CITY OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Little City ~ Big Community

March 2018

FINAL DRAFT

CITY OF TONAWANDA

LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY

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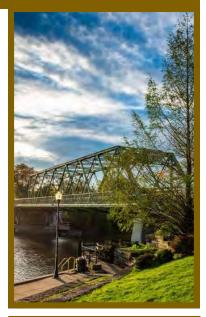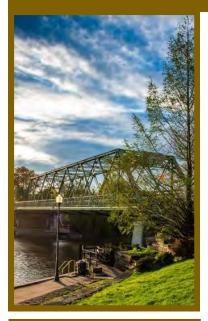
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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Simply put, a Comprehensive Plan defines and outlines the community's vision for the future of the City. It is a community-driven document that prioritizes opportunities and actions to achieve that vision. When well crafted and regularly utilized by the City, it provides guidance for municipal officials, staff, and Boards for decision-making and policies. As the name suggests, it addresses a wide range of community issues ranging from tangible elements such as roads and sewers to various social aspects. The Comprehensive Plan provides a link between what we want and what we get.

In addition, the Plan provides other benefits, such as:

♦ Increased opportunities for grants and other funding from State and private sources

♦ Justification and rationale for sound budgeting and capital improvement programming

♦ Programming and other planning for social and quality-of-life enhancements

♦ Economic development initiatives to increase community vitality and ensure overall sustainability

The legal justification for the development of the Plan is found in General City Law §28a as noted below. Indeed, land use decisions and laws (i.e. zoning code and subdivision regulations) must be tied back to the community through the Comprehensive Plan and future land use and zoning decisions must be consistent with the provisions in the Plan. It does not, though, preclude future City decisions that may not precisely align with the vision and goals of the Plan. In cases such as this, sound rationale must be given in a similar fashion and process that this Plan provides, supported with careful consideration of the overall benefit to residents and the community.

"Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a city government is the authority and responsibility to undertake city comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens"
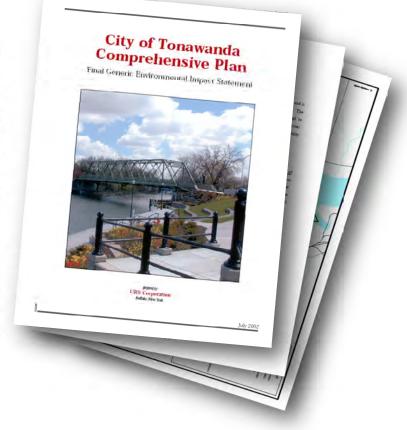
How is the Plan used?

The Plan is organized in such a manner so that it educates readers on what assets the City has in terms of its people and its physical features (Community Profile) and identifies what the priorities are for investment and improvements in the City (Vision & Goals). If the Comprehensive Plan itself is a toolbox, complete with an instruction manual, it's no good without actual tools to get the job done - this is where the action plan comes into play (Moving Forward). Zoning updates, City policies and initiatives, programmatic changes, partnerships, and future planning are some of the "tools" that can be used to implement the Plan. All of this is achieved through the lens of community input, which is what provides the background for the Plan itself - a community-driven process.

Why now?

The typical timeframe for Comprehensive Plan is 10-15 years with a review conducted every year, as a best practice, to ensure that the City is on the right track and identifies any new or additional actions that should be taken in coming years. The City's last Plan was developed in 2002 and since that time, leadership has changed, residents have moved, and priorities have changed. This requires a more in-depth review of the overall vision, as well as other, more specific elements in the community to keep the Plan up-to-date and relevant. Proactive planning keeps the City "ahead of the game" rather than being reactive to issues or opportunities.

In addition, there are a number of action items contained within the former plan that either were completed, out-of-date, or simply irrelevant to today's standards. The update gives the City and community an opportunity to revisit the Plan with a fresh set of eyes.

How was this developed?

The 2017 Plan utilized the framework of the 2002 Plan as the foundation for which critical updates to key areas, such as demographics and other socio-economic trends, that have most likely changed in

Plan Kickoff ▸ Inventory ▸ Vision, Goals & Policies ▸ Land Use Plan ▸ Action Plan ▸ Draft Plan ▸ Review ▸ Final Plan

the 15+ years since the previous plan was developed. The planning process includes an analysis of existing conditions and past planning documents, community outreach, re-examination of the vision, establishing goals and strategies, developing action items, and an overall implementation plan to move the plan forward.

Steering Committee

The update was overseen by a steering committee that consisted of volunteers representing a variety of stakeholders including elected officials, City employees and staff, community residents, Board members, School District representatives, and business owners. Some of the committee members were also involved in the creation of the 2002 Plan, providing valuable insight into its development and the connection to the updated Plan.

Using an outside consultant team led by Clark Patterson Lee for technical assistance, community engagement, and overall plan development, the steering committee's role was to provide direction and feedback to the consultant team based on community input and other data gathered throughout the process. The committee also served as the primary conduit to the community itself.

Monthly meetings of the committee and consultant team occurred between the project kick-off in January 2016 through March 2018.

Public Input

As a community-supported document, development of the Plan was designed to include important input from residents and businesses as possible, bringing their unique experiences and local knowledge into the planning process that was incorporated

throughout. The process created a constituency that supported the adoption and implementation of the Plan. At strategic points in between, there were opportunities for community outreach including a public kickoff and update meeting, student outreach, resident surveys, integration with local events, and more.

Public meetings allow the community to interact with the consultants and each other to identify issues and opportunities.

A full summary of all of the events and the feedback received is included in Appendix A.
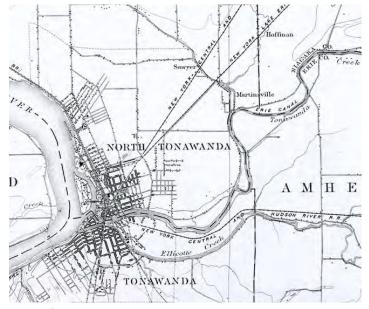
Our History

The history of the City can be traced back to the Iroquois Confederacy and more specifically the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois who occupied lands from Seneca Lake westward. They, like many settlers who came to the area in the early 1800's, lived and prospered off of the many natural resources in the region, most notably Tonawanda Creek, an important waterway of the time. The hamlet of Tonawanda, a name derived from the Iroquois meaning "swift running water" used to describe the creek, grew slowly in the early 1800's as a result of active use of local waterways, and further expanded after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825.

The Erie Canal, running from Buffalo to Albany and connecting the bustling harbors of New York City to the Great Lakes and beyond, gave Tonawanda its substantial start in commerce and spurred its incorporation in 1836 as the Town of Tonawanda. In 1853, the hamlet was incorporated as a village and then re-incorporated again as a city in 1903. Originally, the village included four wards, one of which was situated along the north side of Tonawanda Creek. After many disputes regarding favoritism over financial assistance, the north ward

eventually separated from the village in 1857 and became what is known today as North Tonawanda.

In the early part of the 20th century, in an effort to improve navigation, New York State funded a major improvement to the canal, henceforth known as the New York State Erie Barge Canal. With this change the mouth of Tonawanda Creek became the western terminus of the canal. The City owes its initial growth and development to the economic benefits of its location on the Erie Canal.

Primarily the community was engaged in the lumber industry as a major Great Lakes shipping port. By

Path of the Erie Canal in western New York, passing through the City of Tonawanda (USGS Survey, 1894)

the late 19th Century the area had become the second largest lumber handling port in the world.

LUMBER BOATS ON THE ERIE CANAL.

As the Canal lost its economic dominance as a critical mode of transportation to railroads, the City's regional, state, and national role as a lumber center was decreasing. However as industrialization took hold across the country, the City saw manufacturing growth most notably beginning in the early 1900s with facilities like Spaulding Fibre, Columbus McKinnon, Buffalo Steel, and Tonawanda Box Company. After World War II, like many Great Lakes communities, a decline in manufacturing and economic investment cut off growth and development. By the 1970s the closure of most of the major manufacturing industries had seriously impacted the City.

Tonawanda Today

Today, the City of Tonawanda is predominantly known for its waterfront, boasting an expansive park along the Niagara River with a shoreline trail that connects to points north and south and an easterly trail that follows the route of the Canal across New York State. Expansive residential neighborhoods are found throughout the City with a small, but defined downtown core along Main Street between Fletcher Street and Niagara Street. Other commercial areas are located along sections of Young Street and Niagara Streets, but Tonawanda is primarily residential in nature.

The City is actively working towards addressing these core areas through the various planning initiatives previously mentioned, most notably the Main Street Program and LWRP, but also through key projects such as the Intermodal Depot. As an older City that is almost completely built out, there is little open land (i.e. "greenfields") available; adaptive reuse of existing buildings and redevelopment of lots are the primary avenue for investment. Reinvestment in itself through these assets is the key to moving the City towards a more sustainable direction in the future.

About Us

The previous Comprehensive Plan was based on economic and demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census. A significant component of this Plan update consists of the use of more up-to-date information to provide a better picture of the current state of the City today. This data will help City officials to make more informed decisions moving forward.

Analysis for the community profile relies on data from U.S. Census Bureau Decennial and American Community Survey (ACS) programs. Generally, the data cover the period from 1990 to 2010, with some variables covering estimates as recently as 2016. After the 2000 Decennial Census, the Census Bureau changed its methods for collecting and reporting data. The Decennial Census is no longer collecting and reporting key socio-economic data.

The ACS is now collects and reports socio-economic data more regularly, although the data are estimates rather than 100 percent counts of the population. However, the ACS program data can be helpful in keeping abreast of changing conditions in a community because it is timelier than the Decennial Census.

In order to understand the data, it needs to be put into context with other communities; for Tonawanda, a proper comparison is with other similar first ring suburbs of the City of Buffalo. These communities had similar historic development and growth trends; lack sufficient areas for new commercial and residential development; and generally have older housing stock consisting of smaller homes on smaller lots. Additionally, Buffalo and Erie County are included to better contextualize the data and offer a comparison to trends at the central city and county levels.

