterfront community and how we might best maximize our unique assets. In 2018, Tonawanda Main Street organized a business owner meeting to identify positive and negative aspects of the downtown and discuss opportunities for improvements. In 2019, Tonawanda Main Street and the City of Tonawanda invited downtown property owners to discuss the opportunity to apply for a New York Main Street grant to revitalize key properties in the downtown, successfully engaging owners in the application process to leverage private investment.

Downtown Business In-Person & Online Surveys

In 2016, in person interviews were conducted throughout the Tonawanda Main Street area to identify issues, concerns and opportunities in the business community.

After the closure of Young Street, an online survey was conducted with business owners in the Tonawanda Main Street to provide feedback on the impact to their business, illustrating that the majority of business owners were either not impacted or positively impacted by the closure.

Award-winning Planning Approach for Tonawanda...A Community Connected

In 2018, the City of Tonawanda was recognized for by the Western New York Section of the American Planning Association with an Outstanding Planning Award for Public Outreach Award for the coordinated public engagement efforts of the Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), a Housing and Neighborhood Strategy and the Tonawanda Main Street Program. With a shared approach to public participation, the community maximized the effectiveness of engagement tools and maintained engagement in an extensive city planning program. Incorporated in this public participation program were a variety of techniques including tactical events, seminars, walking tours, public meetings, mapping exercises, a visual preference survey, social media campaigns and community surveys.



Tonawanda Main Street

Tonawanda Main Street began developing as sustainable grassroots community organization focused on downtown revitalization in the City of Tonawanda in 2016. The program was developed in accordance with Main Street America (the former National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program) and is centered on economic development and building community capacity and self-advocacy. The first steps of the program were forming a group of independent community volunteers and hiring a professional Executive Director. Together, the group established Tonawanda Main Street. Based on community need identified through extensive community

engagement, Tonawanda Main Street established its mission to act as the unifying agent that will facilitate the on-going, incremental economic and social development of the City of Tonawanda's main street area within the context of historic preservation. One of the primary successes of the establishment of Tonawanda Main Street is that the downtown has clear representation and is able to mobilize volunteers, business and property owners and other community stakeholders to address community issues and participate in community events for an improved quality of life in the downtown. Building on the success of the organization was the incorporation of the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation.

'It's a Wonderful Night,' Tonawanda Main Street's signature event, engaging the community in an active and walkable downtown event and promoting partnership with Lumber City Winter Walk for a weekend of winter fun.





DRI Local Planning Committee

The Tonawandas Downtown Revitalization Initiative Local Planning Committee will include representation from the following groups:

- City of North Tonawanda Mayor's office and Common Council
- City of Tonawanda Mayor's Office and Common Council
- Lumber City Development Corporation
- Tonawanda Main Street
- City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation
- Niagara County Legislature
- Erie County Legislature
- Erie County Industrial Development Agency
- Niagara County Department of Economic Development
- North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission
- North Tonawanda Waterfront Commission
- Tonawanda Marketing Committee
- Tonawanda Historic Preservation Committee
- Tonawanda Economic Development Committee
- Tonawanda Downtown Beautification and Revitalization Committee
- City of Tonawanda Visual and Performing Arts Board
- North Tonawanda Building Inspector's Office
- City of Tonawanda Building Inspector's Office
- City of Tonawanda Engineering Department
- North Tonawanda Downtown Merchants Association
- Swift Water Business Association
- Oliver Street Merchants Association
- Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas
- Destination Niagara USA
- The East Hill Foundation
- The Tonawanda Council on the Arts
- Twin Cities Community Outreach
- Church/Faith Based Community
- Citizens on Patrol
- Project Pride
- Greenway Commission
- Up to 5 private business and property owners



7) Transformative opportunities.

Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project). Identify potential development opportunities, such as municipally-owned property that may be appropriate for redevelopment. Projects may be public or private, and could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. It should be recognized that if a DRI award is made to the downtown, the projects identified here, along with any others that may arise during the DRI planning process, will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State to determine which projects receive DRI grants.

The Tonawandas have prepared for near-term implementation of their various planning efforts. Both cities have identified a broad range of transformative projects that can be completed with an infusion of DRI funds within 1-2 years of award. These projects advance the vision for downtown redevelopment while leveraging private investment:

The transformational projects build on the entrepreneurial spirit in the Twin Cities.





TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS MAP



PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT

- 1 Gateway Harbor Bridge Lighting
- 2 Lumber City Village*
- 3 Main Street Improvements
- 4 Niagara Street Reconfiguration
- 5 Oliver Street Pocket Park
- 6 River Road Bicycle Path Overlook
- 7 Tonawanda Island Infrastructure
- 8 Visitor Center of the Tonawandas*
- 9 Weatherbest Slip River Access

NEW DEVELOPMENT / REHABILITATION

- 1 Broad St Infill
- 2 Carousel Apartments
- 3 Former Board of Education Bldg.
- 4 Former Fire Training Facility
- 5 Former First Trust Company Bldg. Redevelopment
- 6 Hubmann Vault Stabilization
- 7 Micro-Business Incubator
- 8 Northern Gateway Redevelopment
- 9 R.T. Jones Redevelopment Site
- 10 The Shores Mixed Use Development
- 11 Webster St Mixed Use Infill
- 12 Young St Hotel Development
- 13 15 Webster St Redevelopment
- 14 20-30 Fillmore Redevelopment
- 15 230 Oliver St Redevelopment
- 16 311 Michigan St Redevelopment
- 17 36 Delaware St Renovations
- 18 624 River Rd Redevelopment
- 19 72 E Niagara St Adaptive Reuse

REVOLVING FUND

- 1 Downtown Building Improvement Revolving Fund*

BRANDING & MARKETING

- 1 Downtown WiFi (DRI AREA)*
- 2 Public Art (DRI AREA)*
- 3 Wayfinding (DRI AREA)*

*Location Not Shown on Map

LEGEND

- DRI Boundary
- Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path
- Multi-Use Trail / Bike Path Underway



Public Improvement Projects

Proposed are a variety of public improvement project to help the Twin Cities achieve its vision for the future. These projects are summarized in the following table and descriptions highlight several key improvements.

Transformational Public Improvement Projects

Project	Total Project Cost	Measurable Results	Estimated Completion	Estimated DRI Funding
Gateway Harbor Bridge Lighting - Decorative lighting on Railroad bridge, Main Street Bridge, and Webster Street Bridge	\$255,000	Decorative lighting	2020	\$255,000
Lumber City Village - Waterfront artisan market	\$150,000	Seasonal art & craft market along the Erie Canal	2020	\$50,000
Main Street Improvements - Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Utilize lighting and greenscape to enhance public plaza at 5 Main	\$1.5 Million	Unified pedestrian & bicyclist friendly Main Street Corridor	2020	\$1,500,000
Niagara Street Reconfiguration - Reduce unnecessary travel lanes and re-route to add new multi-use path, art walk, and landscaping. Create room for future development	\$6.7 Million	Road diet, new multi-use trail connection to downtown	2020	\$5,000,000
Oliver Street Pocket Park - Pocket park development on vacant parcel at Tremont and Oliver Streets	\$25,000	Landscaping, street furniture, park design	2020	\$25,000
River Road Bicycle Path Outlook - Scenic outlook with picnic area overlooking the Niagara River	\$150,000	Enhancing public access to waterfront and increasing bicycle path use	2021	\$50,000
Tonawanda Island Infrastructure Improvements - Critical infrastructure improvements for future development	\$1.5 Million	Utility service, sidewalks,	2021	\$500,000
Visitor Center of the Tonawandas - Visitor center at 3 potential downtown sites to also serve as local cultural organization hub.	\$1.5 Million	Central destination directing visitors to all area attractions	2021	\$300,000
Weatherbest Slip River Access - Located at confluence of Niagara River and Erie Canal to enhance public access to waterfront and public spaces	\$250,000	New public space adjacent to bicycle path	2021	\$125,000



Main Street Improvements

In 2018, a part of the technical assistance funding of the NYS Department of State grant for a main street program in Tonawanda, Joy Kuebler Landscape Architect, PC (JKLA) was retained to complete a Main Street Conceptual Master Plan. The plan establishes general design guidelines and a conceptual master plan for Main Street from Gateway Harbor south to Fletcher Street. Through an extensive public input process, JKLA helped the City develop a vision of Main Street that creates a sense of place and is inclusive of pedestrians and cyclists that visit the area. The plan includes greenspace and functional elements such as planters, lighting and green elements to foster community gathering and encourage leisurely use of the corridor as a shopping, tourism and event destination. Dedicated bike lanes, new crosswalks, and bumpouts will be installed to increase walkability, slow traffic and reduce traffic noise while protecting non-motorized users. The uniform look of the corridor will tie the blocks at the south end to the more commercial and recreational feel in the vicinity of Gateway Harbor to the north visually expanding the commercial district and enlarging the footprint of downtown.



Niagara Street Corridor (City Hall to Main Street)

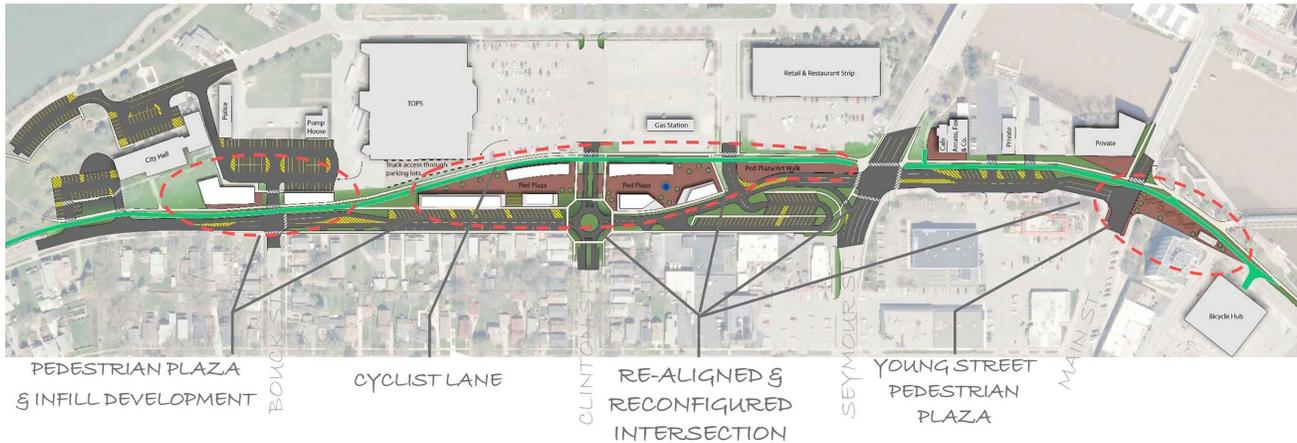
At one time, the City of Tonawanda's vibrant downtown core was connected to its waterfront via the Erie Canal which stretched from Tonawanda Creek through present day Niagara Street and continued alongside the Niagara River to the City of Buffalo. Following the closure of the canal and subsequent urban renewal, the City was left with vast expanses of blacktop roadway and parking lots which severed the connection between what is now the region's premier waterfront park (Niawanda Park) and the central business district. The park attracts approximately 600,000 visitors annually and yet, without an obvious connection to downtown, few visitors venture from the park to enjoy the retail, dining, and entertainment options available in downtown Tonawanda.

The Niagara Street Corridor project will correct this deficiency through a road realignment and diet to right size the vehicular connection while providing a new off-road multi-use trail, streetscaping, and art walk to entice visitors to our historic downtown and Gateway Harbor. The revised roadway will remove the barrier presented by the existing Niagara Street between the City Center and its waterfront by improving pedestrian access across the street. The preferred schematic design will open up space for both future permanent development (approximately 45,000 square feet) and pop-up retail between City Hall and Seymour Street. The project will boost connectivity between the City's core and its waterfront with the expected benefit of increased foot and bicycle traffic into the transforming downtown area where residents and visitors can enjoy several recently completed and planned recreational amenities, waterfront, and downtown shopping opportunities. Developers have expressed renewed interest in downtown as a result of this potentially transformative project.



- 180,483 SF of Pedestrian/Cyclist Friendly Space
- 44,730 SF of Commercial/Residential Infill Opportunity
- 72 additional spaces
- 235,120 SF of Asphalt (357,722 SF existing)

COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN



Tonawanda Island Infrastructure

To support the future compact mixed-use development at 78 Bridge Street, the former Fire Training Facility, there is a critical need for infrastructure improvements including new roads, sidewalks and utilities. The current infrastructure at this site, and Tonawanda Island as a whole is insufficient to meet the demands expected from full build out of the NT Momentum vision.

Visitor Center of the Tonawandas:

The Tonawandas have become a premier tourist and recreation destination in Western New York. On an annual basis, thousands of visitors come to the Tonawandas for our vast bicycle path connections, scenic kayaking, cultural institutions, dining and events. The Tonawandas capture many Niagara Falls visitors who are looking for a historic and charming downtown experience, and Western New York locals looking for a unique day trip. Many visitors to the Twin Cities are unaware of many of our diverse amenities such as the Carnegie Art Center, Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum, Riviera Theatre, Tonawanda's Long Homestead, Historical Society of the Tonawandas, and Ghostlight Theater. Through the implementation of a visitor's center, tourists will be able to receive key information about local attractions and also learn about our rich industrial heritage through interactive displays and exhibits.

The development of a Tonawandas Visitors Center has been identified in numerous city planning documents, including the City of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan. This Visitors Center will be operated by the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas as they currently serve as the local tourism agency for the Tonawandas and through recent discussions, they have committed to moving their offices into this development.

The Tonawandas are fully committed to regional tourism. We have recognized that the local economic boost from tourism will keep dollars spent locally while benefiting small business owners. Additionally, a number of employment opportunities will be created to support the influx of visitors. Tourism can also be a way to maintain the Tonawandas proud cultural heritage, while showcasing it for visitors.



New Development / Rehabilitation

A range of new development or rehabilitation projects have been submitted as part of the DRI application. The following table summarizes these projects and descriptions highlight several key opportunities for development.

Transformational New Development/Rehabilitation Projects

Project	Total Project Cost	Measurable Results	Estimated Completion	Estimated DRI Funding
Broad Street Infill - 3 story mixed-use development on a vacant parcel along Broad Street	\$7,500,000	New mixed-use development with commercial and residential units	2021	\$1,250,000
Carousel Apartments – Renovation of existing apartment building on Oliver Street	\$16 Million	Renovation of existing apartment building and construction of new affordable apartments	2021	\$3,000,000
Former Board of Education Building – Conversion of the existing building to an ADA accessible Senior Center.	\$3,000,000	Convert the old school board building to an ADA accessible Senior Center	2021	\$500,000
Former Fire Training Facility- Mixed use development on Tonawanda Island	\$18 Million	Office & Residential Mixed Use	2021	\$1,500,000
Former First Trust Company Building - Conversion of an early 1900's bank into office space	\$1.2 Million	Building rehabilitation and conversion to office space	2020	\$200,000
Hubmann Vault Stabilization- Stabilize dilapidated historic building	\$500,000	Secure a 10,000 sq. ft building in the downtown core	2020	\$100,000
Micro-Business Incubator - Building modifications to allow further development that includes mixed-use space	\$250,000	Renovations to the existing building to allow for a micro business usage	2021	\$100,000
Northern Main Street Redevelopment- Mixed use development at 4-acre brownfield site	\$10.2 Million	New mixed-use retail, office and residential development	2021	\$800,000
R.T Jones Redevelopment Site, Phase I - Remediation and mixed-use development on 22 acres of Tonawanda Island	\$30 Million	Waterfront townhomes, multi-family apartments, and commercial/retail development- 150 total units	2022	\$3,000,000
The Shores Mixed Use Development - Development of 2 Bridge Street on Tonawanda Island	\$10 Million	Entertainment, dining, marina, and residential development	2021	\$1,000,000
Webster Street Mixed Use Infill - Opportunities for mixed-use infill development	\$2.5 Million	New mixed-use with 3 retail units and 6 residential units	2021	\$500,000
Young Street Hotel -Downtown Hotel Development	\$20 Million	80 Room Urban Hotel	2020	\$2,000,000
15 Webster Redevelopment- Mixed-use historic building on Webster Street	\$1.5 Million	Historic downtown building	2020	\$300,000
20-30 Fillmore Avenue - Construction of new market rate residential units and Class B office space	\$2,200,000	Property remediation and construction of new residential/office space	2021	\$500,000