It should be noted that the newer, growing suburbs such as Orchard Park, Lancaster, and Clarence generally have trends in the opposite direction, in particular with respect to population growth, income, and housing units.

Population

Since 1990, the population of the city has declined from 17,284 to an estimated 14,991 during the period 2012-2016. This represents a 13.3% decrease in the number of residents in the city (**Figure 2-1**). Population decline is not entirely a Tonawanda issue but rather one being encountered by Erie County and many of its municipalities due to regional economic conditions, demographic changes, and changes in the housing market. However, the issue is more pronounced in the city than in many communities and the county. From 1990 to 2012-2016, the rate of population decline in the city was

Municipality	1990[a]	2000[a]	2010[a]	2012-2016[b]	Change
Buffalo	328,123	292,648	258,989	259,517	-20.90%
Tonawanda	*17,284*	*16,136*	*15,130*	*14,991*	-13.30%
Lackawanna	20,585	19,064	17,992	17,992	-12.60%
North Tonawanda	34,989	33,262	31,568	30,935	-11.60%
Town of Tonawanda	65,284	61,729	58,144	57,844	-11.40%
Kenmore	17,180	16,426	15,423	15,303	-10.90%
Williamsville	5,583	5,573	5,300	5,269	-5.60%
Amherst[c]	106,157	110,965	117,084	119,378	12.50%
Grand Island	17,561	18,621	20,374	20,735	18.10%
Erie County	968,532	950,265	919,040	922,129	-4.80%

(a) US Census Bureau, Decennial Census | (b) US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

(c) Amherst includes (V) Williamsville

Figure 2-1: Historical population and change

Niagara County

Lewiston

Cambria

Lockport

Niagara

Niagara Falls

Wheatfield

Pendleton

North Tonawanda

Grand Island

Amherst

River

Tonawanda

Canada
(Ontario Province)

Erie County

Cheektowaga

Buffalo

West Seneca

Lake Erie

Lackawanna

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Regional Context

greater than the county rate of -4.8 percent. It also exceeds the rate in its cohort of older, first-ring suburban communities (Figure 2- 1). The only community with a greater decline is the City of Buffalo.

Age

The age distribution of a population is an important consideration for a community. For example, an increase or decrease in school age children has impacts for local school districts. One way to understand the change in age distribution over time is the Dependency Ratio, a measure of the number of youth (ages 0-14) and elderly (aged 65 and older) residents to working age residents (age 15-64) (**Figure 2-2**).

The dependency ratio for the City is 46 as shown in **Figure 2-3**. Simply stated, for every 100 people in the city of working age, there are 46 dependents.
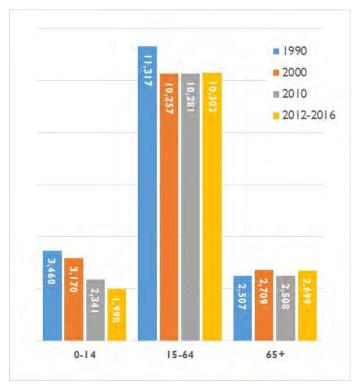
Figure 2-2: Age Breakdown comparison, 1990-2016

Those are broken down as 19 youth and 26 elderly dependents. This is a decline from 1990 when it was 53 and 2000 when it was 57. The interpretation of the dependency ratio is important here. Communities typically want a balance of working age population, those that are supporting dependents, and at least a stable population of children and retirees. For comparison, the dependency ratio for Erie County is 50, broken down as 25 for the Youth ratio and 25 for the Elderly ratio.

$$Dependency\ Ratio = \frac{(Population\ 0-14 + Population\ 65+)}{Population\ 15-64} \times 100$$

Year	Youth	Elderly	Dependency
1990	31%	22%	53%
2000	31%	26%	57%
2010	23%	24%	47%
2012-2016	19%	26%	46%

Figure 2-3: Dependency ratio

One might interpret the decline in the ratio of dependents as a positive sign, indicating that a growing percentage of the city's population is in, or eligible for, the workforce. However, there are two underlying trends in this data, as evidenced in Figure 2.2. First, the elderly population is a growing and becoming a larger share of the population. Adding some further evidence, the median age in the city increased from 38.8 in 2000 to 44.4 in 2012-2016.

The second and more concerning trend is lower enrollment in the Tonawanda City School District (TCSD), which is a significant reason for discussions of school closures, although improvements to overall school efficiency and responding to changes student instructional needs also factor in. Enrollment in the district has declined from 2,665 during the 1996-1997 school year to 1,716 in 2016-2017. To

get a handle in this, TCSD commissioned a five-year enrollment project beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. The consultants predicted annual enrollment decline in each of the five years in the project. However, enrollment in the district has been relatively stable despite the predicted declines. The projected enrollment declines for the first three years - 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 - were significantly over-estimated. Projected enrollments, using the moderate projection, were 1,671 (14-15), 1,644 (15-16), and 1,625 (16-17) but reported enrollments were 1,740, 1,682, and 1,716, respectively. Enrollment in the district in 16-17 was one less student than the enrollment for 2012-2013 (1,717), the base year in the report. This represented 91 more students than the moderate enrollment decrease projected. In fact, the first year saw an **increase** over the base year, not a decrease.

This highlights the challenges of projecting school enrollments. However, the projections had at least one methodological error - they did not account for birth rates. This might explain some of the school enrollment stabilization. Looking closely, and considering the years of prime fertility, in 2000 the number of woman aged 18-34, was 1,548. In 2010, it increased to 1,608. From 2009-2013, the most recent data likely available when the District's projections were conducted, it was estimated by the Census to be 1,715.

For the 5-year period 2012-2016, the estimate is 1,858. Even when considering the margin of error associated with 5-year estimates, the population of woman 18-34 is growing, one of the few cohorts showing growth in the city, which may indicate more students entering the school district.

Income

Per capita income (**Figure 2-4**) is one measure of the economic conditions of the general population. Simply stated, it measures the total income within the population and divides it by the number of residents. It is a simple descriptive measure allowing for comparison of incomes between communities and when adjusted for inflation allows an understanding of change over time.

In Tonawanda, per capita income (PCI) has increased since 1989, rising from $24,812 (in 2016 dollars) to an estimated $27,641 in 2016. Among the

Municipality	1989*	1999*	2011*	2016	Change (%)
Tonawanda	$24,812	$27,294	$25,481	$27,641	11.40%
Buffalo	$20,485	$21,777	$21,474	$21,566	5.30%
North Tonawanda	$24,951	$27,984	$27,826	$29,717	19.10%
Grand Island	$34,795	$37,502	$36,542	$35,604	2.30%
Town of Tonawanda	$28,342	$30,140	$29,063	$30,084	6.10%
Kenmore	$27,215	$31,515	$29,330	$29,961	10.10%
Lackawanna	$21,174	$24,299	$22,263	$20,015	-5.50%
Amherst^	$38,812	$40,162	$37,883	$38,846	0.10%
Williamsville	$37,388	$39,479	$41,986	$38,312	2.50%
Cheektowaga	$25,646	$28,757	$26,477	$26,563	3.60%
West Seneca	$27,295	$29,882	$29,603	$30,642	12.30%
Sloan	$23,337	$23,190	$22,519	$24,602	5.40%
Erie County	**$26,595**	**$29,572**	**$29,277**	**$29,940**	**12.60%**

Figure 2-4: Per capita income, 1990-2016

suburbs in Figure 2-4, the 11.4% increase in PCI was slightly behind North Tonawanda and West Seneca, as well as Erie County in general.

Another measure to consider is median household income (**Figure 2-5**). Median household income indicates the middle point of household income in the city, meaning half the households earned more and half earned less. In Tonawanda, median household income declined by 16.9 percent from 1990 to 2016. Among comparable communities and Erie County, Tonawanda's median household income is on the bottom third and it has experienced the largest decrease in median household income.

There is one more income measure to consider to help complete the story. An increase in per capita income suggest that on the whole, everyone in Tonawanda is better off financially today than in 1989. Certainly an increase in per capita income is positive, but when we consider that population has declined, the picture changes somewhat. An important measure of a community like Tonawanda, which has generally been fully developed since the 1970s with basically the same number of housing units is the total income in the community. In 1999, after a generally prosperous decade, total income in Tonawanda was $440,389,409 (in 2016$). In 2016, total income had decreased to an estimated $414,363,200.

The loss of $26 million from the local economy has significant impacts on residents and the city. Less money in the local economy means less money to maintain homes; spend in local stores, restaurants and bars; and less tax revenue for the city and school district as housing quality and values decline, stores closes, and homes and businesses become vacant and abandoned.

Poverty is also a concern in Tonawanda, with the rate of persons in poverty increasing 6.5 percent in 1990 to 10.9 percent in 2016. The trend county-wide is for an increase in poverty and most communities have experienced at least some increase. However, among its neighboring suburbs, Tonawanda has the third highest poverty rate, behind Buffalo and Lackawanna (**Figure 2-6**).

Municipality	1989[c]	1999[c]	2011[d]	2016[d]	Change (%)
Tonawanda	$57,824	$54,508	$50,223	$48,047	-16.90%
Buffalo	$36,248	$35,642	$32,341	$33,119	-8.60%
North Tonawanda	$58,006	$56,877	$49,430	$50,575	-12.80%
Grand Island	$83,670	$87,787	$85,910	$79,778	-4.70%
Town of Tonawanda	$61,162	$60,041	$53,659	$55,746	-8.90%
Kenmore	$60,160	$61,378	$54,261	$52,676	-12.40%
Lackawanna	$41,795	$42,641	$38,421	$35,563	-14.90%
Amherst[b]	$81,326	$80,517	$71,281	$71,105	-12.60%
Williamsville	$65,136	$69,084	$65,668	$59,552	-8.60%
Cheektowaga	$57,010	$55,096	$50,828	$48,994	-14.10%
West Seneca	$67,434	$67,206	$58,472	$60,150	-10.80%
Sloan	$50,232	$42,737	$41,025	$42,146	-16.10%
Erie County	$54,925	$56,025	$52,213	$52,744	-4.00%

(a) 2016 dollars | (b) Amherst includes (V) Williamsville

(c) US Census Bureau, Decennial Census | (d) US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Figure 2-5: Median household income

Municipality	1989[a]	1999[a]	2011[b]	2016[b]	Change (%)
Tonawanda	6.5%	7.1%	12.1%	10.9%	4.4%
Buffalo	25.6%	26.6%	30.1%	31.2%	5.6%
North Tonawanda	6.1%	7.2%	10.6%	9.4%	3.3%
Grand Island	2.8%	3.0%	5.7%	7.7%	4.9%
Town of Tonawanda	5.0%	7.3%	10.7%	8.5%	3.5%
Kenmore	5.2%	5.2%	6.6%	7.2%	2.0%
Lackawanna	16.7%	16.7%	22.3%	24.3%	7.6%
Amherst[c]	5.4%	6.5%	8.1%	10.0%	4.6%
Williamsville	5.3%	4.5%	7.9%	7.6%	2.3%
Cheektowaga	5.1%	6.5%	9.4%	10.8%	5.7%
West Seneca	3.2%	4.6%	6.4%	7.0%	3.8%
Sloan	7.0%	11.5%	15.7%	9.0%	2.0%
Erie County	12.2%	12.2%	14.2%	14.7%	2.5%

(a) US Census Bureau, Decennial Census | (b) US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

(c) Amherst includes (V) Williamsville

Figure 2-6: Poverty rates

Housing and Neighborhoods

A community's housing stock is vital to its long-term viability. Declining housing values and conditions put local governments in a fiscal squeeze as taxable assessments decline. Additionally, this is troublesome for some property owners who maintain their properties and see property tax bills increased to offset declining values in certain neighborhoods. Historically, the city has focused much of its efforts, funding, and staff capacity on economic development. The underlying assumption and belief is that economic development results in increased tax generation that further reduces or minimizes taxes paid by existing homeowners. Further, economic development reinvests in underutilized buildings and sites and leads to increased property values adjacent to these investments.

And although some benefit can be attributed to this effort, the reality is that a singular focus on the potential trickle down effects of economic development into the community fails to adequately recognize the economic context of the region and the role the community has played, which is that of a bedroom community. To make this clear, 5,706 of 6,402 (89.13%) parcels are residential uses.

Ultimately, a bedroom community needs to recognize both the rooftops and the value of housing, not just as a community asset but as personal investments.

To drive home this point, the assessed value of residential properties in the city outweighs all other uses. Based on current assessed values, residential property accounts for 71.7% of the total real property assessment in the city. It represents $500

million of the city's total $698 million total assessed value. Therefore, it is in a community's best interest then to maintain the value of these properties as it has a substantial impact on the city's finances. Declining property values have a twofold impact. First they reduce the assessed value of some properties, causing a loss in tax revenue from those properties. Second, that lost tax revenue is then made up by increasing the taxes on property owners whose property has maintained or increased in value.

The adage that "retail follows rooftops" is appropriate here. That is business, bars, restaurants, boutiques, and coffee shops that communities covet require the right local marketplace to survive and prosper. That marketplace is a community's residential population, or its "rooftops". When a business decides to invest in a specific community, it generally will conduct a market assessment to determine the needs and wants of the community before determining whether to open in that specific community. That assessment will include both residents living in the community and those within a given distance who are likely to travel for a given service. So the rooftops in a community are important because housing quality determines household attributes. Put another way, when your community is losing population and the housing stock is declining in quality and price, businesses will recognize that because of the relationship to housing quality and income. The correlation between declining housing quality and price and increased poverty is clear.

Additionally, the trends seen in housing (when considered in concert with key socio-economic factors) in a community are strong predictors of future neighborhood conditions, poverty rates, incomes, business development, tax revenue, crime, and a host of other community issues. Key variables are housing condition, vacancy rates, and owner-occupancy. The City's vacancy rate continues to creep higher decade over decade. Although the increase may seem minimal, research has shown that vacancy initially grows slowly but steadily before taking off rapidly as other factors in the community evolve, such as population age, declining incomes, and increased poverty, all of which are evident in Tonawanda. **Figure 2-7** on the following page presents the vacancy rate for the City and selected communities.

Tenure, or the means of occupancy, helps understand the housing market in a community. Owner-occupied and renter-occupied are the means by which people come to inhabit residential units. In older, inner ring suburbs owner-occupied units are typically the majority and this is certainly the case in Tonawanda as indicated in **Figure 2-8**. The rate of renter-occupied housing can be an indicator of housing market conditions and an increase may suggest an underlying change in the local housing market.

It should be stated that renters are not inherently a problem. Many communities do very well with high renter rates. However, when a community that is a dominant single-family residential location starts to see conversions of singles to multi-units, all other factors considered, it typically indicates a weak housing market for homeownership (investment). Owners typically convert if unable to sell or as a way to increase revenue from a single-unit rental property. The rental rate is stable in Tonawanda and anecdotal information and conversations seem to indicate this issue may increase.

However, the potential exists for absentee owners, out-of-state speculators, and flippers and the City may want to consider further investigation.

Municipality	1989[a]	1999[a]	2011[b]	2016[b]	Change (%)
Tonawanda	*3.10%*	*5.30%*	*5.50%*	*6.90%*	*3.80%*
Buffalo	10.20%	15.70%	15.70%	16.30%	6.10%
North Tonawanda	2.60%	5.20%	5.10%	7.00%	4.40%
Grand Island	4.30%	6.20%	4.10%	6.50%	2.20%
Town of Tonawanda	2.20%	3.60%	5.10%	5.50%	3.30%
Kenmore	3.10%	5.20%	4.80%	5.50%	2.40%
Lackawanna	5.90%	8.50%	9.30%	11.90%	6.00%
Amherst[c]	4.70%	3.70%	4.40%	4.70%	0.00%
Williamsville	3.50%	4.00%	6.00%	3.00%	-0.50%
Cheektowaga	2.70%	4.60%	6.40%	6.90%	4.20%
West Seneca	2.40%	3.50%	4.10%	5.80%	3.40%
Sloan	3.80%	6.10%	7.60%	8.40%	4.60%
Erie County	**6.30%**	**8.40%**	**8.80%**	**5.20%**	**-1.10%**

(a) US Census Bureau, Decennial Census | (b) US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

(c) Amherst includes (V) Williamsville

Figure 2-7: Vacancy rates, 1990-2010

Owner Occupied					Renter Occupied				
Municipality	1990a	2000[a]	2010[a]	2012-2016[b]	Municipality	1990a	2000[a]	2010[a]	2012-2016[b]
Grand Island	79.70%	83.30%	79.30%	81.80%	Grand Island	20.40%	16.70%	20.70%	18.20%
Town of Tonawanda	74.70%	74.60%	74.20%	72.80%	Town of Tonawanda	25.40%	25.40%	25.80%	27.20%
Tonawanda	*72.60%*	*72.50%*	*71.10%*	*72.50%*	*Tonawanda*	*27.40%*	*27.50%*	*28.90%*	*27.50%*
Amherstc	75.80%	74.80%	72.00%	71.30%	Amherstc	24.30%	25.20%	28.00%	28.80%
North Tonawanda	67.90%	68.70%	66.90%	69.10%	North Tonawanda	32.10%	31.30%	33.10%	30.90%
Kenmore	68.60%	66.60%	71.10%	66.60%	Kenmore	31.40%	33.40%	28.90%	33.40%
Erie County	63.70%	65.30%	64.80%	65.30%	Erie County	36.30%	34.70%	35.20%	34.70%
Williamsville	60.60%	60.30%	60.30%	59.50%	Williamsville	39.40%	39.70%	39.70%	40.50%
Lackawanna	57.50%	57.00%	52.40%	52.80%	Lackawanna	42.50%	43.00%	47.60%	47.20%
Buffalo	43.10%	43.50%	40.70%	41.40%	Buffalo	56.90%	56.60%	59.30%	58.60%

Figure 2-8: Renter –occupancy rates, 1990-2010

(a) US Census Bureau, Decennial Census | (b) US Census Bureau, American Comm. Surve

(c) Amherst includes (V) Williamsville

Local and Regional Economy

Regional Context

The Buffalo Niagara Region is home to several business amenities which have driven historic development. The Erie Canal was built to create a navigable water route from New York City and the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes. Lake Erie supports significant shipping traffic, commercial fishing operations, agriculture, and tourism. Niagara Falls generates a massive amount of hydroelectric power all while attracting some 12 million tourists each year. These natural resources have historically impacted industry and commerce within the region.

Educational opportunities are plentiful for residents living in the Buffalo Niagara Region. Higher education institutions are scattered throughout the region and ranging from a large university, small private liberal arts colleges, and community colleges. Recreational and cultural resources are also abundant. In addition to Lake Erie and Niagara Falls, the region boasts the Niagara and Buffalo Rivers, Beaver Island State Park, Knox Farm State Park, Artpark State Park, Old Fort Niagara, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Buffalo Zoo, the Buffalo Museum of Science, Explore & More Children's Museum, and many other local and regional attractions.

The accessibility and quality of natural, educational, recreational and cultural resources within region are leading a resurgence in job creation, business development, and economic development throughout the region. The ten largest employers in Western New York include: State of New York, U.S. Government, Kaleida Health, SUNY at Buffalo, Catholic Health Systems, Employer Services Corporation, Tops Markets LLC, City of Buffalo Schools, M&T Bank, and Erie County Government. As stated in the Western New York Regional Economic Development Progress Report (2016),

"Key indicators point to a growing and increasingly vibrant regional economy, with more jobs and firms and greater productivity than just a few years ago. In fact, since 2011, the regional economy added over 12,500 jobs, 1,400 new firms and nearly $3.0B in wages."