Project	Total Project Cost	Measurable Results	Estimated Completion	Estimated DRI Funding
230 Oliver Street Stabilization- <i>Stabilization and redevelopment of historic anchor building on Oliver St</i>	\$500,000	Mixed-use redevelopment of key Oliver Street building	2020	\$100,000
311 Michigan Street- Redevelopment of waterfront property on northern tip of Tonawanda Island	\$14,000,000	Mixed-use residential and commercial development on waterfront	2022	\$2,800,000
36 Delaware St Renovations - Conversion of existing 3 story building to office space	\$325,000	Property renovations that will transform the building to a multiple use business area	2020	\$110,000
624 River Road- <i>Redevelopment of a key waterfront property, adjacent to River's Edge Apartments</i>	\$8 Million	Entertainment, dining, and commercial development	2020	\$1,200,000
72 East Niagara St Adaptive Reuse - Conversion of an abandoned school building into apartments	\$3 Million	Building rehabilitation and conversion to a 20-unit apartment building	2021	\$300,000

Former Fire Training Facility Development on Tonawanda Island:

78 Bridge Street is uniquely positioned on a 3-acre site on Tonawanda Island at the foot of the Taylor Drive bridge with 300 feet of Niagara River frontage. This property is owned by the City of North Tonawanda and was formerly a fire department training facility. Redevelopment of this property is critical to unlocking the potential of Tonawanda Island.

Potential development scenarios for the Fire Training Site include a mixed-use new development with 30 residential units and commercial office space, a full-service waterfront hotel development, or a mixed-use lodging and residential development. The site's unique water access and location would allow residents or employees at this site to experience a picturesque public waterfront, connect to the regional Niagara River bike path, and enjoy a short walk to downtown for dining, shopping, and entertainment.

This multi-million-dollar private development would be a catalyst for future developments on Tonawanda Island. With over 30 developable acres and thousands of feet of Niagara River frontage, Tonawanda Island is one of Western New York's most interesting and unique development opportunities.

In March 2018, the City of North Tonawanda was awarded \$161,167 from the Restore New York Program to assist in the demolition of the existing fire training tower. The City is currently accepting proposals to attract potential developers to the site. Coupled with existing site control, a preliminary feasibility study, Phase I environmental review, new zoning code, and enhanced BOA tax credits, this project is in a prime position to kick-off a boom of new development along North Tonawanda's beautiful waterfront.





Former First Trust Company Building Renovations

The former First Trust Company building, constructed in 1929, is an architectural gem in the downtown located on a highly-visible corner at Niagara and Main Streets. The building has the potential to serve as a landmark feature at the entrance to Gateway Harbor in the center of the downtown. Recognized for its significance in the Tonawanda Main Street Historic Resources Survey, the building was determined by the State Historic Preservation Office as eligible for inclusion in the National Register and described as a fine example of a Neoclassical commercial building.



Since the closing of the former HSBC building in 2012, the building has remained vacant, standing as a monument of untapped potential in the downtown. Recently new life has been given to the building with the purchase by the owner of TPW Websites, a local startup located at 2 Main Street, that is growing. The building owner is a proven steward of the downtown, having invested in the preservation and improvement of the building at 2 Main Street. Renovations at 6 Main Street will bring the building back to productive use and preserve the architectural integrity of the building, including the preservation of a large mural depicting downtown that is locally recognized as an important cultural resource.

To transform the former bank into suitable professional office space, substantial work remains. TPW Websites would like to install a mezzanine, new elevator and staircase, construct new office spaces, restore restroom and break room facilities to working order, replace the antiquated and failing HVAC systems, and make structural repairs to the tunnel system located in front of the building beneath the sidewalk. TPW Websites estimates that the full rehabilitation will cost approximately \$1.2 million and will allow the company to add new full-time employees immediately upon completion and allow for future growth.

Micro-Business Incubator at 60 Main Street

The project is to be a mixed-use space that supports creativity and entrepreneurship, offering flexible leases to incoming tenants. It will welcome retailers, eateries and offices of any size to come and join us to create a social environment where local residents can also gather and socialize alongside our resident businesses as they grow and thrive. By providing affordable rental rates, 60 Main Street will act as an incubator to local businesses just starting up that are not ready to support a storefront location. The further development of the building will design the space to accommodate up to 20 businesses for a mix of retail and offices across three floors.

With DRI funding, the project will be able to keep rent low to create an attractive/appealing space for businesses and the local community to come and unite.

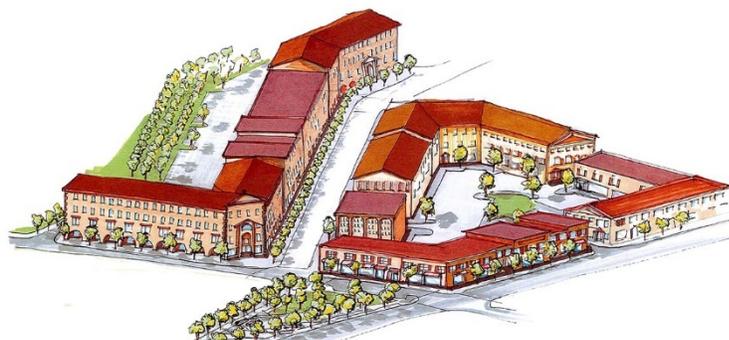




Northern Gateway Redevelopment:

Situated in an approximate triangle between River Road, Main Street, and Island Street, this collection of parcels is over four acres in size and strategically located at a gateway entrance point to Downtown North Tonawanda.

This formerly industrial site is currently underutilized as a materials and equipment storage yard. Given the site size, location in Downtown, and opportunity as a brownfield redevelopment site, this site has been identified as potential redevelopment opportunity to add commercial and residential density to the Downtown.



This location is envisioned to be transformed into a mixed-use node with approximately 120 -one- and two-bedroom residential units, and 4,500 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail space. An appropriate size and massing will fit within the character of the existing Downtown. Redevelopment of this site is critical to the NT Momentum vision as the property sits at the gateway point between Tonawanda Island and the historic downtown core. The project will also be a positive compliment to the adjacent Enterprise Lumber and Silo project and Main Street streetscape enhancements currently under way.

Recently the site owner, a committed private developer, and the City of North Tonawanda have opened a dialogue regarding the future sale and redevelopment of the site in accordance with the NT Momentum vision.

Young Street Hotel

Prior to urban renewal, the section of Young Street between Broad and Main Streets was lined with various shops along the roadway backing up to Ellicott Creek. The commercial buildings were demolished during Urban Renewal and Young Street was widened through addition of new travel lanes and on-street parking. The project limited the available space for any future development and effectively severed the connection between downtown and the waterfront.

With the recent closure of this section of Young Street the City has planned and begun to implement various improvements to take advantage of the Empire State Trail which runs adjacent to the site. The northernmost section of the street will be designated for pedestrian use and includes event space, a four-season pavilion which will house concerts in the summer and the City's portable ice rink in the winter, a scenic overlook with new docking facilities and kayak launch located along Ellicott Creek below. The public space will also serve to maintain connection between the Empire State Trail and the Intermodal Hub which provides trail users with restroom facilities, lockers, bike racks, a bike fix-it station as well as benches and tables to enjoy the area. The south portion of Young Street will be open for development. Two different developers have expressed interest in constructing a hotel on the site to take advantage of the City's centralized location along the extensive network of multi-use trails which tie directly in to the downtown area. The project is expected to include first floor retail space to complement the existing commercial district.



15 Webster Street Redevelopment:

Historically known as the Tonawanda Power Company, the three-story building at 15 Webster overlooks Gateway Harbor in the heart of downtown. The property currently has some office tenants but is 50% vacant. New owners purchased the building in 2016 and have developed plans to rehabilitate and utilize the entire structure, anchored by a premier restaurant on the third floor which would offer a unique view of the Erie Canal.



230 Oliver Street Redevelopment:

230 Oliver Street is an iconic mixed-use building built in 1883. This key-corner building has had many past uses including the well-known Wagenshutz Hardware Store, and most recently an antiques shop. Throughout the years, this property has fallen into disrepair and is in need of reinvestment. In early 2019, a committed developer has purchased this property and plans to rehabilitate the building to include 2 market-rate residential units and 2 commercial/retail units on the ground floor. This property has been identified in the Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment as a strategic investment that will lead to the overall revitalization of Oliver Street.



Revolving Fund

In addition to the private development projects identified above, there are a collection of buildings along key streets within the DRI Area that would benefit from investment through a revolving fund and help to promote continued development in the Twin Cities downtown.

Transformational Revolving Fund

Project	Total Project Cost	Measurable Results	Estimated Completion	Estimated DRI Funding
Downtown Building Improvement Revolving Fund: <i>Redevelopment of underutilized/vacant properties along key streets in the DRI Area</i>	\$600,000	Property rehabilitation along key streets within the DRI Area, such as: 53 Oliver St, 200 Oliver St, 236 Oliver St, 48 Main St, 60 Main St,	2020	\$600,000



Branding & Marketing

With the recreational- and visitor-based assets in the downtown, clear branding and marketing is necessary to capture the full potential of the Twin Cities to be a regional destination.

Transformational Branding & Marketing Projects

Project	Total Project Cost	Measurable Results	Estimated Completion	Estimated DRI Funding
<i>Downtown Wi-Fi- Installation of downtown Wi-Fi service to serve visitors and boaters to enhance the user experience of Downtown</i>	\$75,000	Increasing the user friendliness of both Downtowns	2020	\$75,000
<i>Public Art Program- Public art program to celebrate heritage- Oliver Street & Downtown</i>	\$75,000	Permanent art installations	2020	\$75,000
<i>Wayfinding - Consistent wayfinding and signage throughout the Twin Cities</i>	\$300,000	Improving the quality of the downtown experience by identifying clear connections	2020	\$300,000

The Visitor Experience: Bridge Lighting, Wi-Fi, Wayfinding, & Public Art:

The Twin Cities are committed to enhancing the visitor experience of Gateway Harbor and their surrounding Downtown areas. Through the installation of small-scale enhancements including bridge lighting, consistent wayfinding, and public art, these amenities will add to the overall public experience while leveraging larger capital investments.

Bridge lighting is proposed for three bridges that connect near Gateway Harbor including the Renaissance Bridge, Delaware Street Bridge, and River Road Bridge. Illuminating these bridges is symbolic of the unification of the Twin Cities and will enhance the quality of the Erie Canal experience at Gateway Harbor.





Amphibious “Canal Duck Boats” is a potential component of this project. These boats, designed to look like historic Erie Canal Packet boats, will provide a land and water user experience and tours can accommodate a variety of themes including history, ethnic heritage, and private gatherings. This unique experience would be the only type of operation in the region, which will also expand visitor draw to the Tonawandas.

Free public wi-fi is an amenity that visitors expect in first class destinations but is still lacking in the

Tonawandas. Providing this service at Gateway Harbor will increase boater and visitor traffic, provide new business opportunities, and improve the quality of the experience at Gateway Harbor.

Visitors to the Tonawandas do not see two separate cities, but one larger interconnected downtown area. Through the use of consistent wayfinding and signage, visitors will be able to easily navigate both downtown areas while identifying key attractions, further adding to the overall sense of place in the Tonawandas.





8) Administrative Capacity.

Describe the existing local administrative capacity to manage this planning and implementation initiative, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects using existing staff and resources.

Tonawanda and North Tonawanda have each demonstrated a commitment to planning for and implementing downtown and waterfront redevelopment projects with great success. However, the DRI is an intensive process which brings a significant administrative burden.

The collaborative Tonawandas Downtown Revitalization Initiative application was built on the recognition that jointly the two cities bring significant administrative capacity, development and project experience, and passion and community commitment to the DRI implementation process.

As evidence of Tonawanda's and North Tonawanda's commitment to the joint Twin Cities DRI application, the cities have executed an inter-municipal agreement committing each city to collaboratively and diligently completing their respective DRI responsibilities for the effective implementation of a Tonawandas Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Executive Committee

Given the joint Tonawandas application requires the coordination of two municipalities, the Twin Cities propose establishing a DRI Executive Committee. While the Local Planning Committee would direct all DRI planning and activities, the Executive Committee would be responsible for coordination and communication between both communities and would be the direct liaison to Empire State Development, Department of State, and the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council. The Executive Committee would be composed of the following representatives:

- Tonawanda and North Tonawanda Mayor's' offices representatives,
- Tonawanda and North Tonawanda Council representatives,
- Tonawanda Local Development Corporation Director,
- Tonawanda Engineer, and
- North Tonawanda Community Development office.

The direct point of contact for the DRI will be North Tonawanda Community Development Director Michael Zimmerman.

Primary DRI administration will be handled by the City of North Tonawanda through the City's Community Development office and Lumber City Development Corporation. Lumber City Development has directed North Tonawanda's redevelopment activities for the past fifteen years. Lumber City Development has a Board of Directors of 15 volunteers with a diverse array of professional experience, including: attorneys, commercial lenders, small business owners, engineers, architects, and CEOs. Michael Zimmerman is Lumber City's Executive Director while simultaneously serving as Director of



Community Development for North Tonawanda. In this dual role, Mr. Zimmerman oversees all planning, grant administration, economic development, and community development activities throughout the City. Mr. Zimmerman has his Master's in Urban Planning and eight years of experience within the city. During those eight years, Mr. Zimmerman has managed a robust revolving loan fund, housing rehabilitation programs, millions of dollars' worth of grant-funded initiatives, as well as the City's redevelopment planning process through the Brownfield Opportunity Area. Lumber City is also staffed by Laura Bernsohn, Planning and Development Specialist. Ms. Bernsohn also has a Master's in Urban Planning and seven years of experience managing community and economic development programs in Western New York communities.

Facilitating a collaborative effort, the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (COTLDC) will continue its successful working relationship with Lumber City Development Corporation that has, in part, led to this joint application. Since 2017, COTLDC and the City of Tonawanda have been growing the capacity for Tonawanda to actively pursue development opportunities. The City now has a structure in place to accomplish this task with multi-disciplinary board of directors that can provide a focus on the DRI process. Developed with representation from the City of Tonawanda as well as a key advisor from Lumber City, the organization understands the significance of working in partnership with North Tonawanda. With the COTLDC, the Twin Cities are equipped with mirroring development corporations to benefit the development shared downtown and the surrounding region.