Continued growth is anticipated throughout the region. **However, locally, the City has not shown the same trends in terms of economic development and business growth.** A review of employment and business trends, real property taxes, and the results of an informal survey of businesses within the Main Street area show there is the need for economic development solutions that identify and strengthen the City's position within the regional market.

Employment and Business Trends

Data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, in conjunction with the Local Employment Dynamics program, *OnTheMap*, shows where individuals living in the City are employed. The analysis is restricted to those working in primary jobs as of 2014, the

most recent year for which data are available. (Primary jobs include both public- and private-sector jobs covered under the state unemployment insurance system. A primary job is the highest paying job for an individual worker for the year.)

The data shows that more than 7,100 primary jobs are held by city residents. These jobs are in a wide range of industries, led by health care and social

assistance (13.9%), retail (12.4%), and manufacturing (12.3%), which are also among the largest economic sectors in the region. Various levels of government, as well as public school systems, also account for more than 12% of the jobs held by city residents.

Since 2004, residents held more jobs in finance and insurance; professional, scientific, and technical services; and management and fewer jobs in

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector	City of Tonawanda				Buffalo-Niagara MSA			
	2004		2014		2004		2014	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	962	13.30%	990	13.90%	72,392	15.20%	75,208	15.30%
Retail Trade	879	12.20%	879	12.40%	54,439	11.40%	54,342	11.10%
Manufacturing	962	13.30%	877	12.30%	57,539	12.10%	50,030	10.20%
Accommodation and Food Services	613	8.50%	601	8.50%	35,291	7.40%	41,560	8.50%
Educational Services	735	10.20%	560	7.90%	58,628	12.30%	50,735	10.30%
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. and Remediation	472	6.50%	419	5.90%	26,771	5.60%	25,809	5.30%
Finance and Insurance	308	4.30%	388	5.50%	20,371	4.30%	25,339	5.20%
Prof., Scientific, and Technical Serv.	307	4.20%	365	5.10%	22,701	4.80%	25,958	5.30%
Wholesale Trade	392	5.40%	333	4.70%	21,168	4.40%	21,147	4.30%
Govt. and Public Admin.	294	4.10%	317	4.50%	20,825	4.40%	25,420	5.20%
Transportation and Warehousing	256	3.50%	292	4.10%	15,606	3.30%	16,899	3.40%
Construction	281	3.90%	286	4.00%	15,657	3.30%	16,612	3.40%
Other Services (exc. Public Admin.)	296	4.10%	264	3.70%	18,082	3.80%	18,844	3.80%
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	115	1.60%	204	2.90%	8,745	1.80%	15,407	3.10%
Information	123	1.70%	114	1.60%	10,658	2.20%	8,490	1.70%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	83	1.10%	112	1.60%	7,133	1.50%	8,938	1.80%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	102	1.40%	85	1.20%	6,606	1.40%	6,663	1.40%
Utilities	47	0.60%	19	0.30%	2,369	0.50%	2,204	0.40%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.00%	3	0.00%	195	0.00%	261	0.10%
Ag., Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5	0.10%	1	0.00%	1,191	0.30%	1,329	0.30%
Total	7,232	100.00%	7,109	100.00%	476,367	100.00%	491,195	100.00%

Figure 2-9: Local employment by Industry

manufacturing, educational services, and wholesale trade.

Compared to the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the City's share of residents working in retail and manufacturing are higher, but lower in health care and social assistance and educational services. The Buffalo-Niagara MSA also saw an increase of 15,000 in total primary jobs compared to a decline of more than 120 total primary jobs in the City.

Analyzing the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census most recent data shows **notable declines** in the number of establishment and employees in both **manufacturing and wholesale trade** industries within the City from 2002 to 2012. Retail **trade** is currently the largest industry in terms of both establishments (57) and employees (944) despite seeing significant declines between 2002 and 2007. Trends between 2007 and 2012 suggest the retail trade industry is nearing a return to 2002 levels. **Accommodation and food services** and **manufacturing** industries are the second and third largest industries within the City. Both real estate and rental leasing and administrative and support and waste management and remediation services industries have experienced growth in the number of establishment and the number of employees from 2002 to 2012.

Updated employment and business statistics from Invest Buffalo Niagara indicate the top 50 businesses

NAICS Industry Sector	Number of establishments			Number of employees		
	2002	2007	2012	2002	2007	2012
Manufacturing	41	39	34	4,801	1,196	909
Wholesale Trade	37	35	30	877	586	386
Retail Trade	61	48	57	1,172	840	944
Transportation and Warehousing	--	--	14	--	--	329
Information	7	9	6	62	55	--
Finance and Insurance	--	--	17	--	--	--
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	17	19	21	109	111	119
Prof., Scientific, and Technical Services	29	33	32	141	232	191
Admin. & Support and Waste Mgmt. and Remediation Services	17	25	29	277	272	308
Educational Services	1	1	3	--	--	--
Health Care and Social Assistance	30	33	31	322	392	325
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3	2	1	--	--	--
Accommodation and Food Services	44	43	43	639	724	821
Other services (except Public Admin.)	32	29	33	180	120	--
Total	319	316	351	4,332	4,528	4,332

Figure 2-10: City Businesses and Employee counts

within the City employ more than 3,000 people with an annual sales volume over $816 million. Notable findings include:

♦ Twelve manufacturing businesses have a total of 825 employees and an annual sales volume of more than $170 million.

♦ Five retail trade businesses employing more than 300 people account for more than $372 million in annual sales, or 46 percent of the total annual sales of the top 50 businesses.

♦ A single business in the information industry has an annual sales volume of nearly $80 million.

♦ The average annual sales volume of the top 50 businesses is more than $258,000.

♦ The average number of employees of the top 50 businesses is 60.

♦ Six businesses have a sales volume greater than $1 million per employee.

♦ The top 10 businesses employ more than 1,200 people and include: Con Agra Foods Inc., Tops Friendly Market, Livingston International Inc., Texas Roadhouse, XPO Logistics, Medco Supply Co., Surgical Supply Service, Snyder Industries Inc., Exolon CO, and Midland Asphalt Materials.

Nearly 65% of employed City residents work within the Buffalo-Niagara MSA, which is comprised of Erie and Niagara Counties. Of interest is the fact that only 9.6% have jobs within the City, which is a decline from 12.4% in **2004 when more City residents worked within the City than in the Town of Tonawanda.** As of 2014, 11.1% percent of City residents worked in the Town of Tonawanda,

compared to 9.6% of City residents working within the City. Consequentially, most residents must drive or take public transportation to get to work. This has a significant impact on local infrastructure and necessitates the importance of improved modes of alternative transportation for City residents.

Employed City of Tonawanda residents have comparable levels of educational attainment as those within the Buffalo-Niagara MSA. Although *OnTheMap* does not report educational attainment for workers aged 29 or younger, the data shows that 6% lack a high school diploma or GED, and nearly 24 percent have a high school diploma or GED with no college experience. Nearly 26% of employed residents have some college education or an Associate degree, and 20% of employed residents have a Bachelor's degree or advanced degree.

American Community Survey data estimates in 2015 showed the City had an unemployment rate of 7.3%, compared to 5.9% in 2010. This is based on a total labor force of 7,915 residents in 2015 and 8,255 residents in 2010. Increases in the local unemployment rate indicate a greater need to put City residents to work. Yet, an overall **decline in the availability of a local labor force indicates a shrinking labor market available** to prospective businesses. These trends are particularly **problematic for both local residents, as well as for local businesses** looking to grow and expand within the City.

Of note, the data further shows a 3% decline in private wage and salary workers and a 34% decline in government workers. However, the self-employed workers (unincorporated businesses) increased from 114 workers in 2010 to 270 workers in 2015, an increase of nearly 140%. This suggests there is an

emerging need to foster entrepreneurship and to explore communal workspaces and shared services to support start-up businesses.

Land Development Trends

Local Building Department statistics are one measure to identify land development trends in a community. From 2010 through 2016, the City produced 3,068 residential building permits, an average of **438 per year**. The total number of residential permits ranged from a low of 379 in 2014 to a high 505 in 2010. Residential building permits were predominantly produced for **exterior dwelling improvements** and for fences throughout the period. For every year between 2010 and 2016, these two types of residential permits accounted for **more than half of the total** residential permits produced. Over the entire period, just 12 building permits were granted for new residential dwellings.

The estimated construction cost for residential work completed totaled more than $28 million for an average of more than **$4 million per year**. Total construction costs ranged from a low of $2.2

million in 2014 to a high of $6.9 million in 2015.

Commercial building permits totaled 333 over the period of 2010 through 2016, with an average of 48 **permits per year**. Commercial building permits were predominantly produced for business **remodeling and improvements**. In total, 16 new business commercial permits were produced over this period. The estimated construction cost for commercial work completed totaled more than $16 million for an average of more than **$2.35 million per year**. Total construction costs ranged from a low of $1.1 million in 2013 to a high of $4.4 million in 2010.

Trends in both residential and commercial building permits indicate relatively consistent rates of produced permits with somewhat significant variation in construction project costs on an annual basis. Despite this variation, the City, on average, has collected nearly $130,000 in **building permit fees** annually.