In addition to the development corporations, both municipalities will also bring the direction of numerous City departments to this project including the City Engineer, Building Inspection, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation departments. The directors of these departments each have over 20 years of experience in their respective fields and will provide valuable input on the redevelopment initiative, project feasibility, and the impact of the project as a whole.

The cities also have a number of volunteer committees made up of residents with interest or concern in areas including historic preservation, waterfront policy, and environmental issues. North Tonawanda and Tonawanda are prepared to mobilize these diverse resources to assist with the direction and management of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative implementation process.

The Tonawanda Regional Charter

In 2019 the City of North Tonawanda, City of Tonawanda, and Town of Tonawanda jointly executed the Tonawanda Regional Charter. The Charter sets forth a vision for the Tonawandas as a waterfront destination within the Western New York region prime for redevelopment and investment. Signing this charter put the infrastructure in place for the Tonawandas to undertake collaborative planning and development projects like the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and will serve as a guide to further waterfront development that improves the quality of life for residents of the Tonawandas.



9) Other.

Provide any other information that informs the nomination of this downtown for a DRI award.

Support and Commitment

As identified in the attached letters, many key partners, stakeholders and developers are committed to the Twin Cities Together project including:

Elected Leaders

Congressman Brian Higgins
60th District Senator, Christopher Jacobs
62nd District Senator, Robert Ort
4th District Erie County Legislator Kevin Hardwick
8th District Niagara County Legislator Richard Andres

Stakeholders

Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas
Empire State Trail
Finger Lakes Trail
Lumber City Development Corporation
City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation
Niagara County Center for Economic Development
Niagara River Greenway Commission
Parks and Trails New York
Project Pride of North Tonawanda
Rotary Club of the Tonawandas
Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor Inc.
Webster Street Downtown Merchants Association

Developer Interest

Barbara and Kevin Hughes
KCG Development
Lauren Shulte
M. Property Restoration
Mostafa Tanbakuchi
Rock One Development
Smith Boys Marine Sales, Inc.
Rachel Aspland
Welke Customs Brokers USA Inc



BRIAN HIGGINS
26TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
VICE RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

CO-CHAIR, CANCER CAUCUS
CO-CHAIR, NORTHERN BORDER CAUCUS
CO-CHAIR, REVITALIZING OLDER CITIES
TASK FORCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3226

2459 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3306
(202) 226-0347 (FAX)

726 EXCHANGE STREET
SUITE 601
BUFFALO, NY 14210
(716) 852-3501
(716) 852-3929 (FAX)

800 MAIN STREET
SUITE 3C
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14301
(716) 282-1274
(716) 282-2479 (FAX)
higgins.house.gov

May 14, 2019

Mr. Jeff Belt and Dr. Virginia Horvath, Regional Co-Chairs
Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
Empire State Development Corporation
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, New York 14203-3030

Dear Mr. Belt and Dr. Horvath:

I am pleased to write in support of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) joint application submitted by the cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda. Now in its fourth year, Governor Cuomo's DRI continues to focus on realizing the promise of "transforming downtown neighborhoods into vibrant communities where New Yorkers want to live, work and raise families."

This submission captures that promise as well as it helps advance the vision of The Niagara River Greenway Commission which is charged, in part, with creating connection and economic development opportunity along the Niagara River Corridor. The Niagara River Greenway Plan identified the downtown areas of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda as key gateways for the corridor.

As a key hub for trails in New York State, the Tonawandas connect the Niagara River Greenway and Western New York with the Empire State Trail. Recent investments in the Empire State Trail system and additional WNY Trails represent a great opportunity to catalyze revitalization of a strategically located multi-modal transportation hub and build on increased economic development.

With the support of the DRI, these two intricately connected downtown areas will continue to grow as popular waterfront and multi-use trail destinations to the benefit of those residents who are living, working and raising families in the cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda and beyond. Thank you for your review and consideration for this most worthy application.

Sincerely,



BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress

DISTRICT OFFICE:
65 Court Street, Room 213
Mahoney State Office Building
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 854-8705
Fax: (716) 854-3051

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



CHRISTOPHER L. JACOBS
SENATOR, 60TH DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE:
Room 413
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12247
(518) 455-3240
Fax: (518) 426-6738

May 23, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street
Suite 500
Buffalo, New York 14203-3030

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to share my support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application presented by the cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda.

The City of Tonawanda is a key hub for trails in New York State, connecting the Niagara River Greenway and Western New York with the Empire State Trail. Recent investments in the trail system and additional trails throughout Western New York will bring with them increased economic development opportunity for businesses along the growing downtown corridor in the City of Tonawanda.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Jacobs".

Chris Jacobs
New York State Senator
60th District



CHAIRMAN
MENTAL HEALTH AND
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

COMMITTEE MEMBER
CIVIL SERVICE AND PENSIONS
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES
AND COMMISSIONS
ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
HIGHER EDUCATION
LABOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



ROBERT G. ORTT
SENATOR, 62ND DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE:
815 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2024
FAX: (518) 426-6987

DISTRICT OFFICE:
175 WALNUT STREET, SUITE 6
LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094
(716) 434-0680
FAX: (716) 434-3297

May 21, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Regional Council members,

On behalf of the 62nd Senate District of New York State, I fully support the Tonawandas' application to the 2019 Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Authored jointly by the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, the Tonawandas' Downtown Revitalization Initiative application is a vision for collaborative, regional economic success. With both cities sharing the Erie Canal and Niagara River waterfronts, each with historic and walkable downtowns, both having completed downtown development plans, and both cities having been recently awarded Smart Growth Community funds, this is an ideal time for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to capitalize on all of the momentum in the Tonawandas.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please call my office at (716) 434-0680 if I can ever be of assistance.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Ortt".

Robert G. Ortt
State Senator, 62nd District



Niagara County

Legislature

*From the Desk of
Legislator Richard Andres*

May 29, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Regional Council members;

On behalf of the 8th District of the Niagara County Legislature, I would like to express my enthusiastic support of the Tonawanda's application to the 2019 Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

This collaboration between the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda is a vision for regional economic prosperity. Both cities are committed to responsibly developing the Erie Canal and Niagara River waterfronts, preserving their historic and walkable communities, and leveraging the success of recent development projects. The Tonawandas are poised to efficiently and effectively implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Tonawandas.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Andres", is written over the typed name.

Richard Andres

Niagara County Legislator, 8th District



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. KEVIN R. HARDWICK

LEGISLATOR

May 23, 2019

Amanda Mays, Regional Director
Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, New York 14203-3030

Re: Downtown Revitalization Initiative – Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda

Dear Ms. Mays:

I am writing to express my support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application presented by the Cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda.

As an Erie County Legislator, I represent the City of Tonawanda and I am supportive of the Niagara River Greenway Commission's work in Grand Island, the City of Tonawanda, and the Town of Tonawanda – all of which are in my legislative district. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative process would contribute greatly to the realization of the vision set forth in the Niagara River Greenway Plan in which the downtown area of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda were identified as key gateways for the corridor.

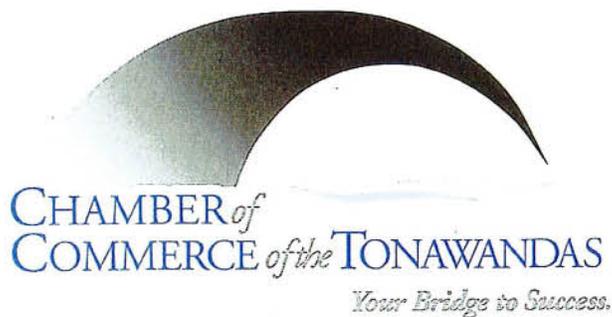
The Tonawandas are a key hub for trails in New York State, connecting the Niagara River Greenway and Western New York with the Empire State Trail. Recent investments in the Empire State Trail system and additional trails throughout Erie County – which the County government has wholeheartedly endorsed and supported through our investment in many tens of miles of new trails – will bring with them increased economic development opportunity.