While the patterns of land development and improvement appear to be relatively consistent since 2010, the City has experienced a significant widening

	Residential Permits						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Permits	505	427	455	429	379	453	420
Cost	$6,584,450	$2,925,000	$3,027,300	$2,713,000	$2,260,907	$6,953,373	$3,552,975

Figure 2-11: City Residential building permits issued 2010-2016

	Commercial Permits						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Permits	49	49	42	49	49	55	40
Cost	$4,462,200	$2,568,800	$1,645,700	$1,118,800	$3,048,460	$1,490,021	$2,116,086

Figure 2-12: City Commercial building permits issued 2010-2016

of the gap between increased complaints and decreased inspections. From 2010 through 2012 the ratio of complaints to inspections was about equal. However in 2013, the number of inspections dropped dramatically and the rate of complaints through 2016 increased by almost the same number.
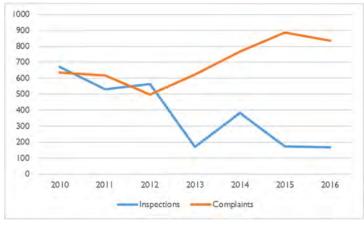

Figure 2-12: Complaints vs Inspections

While not knowing the nature of complaints made to the City's Office of the Building Inspector, it is significant to see not just an increase in the number of complaints, but also a more drastic decline in the

number if inspections. The disparity between complaints and inspections is problematic and may **represent the need for additional staff** within the Office of the Building Inspector, new or additional **housing rehabilitation programming**, and the need for an overall **improvement of economic conditions** within the City.

Real Property Tax Comparison

The combined real property tax rate in the City totals $40.41 per $1,000 of assessed value (not including special districts). Compared to the three cities in Erie County, the City of Tonawanda has a higher combined tax rate than the City of Lackawanna ($35.05/$1,000) and City of Buffalo ($23.82/$1,000). Both Tonawanda and Lackawanna have 100% equalization rates, whereas the City of Buffalo's equalization rate is 88%. In comparison to adjoining communities, City of Tonawanda has a lower tax rate than the Village of Kenmore and the Town of Tonawanda, but a higher rate than the Town of Cheektowaga, Town of Grand Island, Village of Williamsville and Town of Amherst.

Municipality	2015 Eq. Rate	2015-2016 School	2016 County	2016 City/Town	2016 Village	Total Rate
Kenmore, Village	44%	47.44	12.38	6.32	28.53	94.67
Tonawanda, Town	44%	40.23*	12.38	15.27	--	67.88
City of Tonawanda	100%	17.63	6.05	16.73	--	40.41
Cheektowaga, Town	100%	21.21	5.28	9.5	--	35.99
City of Lackawanna	100%	13.68	6.12	15.25	--	35.05
Williamsville, Village	97%	19.14	5.3	5.43	4.5	34.37
Grand Island, Town	96%	19.84	5.63	3.26	--	28.73
Amherst, Town	97%	17.86*	5.3	3.97	--	27.13
City of Buffalo	88%	9.09	5.95	8.78	--	23.82
*Multiple school districts and varying taxing rates have been averaged						

Figure 2-13: Tax comparison

The comparison of real property taxes within the area shows that real property in the City of Tonawanda is taxed at higher rates than its companion cities within the County, as well as many of the adjacent communities. When considering equalization rates, only property in the Village of Kenmore is taxed at higher rates. This puts the City **at competitive disadvantage**.

The New York State Office of the Comptroller tracks financial data (expenses and revenues) for local governments. At the big picture level, the data show that total revenues and total expenses over the six-year period (2010 – 2016) both averaged $26.1 million, indicating a **balanced budget**. However, local revenues, such as real property taxes, sales tax and charges for services, accounted for just 76% of total City revenues on average. The remaining 24%, on average, comes in the form of **state and federal aid**. Over the period, state and federal aid ranged from a low of $3.1 million in 2014 and a high of $6.8 million in 2010.

Despite the dependence on additional aid, the data show an **increase in real property value** from $597.4 million to $638.8 million over the period. And real property taxes have increased from $9.5 million to $10.7 million over the same period. This is consistent with the increase in property values, and the amount of new construction in the City.

Expenditures have **remained relatively stable** near the average of $26.1 million over the period. And yet the City has experienced increases in the cost of employee benefits, sanitation, and debt service. However, economic development expenses have been nearly eliminated from the local budget

within the last three years. Despite increased expenditures the City needs to invest in economic development activities that will strengthen the City's position within the regional market. Local, regional, and state-wide funds should be identified to assist with these activities.

Downtown Businesses

An inventory of downtown businesses along Main Street found a mix of restaurants and bars, retail and boutique stores, professional offices, and social and community activity destinations. The building stock is primarily two-story, brick-faced, and in generally good condition. Some of the two-story structures have residences, offices, and vacancies on the second floor. Some single-story structures are intermixed throughout with few opportunities for infill development. Ample parking appears to support the downtown with a number of larger parking lots adjacent to the business district.

Tonawanda's Downtown consists primarily of two-story buildings.

Opportunity still exists within the downtown to support economic development through the improvement of the building stock and through facilitating the highest and best use for the properties, both on and off Main Street. Occupying the vacant storefronts and second floors of mixed use structures would provide a boost to the

downtown and advance a stronger economic base within the City.

Tonawanda Main Street Business Survey Summary

In 2015, the City of Tonawanda, in partnership with the Western Erie Canal Alliance, received a grant from the New York State Department of State to establish a Main Street Program for the City's downtown commercial area.

"Tonawanda Main Street" (TMS) is led by a volunteer committee that is currently going through the incorporation process and anticipates receiving 501(c)3 status from the IRS. TMS has utilized grant funds to hire a Program Manager who has more than 10 years of urban planning experience. The Program Manager will be responsible for implementing the TMS vision, while providing a central point of contact for the downtown business community.

The TMS mission is:

"To act as the unifying agent that will facilitate the on-going, incremental economic and social development of the City's main street area within the context of historic preservation."

TMS conducted an informal business survey with businesses within the main street area to identify

issues, concerns and opportunities. The exercise has provided insight into the needs of the Main Street area and is being used to develop the organizational direction of TMS. In-depth interviews with local business owners and other representatives were conducted to engage the business community in the program's development.

Key findings from the survey were organized by the four-point approach categories of the Main Street Program: Organization and Governance; Design and Preservation; Economic Restructuring and Revitalization; and Promotion, Marketing and Branding.

With respect to economic and business development, the survey results suggest a general belief that the City will catch up to economic revitalization progress that has happened in the City of North Tonawanda.

Some of the issues identified include:

♦ Lack of foresight (investing in property and other opportunities)

♦ There is no vision for the future of the Main Street area

♦ A lot of office space and a lot of business turnover on Main Street.

♦ City lacks a draw to the downtown

♦ Limited storefronts are occupied by non-profits that don't bring in people

♦ Missing grant opportunities

♦ Not a lot of places to locate a new business

♦ There are fewer retail shops/no concentration of retail

Some of the needs identified for Main Street include:

- Need a business liaison

- Need a group that regulates what is allowed in downtown

- Maintenance of the Main Street Area (garbage disposal, snow removal, street cleaning, weeds, storm-water backup)

- More appropriate signage regulation - currently too small and not allowed to protrude from the building

- Need a database of grants (what's available, dates to apply, etc.)

- Need to increase density

- Provide grants and low interest loans to encourage owner occupied buildings and investment

When asked what would be a good addition to the main street area, the people surveyed stated that they would like to see **more retail, Wi-Fi, a nice restaurant, a coffee shop / café, jewelry store, ice cream shop, chocolate shop/candy store, bakery, sandwich shop, brewery, nightlife activities, hotel/accommodations (potentially on the waterfront) and a banquet hall.**

Based on the group's initial findings, TMS has determined that there is a clear need in the City for a central point of contact to support commercial and retail activities in the downtown. It is anticipated that TMS will secure funding to administer grant programing to benefit businesses and property owners within the central business district. The City of Tonawanda is represented on the TMS committee and may be providing Community Development Block Grant funds to TMS to fund activities that further the TMS mission.

Other Plans, Studies & Initiatives

As communities continually rely on outside funding sources to assist in achieving planning, housing, and economic development goals, it is critical that Tonawanda recognize the growing number of regional and state plans and initiatives and their relationship to potential funding sources.

City of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan (2002)

The City's previous Comprehensive Plan identified goals and objectives around a number of local issues including open space and recreation, transportation, commercial, economy, cultural resources, industry, residential, and government, each with specific action items to achieve those goals. Some of the more prominent action items included:

- Moving Eastern Park north of Fillmore and using the former land for commercial development (Open Space and Recreation)

- Closure of Young Street between Main and Delaware to permit development (Transportation)

- Design standards for commercial development, redevelop the Senior Center, and form a Business Improvement District (Commercial)

- Create a cultural tourism district between the City and North Tonawanda (Economic)

- Appoint an Economic Development Specialist for the City (Cultural Resources)

- Renovate Spaulding Fibre plant (Industry)

- Demolish unrepairable residential homes and have Building Code Officer educate residents on

COMMUNITY PROFILE

renovations/beautification and their assessment impact (Residential)

♦ Consider relocation of City Hall (Government)

While some of these items, and others, have been accomplished, others are not pertinent to moving forward or require updates in order to reflect current conditions. The 2002 Plan provides a good base from which this update builds off of.

Erie-Niagara Framework for Regional Growth (2006)

The Framework for Regional Growth was completed in 2006 and currently serves as the comprehensive plan for Erie and Niagara Counties, providing a region-wide vision for where public investment, development, and conservation should occur. The Framework addresses a long-standing need for a unified vision to guide development and public investment in the 64 independent municipalities that make up Erie and Niagara Counties, ensures that local decision-making is consistent with regional goals, and anticipates the effects that local decision-making may have on other communities.

In addition to providing a blueprint for the growth and development of the region, the Framework describes general policies, programs, and projects to target investment in certain locations and corridors that align with regional goals. Highlights and specific policies and strategies identified by the Framework which may directly affect the City of Tonawanda include:

♦ **The older, first-ring suburban communities such as Tonawanda are under stress** due to declining populations,

aging housing stock, vacant and underutilized commercial buildings and sites, and aging and deteriorating infrastructure. A weak regional housing market can leave these areas, which have high percentages of both aging housing stock and elderly residents, at risk for accelerated decline because these neighborhoods lack the amenities of newer sites and housing developments.

♦ The plan notes that **even small signs of deferred property maintenance can have longstanding effects on surrounding properties**. Maintenance issues in Tonawanda's older neighborhoods put the city at a competitive disadvantage in a regional housing market that suffers from a lack of housing demand.

♦ The 47-acre Spaulding Fibre property is listed in the plan as a site that has been prepared for development. The former brownfield site has been cleaned up and is now shovel-ready and awaiting redevelopment, and the city has other land that could potentially be redeveloped. **The Framework favors redevelopment of existing sites in already developed areas** over developing open land.

♦ The creation of sustainable neighborhoods through **infill development and carefully planned reinvestment in existing neighborhoods** is one of the Framework's core principles. Investing in existing neighborhoods, which are compact and walkable, will help reduce the region's long-term infrastructure operation and maintenance costs.

♦ **Conservation of natural and cultural resources** is another core principle. Tonawanda's highly accessible waterfront is an asset that can be built upon to attract visitors to the city and improve residents' quality of life.

♦ **The City of Tonawanda lies entirely within the plan's Developed Planning Policy Area**. The downtowns of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda are also identified together as one of several Regional Centers, which represent areas that support the majority of the region's residents, jobs, and important cultural and educational institutions. These centers are favored for future development and reinvestment due to their mixed land uses and potential for future economic vitality, high intensity development and public transportation service.

Niagara River Greenway Plan (2007)

The Niagara River Greenway Plan recognizes the Niagara River corridor as an environmental and economic asset of international significance and serves as a guide for identifying priority areas and projects, partnerships, funding sources, and transportation issues related to the river corridor. Dedicated funding for Greenway projects is provided through the New York Power Authority (NYPA) Relicensing Agreement Funds, which was established through a settling agreement during NYPA's 50-year federal relicensing process to support the creation and maintenance of a Niagara River Greenway. Projects that align with the Greenway Plan may also be eligible for competitive funding from outside sources. Tonawanda's waterfront location and existing Riverwalk trail

mean that many of the Greenway Plan's goals are directly applicable to the city, including:

♦ **Improving riverfront access** by creating or enhancing existing multi-use trails, improving signage, and providing interpretive historical information along trailways.

♦ **Making connections by physically linking communities** through multi-use trails along the entire length of river.

♦ **Protecting and restoring natural systems** (including brownfields) and providing educational information regarding these resources to the public.

♦ **Promoting long-term sustainability** through the maintenance and care of facilities, infrastructure, and natural resources.

♦ **Sparking revitalization and renewal through sustainable development, tourism, and improved quality of life**. Although economic development is not the focus of the Greenway Plan, **revitalizing urban centers is a priority, and developing Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs (LWRPs)** in communities with waterfront access is encouraged. These local plans are important tools for implementing the Greenway Plan because LWRPs seek a balance between economic development and natural resource protection. Supporting downtown development (such as along Main Street in Tonawanda) is a natural result of planning to achieve the Greenway's goals.

In addition to NYPA Greenway funds, the New York State Department of State provides 50/50 matching grants through the Environmental Protection Fund's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to help municipalities with the creation of LWRPs. Applications are received through the Consolidated Funding Application, and $12 million in matching funds were awarded during the 2013-2014 grant cycle. After an LWRP is approved, state and federal agency actions are required to comply with the LWRP to the maximum extent possible.

The goals specified in the Greenway Plan underline the importance of Tonawanda's waterfront as a vital regional asset and present an opportunity for the City to capitalize on dedicated NYPA and other funding sources to implement actions in the updated LWRP and for infrastructure and facilities improvements to its Riverwalk, public parks, and downtown.

Strategy for Prosperity: WNY Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan (2011)

In 2011, Governor Cuomo established 10 Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) to create long-term strategies for economic growth in their regions. These councils represent a fundamental shift in the state's economic development strategy toward a more community-based approach that targets the specific needs of each region, and each REDC created a plan to serve as the primary guide for those municipalities wishing to receive state funding for economic development projects.

The Western New York REDC created its five-year plan, the Strategy for Prosperity, with input from an inclusive range of stakeholders representing public and private interests from the five-county region.

The Strategy focuses on three fundamental issues: improving job readiness through initiatives aimed at matching education and training with available jobs, improving efficiency through smart growth, and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship.

Competitive funding for projects that align with REDC goals and strategies is provided through the State's Consolidated Funding Application (CFA). Aligning its development strategies with regional goals is vital if the City of Tonawanda wants to compete for state funding for economic development and increase its tax base.

The City should focus its efforts on the following REDC strategies:

◆ Within its smart growth strategy, **the REDC agenda prioritizes investment for residential neighborhood development, brownfield redevelopment, downtown and main streets redevelopment, and improving public access to waterfronts.** Funding for these specific smart growth projects is provided by the CFA through targeted neighborhood investments, the state's Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program, and the NY Main Streets Program.

◆ **Tourism is identified as a strong regional industry sector that should be promoted to attract and retain visitors.** Tonawanda's waterfront location and history should be marketed to visitors from outside of the city to capitalize on regional tourism. Small increases in tourism are unlikely to have a huge effect on the local economy, but efforts to improve conditions for tourists, which may include improved signage, infrastructure, and facilities in and around the city's downtown

and waterfront, would also improve the quality of life for existing residents and could be a strategy for enticing new residents to move to the city.

♦ **Tonawanda also has the capacity to capture some regional growth in advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and professional services**, and the City should focus its economic development efforts on growing these industrial sectors. The Fillmore Avenue industrial corridor is currently underutilized and several other sites, including the Spaulding Fibre site, could be attractive locations for manufacturing facilities or professional offices. Companies in these industries could be enticed to locate in Tonawanda if the City made an effort to market these sites and promote CFA funding opportunities for businesses. Enhanced streetscape and public infrastructure investments could also be incorporated into an economic development plan to attract new businesses to the city. All of the regional plans support smart economic growth and infill in developed areas and existing industrial corridors, and Tonawanda certainly meets these criteria.

♦ One of the criteria for prioritizing development projects is the scale of the project's regional impact. The City of Tonawanda lies adjacent to Niagara County and forms part of a Regional Center (identified by the Framework for Regional Growth) with the City of North Tonawanda, and **projects in the City of Tonawanda have the potential to impact the economies of both Erie and Niagara**

Counties. The City should use this situation to its advantage when seeking funding opportunities for economic development, and should also consider partnering with North Tonawanda and the Lumber City Development Corporation on specific projects related to growing the industries mentioned above.

NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities Sustainability Plan for Western New York (2013)

NYSERDA's Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) plan for the five-county Western NY region identifies goals, targets, and indicators for quantifying progress in six focus areas: transportation, land use, water management, energy, waste management, and agriculture and forestry. A seventh focus area, economic development, is addressed in the Regional Economic Development Council's (REDC) Strategy for Prosperity Plan and is intended to overlap with the other focus areas to ensure that economic development in the region supports the priorities identified in the CGC plan. Highlights of the CGC plan that should help guide planning efforts in the City of Tonawanda include:

♦ **Transportation** - Prioritize transportation infrastructure projects that align with regional smart growth efforts, particularly through "Complete Streets" projects. Since 2011, New York State law (S.5411) requires state, county, and local transportation agencies to consider complete streets features in all roadway designs that receive both federal and state funding. A 3% reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is targeted by 2020.

- **Land Use**

  ◊ Encourage local municipalities to develop, adopt, and implement smart growth policies and incorporate smart growth policies into zoning codes.

  ◊ Focus development in areas already served by existing infrastructure.

  ◊ Coordinate regional park, greenway, and waterfront planning to connect public and natural resources to each other and promote economic development and recreational opportunities.

- **Water Management** - Coordination of water management and land use planning for decisions regarding where future development occurs, including providing for increased public access to water resources.

- **Energy**

  ◊ Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting energy efficiency and conservation efforts.

  ◊ Support innovative energy projects that are consistent with regional sustainability goals and encourage economic development, particularly through implementation of NYSERDA-funded energy efficiency projects. The City of Tonawanda could capitalize on its relatively windy waterfront location through strategic installation of wind turbines for small-scale renewable energy production.

A New Way to Plan for Buffalo Niagara, "One Region Forward" (February 2015)

One Region Forward is an ongoing project that is funded by a federal grant through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities program, an interagency collaboration among the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Through an inclusive effort of citizens and community leaders in the government, business, and nonprofit sectors, One Region Forward builds on existing local and regional plans to create a unified strategy for moving the Buffalo-Niagara region towards a more sustainable future. The plan identifies potential strategies and actions that communities should take to align with the regional goals and ensure that new development and redevelopment occurs in areas and in forms that will contribute to the sustainability of the entire region.

Several years of research and community engagement has produced a plan that focuses on five "Big Ideas" and many suggested strategies and actions within these areas:

- **"Create great places and a thriving economy through efficient land use."** Efficient land use is accomplished through smart growth, which is concentrating investment in areas where infrastructure already exists by preserving historic buildings and districts, reviving downtowns and main streets, and reinvesting in established neighborhoods and former industrial lands. The City of Tonawanda has all of these resources available to them and the city should be targeted for smart growth development.

♦ **"Connect our places by expanding and diversifying our transportation options."** Projects that enhance walkability and encourage multiple modes of transportation will help connect disadvantaged communities with employment nodes and reduce our reliance on automobiles.

♦ **"Provide housing choices in neighborhoods that are great places to live."** Sprawling development patterns without population growth is leading to abandonment and blight in urban and first-ring suburban communities, and One Region Forward urges communities to anticipate and accommodate demographic shifts in housing development and neighborhood revitalization. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs may help fund community development efforts, but further proactive measures must be taken to adjust to regional housing needs and arrest the spread of blight in its older neighborhoods.

♦ **"Conserve energy, promote renewables and prepare for the impacts of climate change."** Local governments can take the lead in reducing energy usage and establishing the capacity to transition to a low-carbon future. NYSERDA provides a variety of funding opportunities for implementing energy efficiency projects.