These two intricately-connected downtown areas will continue to become a popular waterfront and multi-use trail destination and spur other activities and private investment. Participation in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would accelerate this revitalization to the benefit of the Niagara River Corridor as a whole.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Hardwick
Erie County Legislator



May 22, 2019

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Chairman Belt,

On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas, I would like to express my full support for the City of Tonawanda and the City of North Tonawanda's joint application to Round Four of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The Twin Cities have planned for and began to implement a redevelopment strategy aimed at making the Downtown area a unique, attractive, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. The Chamber of Commerce has been proud to welcome businesses along both sides of the Erie Canal.

Through this opportunity, both cities will be able to advance their redevelopment plans while capitalizing on previous success to bring new investment into the downtown area. The transformative developments envisioned through this process will bring new life to the Erie Canal waterfront, Niagara River waterfront, Tonawanda Island and former industrial brownfield properties. It will also enhance the Tonawanda's arts and culture community thus bringing more visitors into the Twin Cities.

The Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas recognizes the importance of this project and is committed to being a collaborative partner throughout the process.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me directly at 716-692-5120.

Sincerely,

Cathy A. Oddo
Executive Director



Hudson River Valley Greenway

May 10, 2019

Western NY Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street
Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Members of the Western New York REDC,

On behalf of the Empire State Trail initiative, I write in support of the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application.

The Empire State Trail, launched by Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2017, is a 750-mile bicycling and walking trail crossing New York State, that when completed in 2020 will be longest state multi-use trail in the nation. The EST will provide new outdoor recreational opportunities, foster community revitalization efforts, and directly support tourism-related economic development. Detailed information is available on the program webpage: www.ny.gov/programs/empire-state-trail.

The Empire State Trail route passes through Tonawanda, on the south side of the Erie Canal. Tonawanda is a key regional trail junction for the Empire State Trail, which follows the Shoreline Trail west to Buffalo and the Erie Canalway Trail east toward Rochester. In addition, planning is underway to extend the Shoreline Trail from North Tonawanda to Niagara Falls. The Empire State Trail is installing a Gateway in Tonawanda to welcome and orient visitors and tourists to the regional trail network.

New York State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative program would contribute greatly to promoting the Empire State Trail, and to connecting trail users with local businesses and services in Tonawanda and North Tonawanda. The two cities will grow as popular waterfront and multi-use trail destinations. Participation in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would accelerate this revitalization to the benefit of the Empire State Trail and the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Beers".

Andy Beers
Director, Empire State Trail



FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE, INC.

6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt. Morris, New York 14510-9527

(585) 658-9320 * (585) 658-2390

www.fingerlakestrail.org

May 14, 2019

Western NY Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street
Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Re: Downtown Revitalization Initiative

To Whom it may concern:

On behalf of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc. (FLTC), I am writing to express our support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application presented by the cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative process would contribute greatly to realization of the vision set forth in the Niagara River Greenway Plan in which the downtown areas of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda were identified as key gateways for the corridor.

The Finger Lakes Trail System is truly the hub of hiking and walking trails in New York State. In brief, the main trail and one of its branch trails send the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) east to the Long Trail in Vermont, which connects to the Appalachian Trail, and west all the way to North Dakota. To the southeast, in the Catskills, the main FLT terminates at the Long Path, which connects to the AT. In the central part of the state, the Crystal Hills Branch carries the Great Eastern Trail (Get) south to the Pennsylvania border, from where it will go through nine states to Florida and the Florida Trail.

Most relevant to this Downtown Revitalization Initiative, the most westerly branch trail, the Conservation Trail, begins at the Rainbow Bridge, and passes through Niagara Falls, Grand Island, Tonawanda, Amherst, and Clarence, before linking up with the FLT's main trail near Ellicottville. At the border at the Rainbow Bridge, the Conservation Trail meets Ontario's Bruce Trail which travels northwesterly ~550 miles up the Bruce Peninsula to Tobermory.

The Conservation Trail uses the multi-use Riverfront Trail that parallels the Niagara River. Promoting access to this interconnection between U.S. and Canada trail systems and access to the immense national trail system described above will bring more hikers and with them increased economic development opportunity. These two intricately connected downtown areas will continue to become a popular waterfront and multi-use trail destination. Participation in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would accelerate this revitalization to the benefit of the Niagara River Corridor as a whole.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information on our support for this proposal.

Warmest wishes,

Quinn Wright
Executive Director

LUMBER CITY

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Your Partner in Success

May 28, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
Empire State Development
95 Perry Street- Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Honorable Council;

On behalf of Lumber City Development Corporation, I am honored to support the 2019 City of North Tonawanda and City of Tonawanda's joint application for the Twin Cities Together project.

Lumber City Development Corporation has served as North Tonawanda's economic development agency since 2004. In that time Lumber City Development Corporation has worked closely with the City of North Tonawanda and many other local and regional partners in an effort to redevelop and revitalize Downtown North Tonawanda.

By collaborating with the City of Tonawanda; the Twin Cities will be able to leverage their strengths such as a picturesque waterfront, first-class cultural amenities, popular dining and entertainment venues, and historic architecture to attract new residents, companies and developments to the area. The projects outlined in the Twin Cities Together project will significantly transform both downtown areas and positively impact the lives of residents.

Lumber City Development Corporation fully supports the Twin Cities Together project and is committed to working with the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council to implement the the Twin Cities Together initiative. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Douglas Taylor
Chairman

**CITY OF TONAWANDA
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP**

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 29, 2019

Dear Chairman Belt,

The City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (COTLDC) is excited to offer its support for the vision outlined in the Twin Cities Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application. Our exceptional shared location along the Erie Canal and the Niagara River, connected to the surrounding region with a network of multi-use trails, make the Twin Cities Downtown an excellent area for investment and redevelopment. DRI funding will help to catalyze the development of this central destination in Western New York.

Incorporated in 2017, the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation was founded with a strong belief that our walkable downtown and waterfront are important assets upon which economic and community development should be focused. As the organization continues to grow, it serves as an advocate for the City's economic and community development potential, working closely with City leaders to plan, promote, and implement projects and programs and engage with the community.

Given our shared history, the DRI is an exciting opportunity to work in partnership with the City of North Tonawanda to implement mutually beneficial projects. The projects included in the application build on recent planning and development efforts including the City of Tonawanda's Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), Main Street Program, the Intermodal Hub, and the Smart Growth Community Fund project. Coupled with the recent efforts in North Tonawanda, the Twin Cities are well positioned to build upon past state and private investment and continue to realize the downtown and waterfront vision shared by both communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this application for the Twin Cities Downtown DRI and to share the exciting vision for our downtown community!

Respectfully,



Jason Knight, PhD, AICP
President

City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation

May 14, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
Empire State Development
95 Perry Street – Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Honorable Council,

The Niagara County Center for Economic Development is proud to support the City of North Tonawanda's proposal to collaborate with the City of Tonawanda in applying for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Round Four.

The City of North Tonawanda, under the NT Momentum Plan, has planned for and began to implement a redevelopment strategy aimed at making Downtown North Tonawanda a unique, attractive, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. Niagara County has been proud to welcome new businesses and developments along historic Webster Street, the Erie Canal, and the Niagara River.

North Tonawanda has a clear strategy to capitalize on this success to bring new investment into the downtown area. The developments envisioned by the NT Momentum Plan will bring new life to the Niagara River waterfront, Tonawanda Island, former industrial brownfield properties, and the oldest historic neighborhoods in North Tonawanda. This additional investment will help strengthen the community through a variety of new housing developments, office and professional development, unique retail and entertainment amenities, overnight lodging, and investments in critical public infrastructure and public spaces.