While previous regional plans have failed to create an effective implementation strategy, One Region Forward recognizes that a plan is only as good as its implementation and seeks to ensure that the plan is not simply put on a shelf and forgotten. One Region Forward will take action by creating a voluntary regional planning network in which local governments, agencies, community organizations, and institutions will come together in a roundtable format to collaborate, share information, and hold each other accountable to regional objectives; organizing the creation of a public data repository for metrics related to housing, properties, transportation, energy and land use, and environmental quality; providing technical assistance and guidance on best management practices for implementing sustainable programs and projects; and continuing public outreach and educational programs.

Living Niawanda: City of Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Update (2018)

The City of Tonawanda's history is rooted in its relationship with the water, namely the Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek, which form its northern border. The City's original waterfront plan was developed in 1986 and updated in 1991. Since then, there have been a number of positive changes in and around the City related to the waterfront, including the development of the Riverwalk and Canalway Trails, construction of the Niawanda Park Pavilion and Gateway Harbor recreational facilities, and demolition of the wastewater treatment plant adjacent near City Hall.

In addition, with the success of Canalside in Downtown Buffalo, waterfront recreation, attractions, and events have had a resurgence in the regional community and the City had a proactive desire to build upon its assets, both existing and potential ones.

The LWRP identifies ways to further engage the community with the waterfront through physical, visual, and historical connections and improvements, and create ways to make the waterfront more of a year-round attraction for residents and visitors. Some of the major projects include:

- Additional docking and overlooks on all waterways (Niagara River, Ellicott Creek, Two Mile Creek and Tonawanda Creek/Erie Canal)

- Improved connections between the Two Mile Creek Greenway, Veterans Park and Niawanda Park

- A boardwalk along the north side of Niagara Street

- Waterfront mixed use zoning

- Niagara Street corridor enhancements, including at prominent intersections

- Closure of portion of Young Street

- Selective clearing to open views of the Niagara River and other local waterways

- Gateway enhancements at prominent locations into the City

Our Community

Existing Land Uses (Map 2)

The City of Tonawanda encompasses 3.7+/- square miles in area and includes a diverse array of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational. The historic pattern of growth of the city centered upon the Erie Canal and Niagara River, and the pattern of land use expanded outward from these waterways.

In particular, the oldest structures, typically those built in the period prior to World War I, were located nearest Downtown-Main Street and on the "long streets," those that run parallel to Niagara Street: Adam, Morgan, Broad, and Fletcher streets. Additionally, the water-based and rail-based economic heritage of the city is reflected in distinct areas of the cities, specifically the former Spaulding Fibre site and areas along Fillmore Avenue, Wales Avenue, and East Niagara Street.

The city has a clearly defined downtown area with a key corridor of buildings on Main Street, between Young and Broad streets, with various commercial and small business uses radiating out from that area, including portions of Young, Broad, Delaware, Seymour and Niagara streets. Additionally, significant commercial, industrial, and shopping areas exist along the southern Young Street corridor, from State Street to the Twin Cities Memorial Highway.
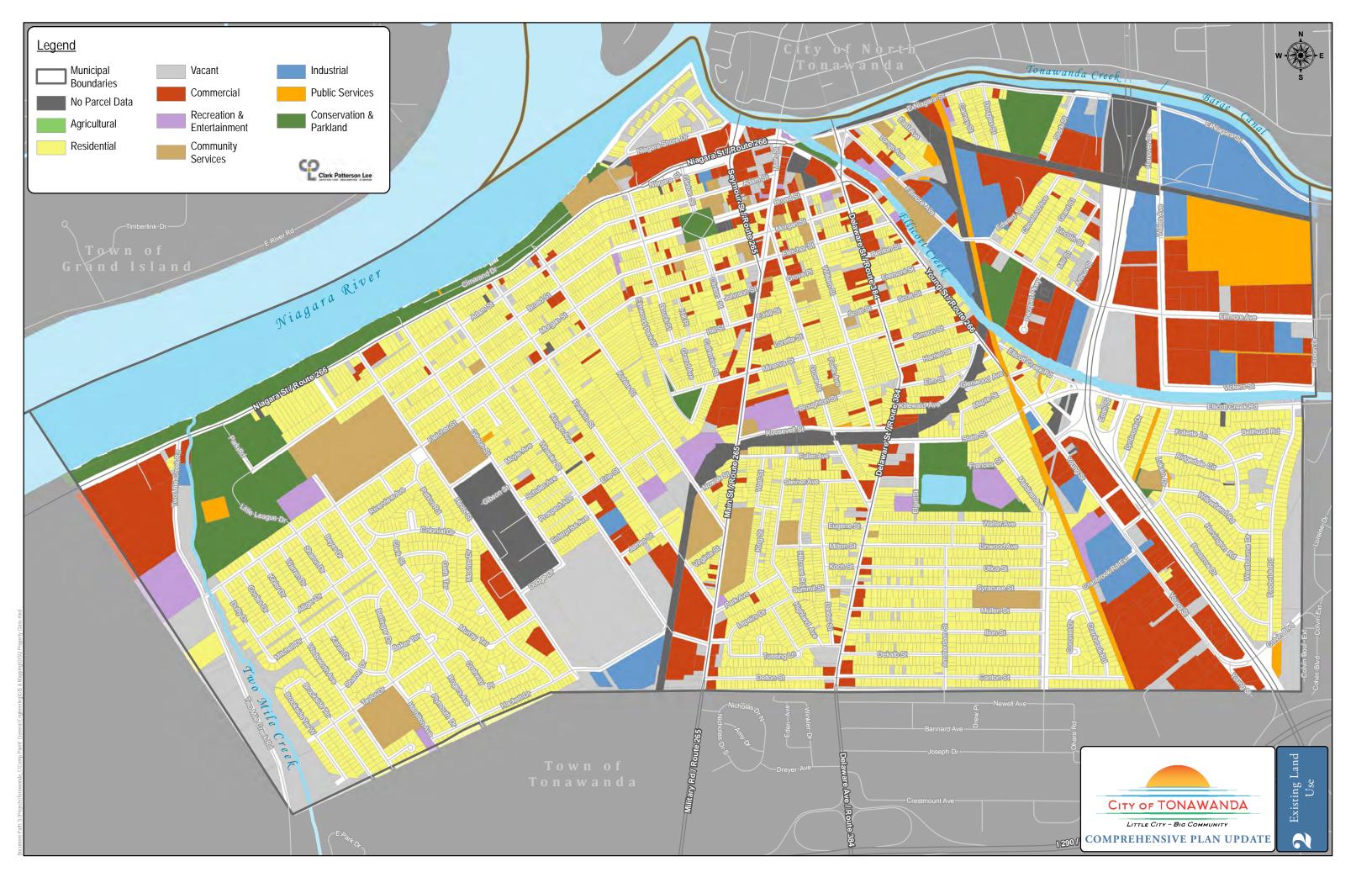
Industrial uses include various sites along Fillmore Avenue, Wales Avenue and East Niagara Streets, and the remediated and shovel-ready former Spaulding Fibre site that now offers potential economic development opportunities.

Residential is the dominant land use in the city, comprising 5,706 of 6,402 city parcels. The following table breaks down these parcel by residential use.

Residential Use	Number of Parcels	Percent of Residential
Single-family	4,874	85.4% (76.1%)
Two-family	477	8.4% (7.5%)
Three-family	62	1.1% (1.0%)
Multi-family	44	0.8% (0.7%)
Vacant/Vacant with improvements/Seasonal	249	4.4 (3.9%)

Figure 2-8: Residential land use breakdown

A variety of residential styles are found throughout the City.

Legend

- Municipal Boundaries
- No Parcel Data
- Agricultural
- Residential
- Vacant
- Commercial
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Community Services
- Industrial
- Public Services
- Conservation & Parkland

Clark Patterson Lee

City of North Tonawanda

Tonawanda Creek

Barge Canal

Town of Grand Island

Niagara River

Two Mile Creek

Town of Tonawanda

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Existing Land Use

2

The importance of this table is that it clearly indicates that the City is predominantly a residential community and the assessed value of residential property drives this home. Based on current data (September 2014), residential uses accounts for $500,599,911 of the City's total assessed value of $697,769,946, or simply 71.7%. **Map 2** provides a map of existing land use in the City of Tonawanda.

Zoning (Map 3)

The City of Tonawanda utilizes a traditional Euclidean zoning model in which districts are categorized according to the primary land use desired and other compatible uses. Similar to land uses, residential is the predominant zoning classification, followed by manufacturing and commercial/business. The zoning districts are also hierarchical in nature with subsequent district provisions building upon previous, i.e. more permitted uses in upper level districts. Some of the key components and intent of each of the districts are outlined on the following pages.

Residential Use

Single Family Residential (R-1), General Residential (R-2), Restricted Residential (R-C)

Residential districts within the city are separated by the type of dwellings that are permitted in each zone, with R-1 being the most restrictive (single-family and limited community uses). Building on this district, R-2 allows high density residential uses, while the R-C district allows those uses and limited commercial uses. Accessory uses support limited home occupations, typical accessory structures, and parking; the R-C district supports restaurants if subordinate to the principle use. Minimum lot sizes for residential districts range between 4,000 (R-2) to 7,500 SF (R-1), depending on the number of dwelling

units. These districts are concentrated on the western portion of the City.

Business Use

Neighborhood Shopping (C-1), Neighborhood Shopping 2 (C-1A), Central Retail (C-2), General Commercial (C-M)

Building on the permitted uses in the R-C district, the commercial business districts allow a greater variety of personal service and retail establishments. The C-1A district is unique in that the only additional use it allows from the C-1 district is personal service restaurants (i.e. those that do not serve beer or wine); very few parcels fall within this district. The C-2 district encompasses Main Street, allowing retail, lodging, indoor theaters, banks and other similar uses.

More auto-intensive or supportive uses, such as gas stations, auto sales and service, drive-in restaurants, and warehousing are permitted in the C-M district, which is characterized by larger, more suburban-style lots. CM districts are located along the major corridors of Niagara Street, Main Street (south of Morgan Street), Delaware Street and Young Street. Minimum lot sizes are determined based on setbacks and parking requirements.