The Niagara County Center for Economic Development looks forward to a continued collaboration with the City of North Tonawanda and all of its partners in downtown development. Thank you in advance for considering the North Tonawanda-Tonawanda proposal.

Kindest regards,



Michael A. Casale, Commissioner



May 14, 2019

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Robin Dropkin
Executive Director

29 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207
P 518.434.1583
F 518.427.0067
www.ptny.org
ptny@ptny.org

Mr. Jeff Belt and Dr. Virginia Horvath
Western NY Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, New York 14203

Dear Co-Chairs Belt and Horvath:

Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) supports the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) application presented by the cities of North Tonawanda and Tonawanda. The DRI process would contribute greatly to realization of the vision set forth in the Niagara River Greenway Plan in which the downtown areas of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda were identified as key gateways for the corridor. This great opportunity to catalyze revitalization of a multi-modal transportation hub in Western New York deserves to be selected as one of the DRI communities this year.

The Tonawandas are a significant hub for trails in New York State, connecting the Niagara River Greenway and Western NY with the Erie Canalway Trail and the Empire State Trail. Recent investments in the Statewide Canalway Trail system, the Empire State Trail, and trails in WNY will bring awareness and excitement to pedestrian and bicycle-related tourism and will result in economic benefits to the communities the trails run through. These two intricately connected downtown areas will continue to become a popular waterfront and multi-use trail destination. Participation in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative would accelerate this revitalization to the benefit of the Niagara River Corridor as a whole.

Parks & Trails New York is New York's leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, working to expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails, and open spaces for use and enjoyment by all. For over 30 years, PTNY has pursued a vision in which all New Yorkers have close access to parks and trails that they can use for recreation and transportation.

Breathing new life into the Tonawandas through their selection as DRI communities will enhance the ability of Western New Yorkers to enjoy our world-class recreational assets, and allow residents to realize the economic, social, environmental and health benefits that come with them. PTNY is proud to support this application.

Sincerely,

Robin Dropkin
Executive Director



May 22, 2019

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Chairman Belt,

On behalf of Project Pride of North Tonawanda, I would like to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda and City of Tonawanda's joint application to Round Four of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Project Pride of North Tonawanda is a twenty-year-old volunteer organization that is committed to the beautification of North Tonawanda to enhance community pride. We work closely with the City of North Tonawanda, Lumber City Development Corporation, and the Oliver Street Merchants Association in organizing street clean-ups, flower planting events, fundraisers and much more. We have also been involved with the installation of new bicycle racks, planters, and street furniture throughout Downtown and the Oliver Street corridor, further leveraging the Smart Growth Community Fund and other various State investments.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative aligns closely with our mission and we truly believe that the enhancements made in downtown through this opportunity will build upon our current efforts to improve the public experience in downtown and our joint waterfronts.

We are proud to support the efforts to help restore the pride and vibrancy in North Tonawanda.

Sincerely,



Barbara Hughes

Board President, Project Pride of North Tonawanda



May 22, 2019

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street-Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Mr. Belt,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor Inc., I would like to express my full support for the City of Tonawanda and City of North Tonawanda's joint application to Round Four of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Our mission is to promote economic growth, tourism, recreation, and cultural and historic heritage through the utilization of Gateway Harbor Park, which is the centerpiece for both Downtown communities. Our programming consists of a variety of events including a concert series, Taste of the Tonawandas, Green Beer Sunday, Food Truck Thursdays, and Haunted Harbor, which bring visitors from all over Western New York into Gateway Harbor Park.

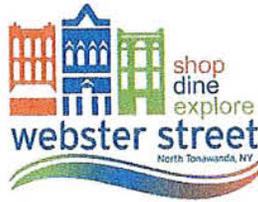
The Downtown Revitalization Initiative aligns closely with our mission and we truly believe that the enhancements made in both downtowns through this opportunity will build upon our current efforts to improve the public experience along our waterfront. Upon implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor will play a collaborative role throughout the process and is committed to serving on the steering committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Foels". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Linda Foels, President



May 22, 2019

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street- Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Mr. Belt,

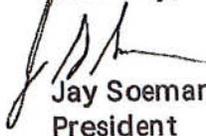
On behalf of the City of North Tonawanda Downtown Merchants Association, I would like to express my full support for the Twin Cities joint application to Round Four of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Established in 1957, the City of North Tonawanda Downtown Merchants Association comprises of small business owners who are committed to strengthening the downtown corridor and waterfront. Through our beautification efforts and variety of annual events, we are able to increase the number of visitors to our district while providing unique goods and services in a walkable historic downtown district.

The developments envisioned in these key planning projects will help bring new life to both downtown areas and waterfront while driving visitors to our area, further leveraging our efforts to enhance our downtown into a vibrant 24/7 destination.

Upon implementation of this project, the City of North Tonawanda Downtown Merchants Association will continue to play a collaborative and supportive role. We are proud to support the Tonawandas efforts to help restore the pride and vibrancy in our downtown areas.

Sincerely,


Jay Soemann
President

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 21, 2019

Dear Chairman Belt,

As the owners of 122 Webster Street, we are writing to affirm our support for the City of North Tonawanda's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and our commitment to undertake a partnership with the City if the program is funded.

We are extremely vested in Downtown North Tonawanda. We own three other downtown properties, which are home to successful restaurant businesses including Webster's Bistro, Webster's Kitchen, and most recently, Just Say Cheesecake bakery and café.

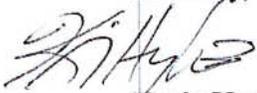
We purchased the vacant property located adjacent to our other properties as we can truly see North Tonawanda's redevelopment potential. With the recent placemaking and walkability enhancements that are currently underway, and the success of our downtown businesses, we feel this is an ideal time to undertake this development.

With an injection of funds from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, leveraged with our own private investment, this project could reach a point of becoming economically feasible. Upon award of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, this letter confirms our willingness to pursue the project through a partnership with the City of North Tonawanda.

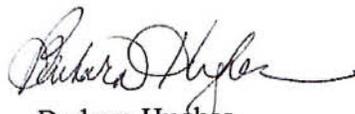
Downtown North Tonawanda is a key redevelopment opportunity in Western New York. We are personally very excited about the prospect of partnering options with the City of North Tonawanda and New York State.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kevin Hughes



Barbara Hughes



Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 14, 2019

Dear Regional Council members;

On behalf of KCG Companies, I am writing to express my support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

KCG focuses on development that builds vibrant communities, improves quality of life, and has a positive social impact. Through both adaptive reuse and new construction we have built a portfolio of successful, attractive, affordable mixed-use and multi-family housing projects throughout the country, including most recently the AP Lofts in Buffalo.

Downtown North Tonawanda is an area with a number of developments in progress and opportunity for continued investment. KCG took notice of North Tonawanda's unique potential in 2018 and has identified a potential site for development. This 4 acre parcel is at the northern gateway to downtown North Tonawanda and KCG has begun conceptual design and feasibility analysis of a mixed-use, affordable housing development. This project would support and enhance the walkability and vibrancy of the Main Street corridor, help connect downtown North Tonawanda to the Niagara River, and improve the quality and diversity of housing in the area. With the support of the City of North Tonawanda and the Downtown Revitalization Initiative this project vision has the potential to become reality. Please accept this letter as evidence of KCG's interest in pursuing a quality development project in North Tonawanda should the City receive funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

KCG believes in North Tonawanda's potential and hopes to partner with the City to further quality, responsible downtown development. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy Kaplowitz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stacy Kaplowitz
Vice President - Development

KCG Companies

9333 North Meridian Street Suite 230 | Indianapolis, IN | 46260 | (317) 708-0943

www.kcgcompanies.com

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 9, 2019

Dear Chairman Belt,

As the owner of 230 Oliver Street in North Tonawanda, I am writing to affirm my support for the City of North Tonawanda's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and my commitment to undertake a partnership with the City if the program is funded.

230 Oliver Street is an iconic mixed-use building located on a key corner within the Oliver Street business corridor. Built in 1883, this building has had many uses including the Wagenschutz Hardware Store, and most recently an antique shop. Throughout the years this property has fallen into complete disrepair and is in need of reinvestment.

I purchased 230 Oliver Street in early 2019 because I saw the true potential of this property and its value to the overall revitalization of Oliver Street. With the recent implementation of the Art on Oliver project, a strong Oliver Street Merchants Association and ongoing beautification efforts, I feel this is the ideal time to undertake this development.

With an injection of funds from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, leveraged with my own private investment, this project could reach a point of becoming economically feasible. Upon award of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, this letter confirms my willingness to pursue the project through a partnership with the City of North Tonawanda.

Downtown North Tonawanda is a key redevelopment opportunity in Western New York. I am personally very excited about the prospect of partnering options with the City of North Tonawanda and New York State.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Lauren Schulte

Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 9, 2019

Dear Chairman Belt,

As the owner of 27-39 Main Street in downtown North Tonawanda I am writing to affirm my support for the City of North Tonawanda's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and my commitment to undertake a partnership with the City if the program is funded. As the owner of Ridge Home Furnishings in North Tonawanda, and the Tonawanda Castle in the City of Tonawanda, I truly see the redevelopment potential of the Tonawandas.

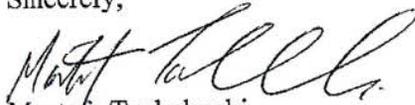
The Lumber City Village project would be a seasonal waterfront destination located adjacent to Gateway Harbor Park and the Erie Canal. This unique development will consist of temporary space for rotating artisans and small retail businesses to feature their jewelry, art, pottery, food services, and more. With the upcoming Gateway Harbor and downtown walkability enhancements currently being completed through the Smart Growth Community Fund, I feel this is the ideal time to undertake this development. Completion of the Lumber City Village will continue to increase downtown foot traffic while creating a vibrant space centered on arts and culture.

With an injection of funds from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, leveraged with my own private investment, this project could reach a point of becoming economically feasible. Upon award of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, this letter confirms my willingness to pursue the project through a partnership with the City of North Tonawanda.

Downtown North Tonawanda is a key redevelopment opportunity in Western New York. I am personally very excited about the prospect of partnering options with the City of North Tonawanda and New York State to create a new waterfront destination which will meet an identified need and contribute greatly to the revitalization of the City of North Tonawanda.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Mostafa Tanbakuchi

May 13, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Regional Council members;

On behalf of Rock One Development I would like to fully express my support for the City of North Tonawanda's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

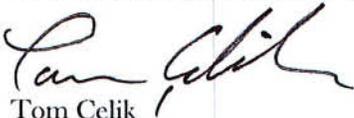
In 2012, we purchased 600 River Road in North Tonawanda and embarked on what became a \$20 million signature waterfront development. This year we will be cutting the ribbon on the 600 River Road Apartments development complete with 88 new luxury residential units and 500 feet of public waterfront access. Overlooking the mighty Niagara River and located on the site of a former iron and steel mill, this project represents the great potential to transform the local waterfront into a vibrant living community embracing key underutilized natural elements the area has to offer.

Further, in 2018 we purchased the adjacent land at 624 River Road with a vision to extend the development and create a unique waterfront campus featuring additional residential units, a dynamic 10,000SF waterfront restaurant, and a community center for residents, all while preserving and promoting the beautiful Niagara River waterfront. In total, the development of 624 River Road is expected to be \$10 million. Support through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will serve to catalyze further private investment on our part to complete the development of 624 River Road and continue to spur competitive economic growth.

The Tonawandas are an area full of opportunity and poised for new investment and growth. Downtown North Tonawanda, with the historic Eric Canal and Niagara River waterfronts, has the potential to develop into a unique area to live and visit unlike any in the region. We at Rock One Development see ourselves as enthusiastic partners with the City of North Tonawanda and ensuring the city becomes the vibrant, dynamic downtown it should be while providing quality amenities for its residents and visitors. Please accept this letter as our commitment to continue investing in North Tonawanda and to pursue the development of 624 River Road should the City receive funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

We believe in North Tonawanda's potential and the City's commitment to supporting quality and responsible economic development. I hope that you give their application serious consideration and that you do not hesitate to contact me with any questions relating to our property or project proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,



Tom Celik
Director of Development
Rock One Development, LLC
P: 716.759.1715 x103

Smith Boys

MARINE SALES, INC.

280 MICHIGAN ST.
TONAWANDA ISLAND
NORTH TONAWANDA, N.Y. 14120

716-695-3472
FAX 716-695-3473
www.smithboys.com

May 24, 2019

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Regional Council Members;

As the owners of Smith Boys Marine on Tonawanda Island, we are writing to express our support for the Tonawandas' application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Family owned and now in the fourth generation, Smith Boys has been an established part of the Western New York boating industry and a part of the North Tonawanda community since 1937. Over those decades we have seen the transition from a waterfront built for factories and industry to one built on boating and recreation. Gateway Harbor of the Tonawandas in particular has become a popular attraction for boaters on the Great Lakes and Erie Canal.

The Niagara River is one of Western New York's greatest assets and nowhere is there more potential for waterfront development than in the Tonawandas. We are proud to call Tonawanda Island our home for the past 47 years but believe its best days are yet to come. Through cooperative, strategic investment by local government and private business, the Tonawandas have the opportunity to become a one of a kind destination in the region. The Smith family and Smith Boys Marine look forward to future opportunities to partner with the City of North Tonawanda and New York State to help grow this waterfront destination.

Thank you for your consideration.



Bradley A. Smith

President


Outstanding Quality In Fiberglass Boats



Mr. Jeff Belt
Co-Chair
Western New York REDC
95 Perry Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14203

May 23, 2019

Dear Chairman Belt,

As the owner 60 Main Street in the City of Tonawanda, I am writing to affirm my support for the Tonawanda and North Tonawanda Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and my commitment to partner on further investment in 60 Main Street if the program is funded.

I purchased the building in 2017 because I saw the potential of the building and the downtown.

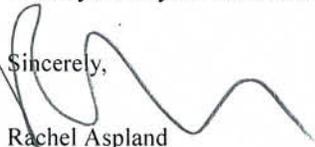
In addition to the building purchase cost, I have personally invested \$170,000 planning, rehabbing and developing the property and will continue to invest more.

Once completed, the building is to be a mixed-use space that supports creativity and entrepreneurship, offering flexible leases to our incoming tenants. We will welcome retailers, eateries and offices of any size to come and join us to create a social environment where local residents can also gather and socialize alongside our resident businesses as they grow and thrive. With an injection of funds from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, leveraged with my own private investment, this project could reach a point of becoming economically feasible. Upon award of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, this letter confirms my willingness to pursue the project.

As I've seen more and more private investment in the shared downtown of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, it's clear there is potential for growth in the area. I am excited to be a part of the redevelopment of the downtown and the opportunity to achieve my vision for the building as well as the vision for the downtown with the infusion of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Rachel Aspland

Welke Customs Brokers USA Inc
36 Delaware St
Tonawanda, NY 14150

May 29, 2019

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm Welke Customs Brokers USA Inc's interest in the Downtown revitalization initiative. This program will help us needed updates to our building and ensure Welke's growth, and continued success for years to come in the City of Tonawanda.

Regards

Damon Piatek

President / CEO

Welke Customs Brokers USA Inc