Manufacturing Use

Manufacturing (M-1), Light Industrial (M-2), Spaulding Commerce Park (SPD)

The manufacturing/industrial districts are found on the periphery, predominantly in the northeastern portion of the City. Although these districts are still hierarchical from upper level districts, residential dwellings are specifically excluded. The M-1 district permits more intensive uses provided they are not "a menace to public health… nuisance…noxious or offensive," while the Light Industrial district requires

uses to be within **enclosed** structures. A listing of specific uses that are prohibited within the M-2 district are also provided, including mining, drugs and pharmaceuticals and fabricated rubber products.

The Spaulding Commerce Park district is the only district that does not base permitted uses on previous districts, rather it provides a standalone listing of permitted uses, along with specific regulations for parking, building setbacks, lighting and other site design requirements.

Community Assets (Map 4)

Arguably Tonawanda's greatest asset is its waterfront location, which is considered one of the most publicly accessible stretches of waterfront in Western New York. Niawanda Park stretches along almost the entire northern edge of the City, along the Niagara River, connecting to Veterans Memorial Park, the Two Mile Creek Greenway and Isle View County Park at the western end. Several regionally-significant trails also converge within the City, including the Riverwalk, the Two Mile Creek trail, and the Canalway Trail.

Additionally, smaller community parks dot the City's neighborhoods, whether connected to public schools, such as Riverview in *The Hill* neighborhood or Ives Pond in the *Delawanda* neighborhood. These parks include various amenities, such as a skateboard park, multiple baseball diamonds, basketball courts, tennis court, and a roller hockey court. Tonawanda is one of the few local communities with a public outdoor winter figure skating and ice hockey pond.
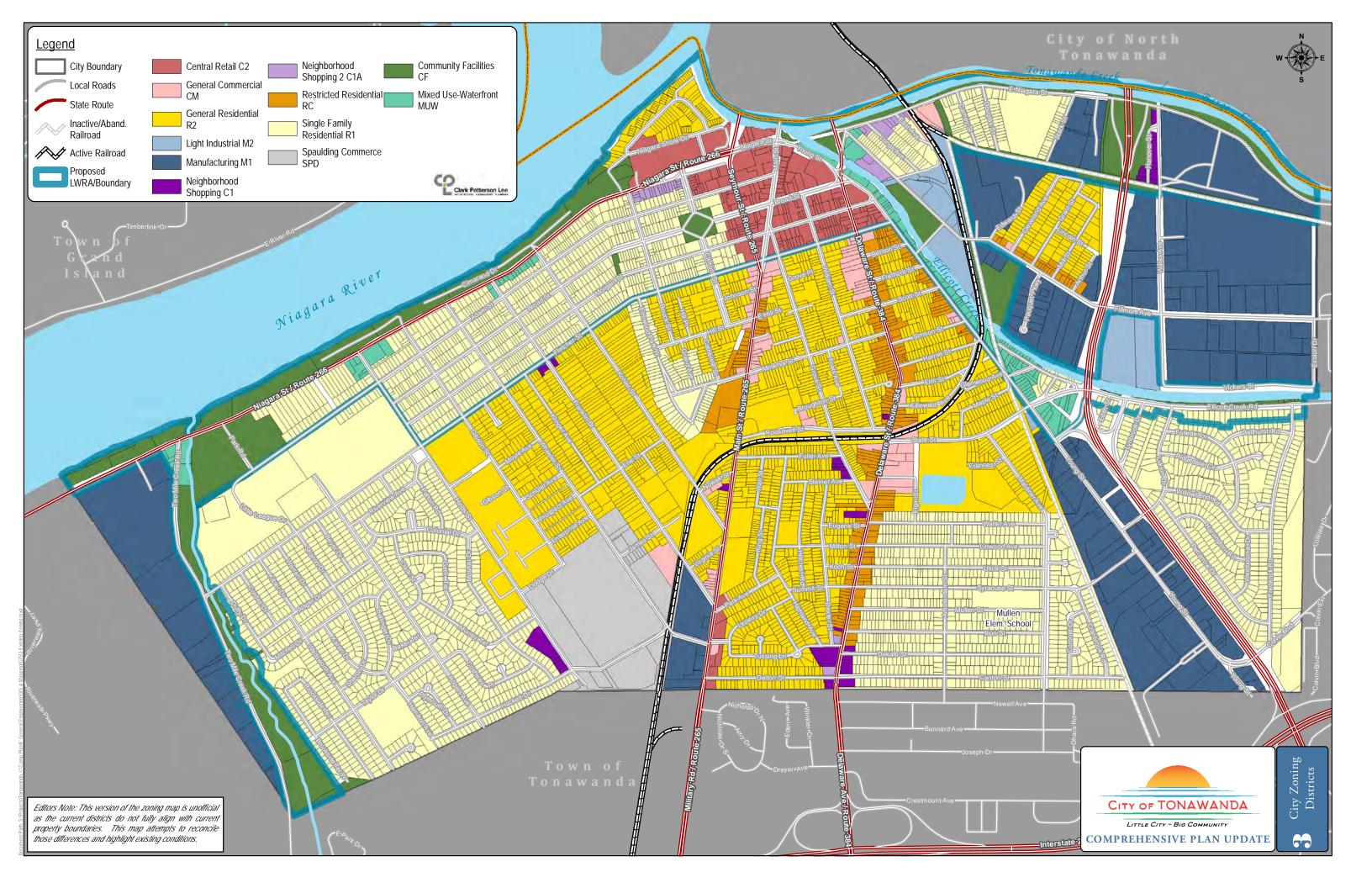
Several public docks with fishing access are also located along the waterways of Tonawanda, most
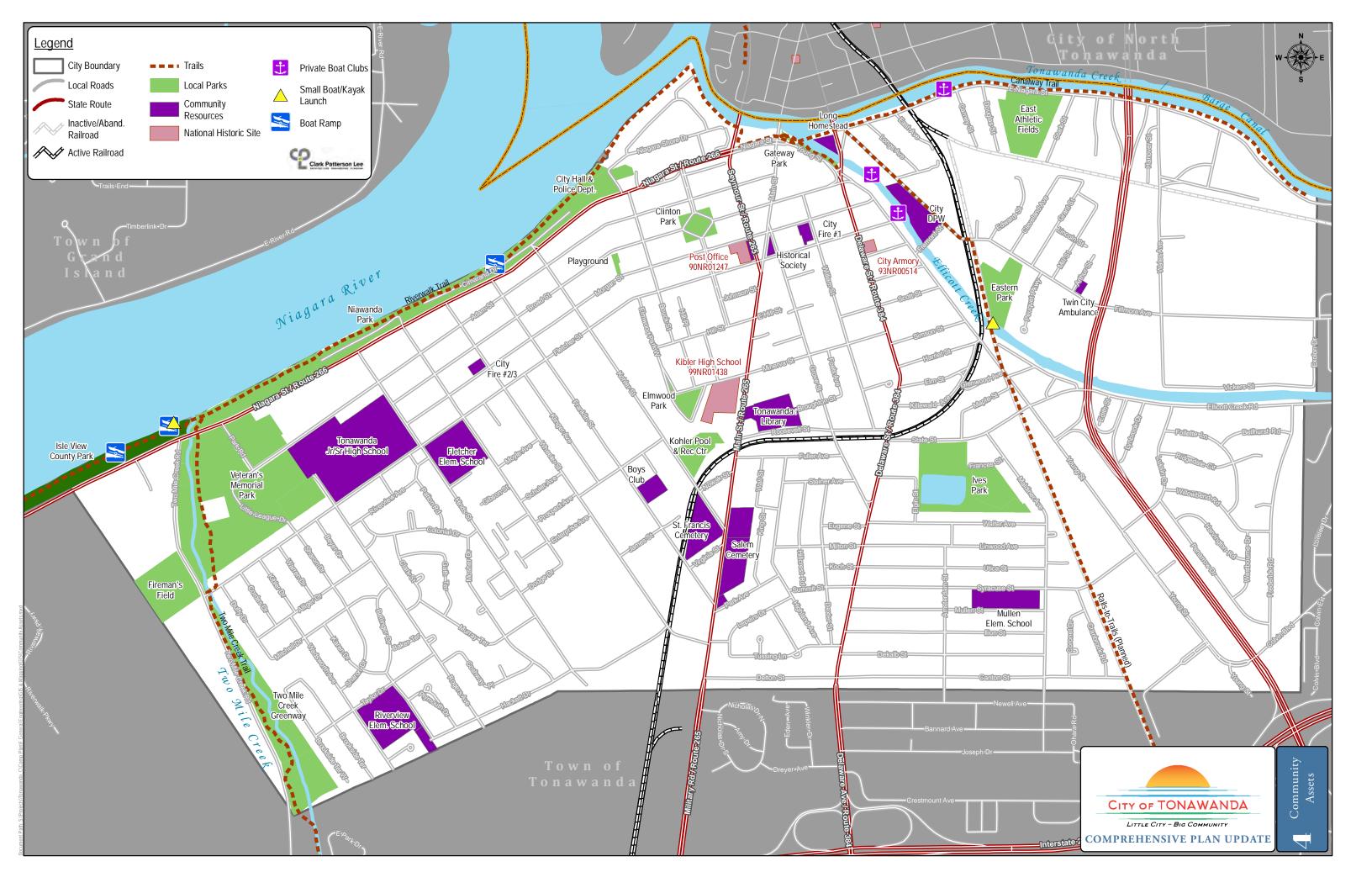
Other assets in the City include the public schools (Middle/High School at top) and community organizations (Boys Club at bottom).

notably along the Niagara River, as well as public and private marinas.

Among the historic and cultural resources found in the City are the Erie Canal (Tonawanda Creek); Long Homestead; the Tonawanda Historical Society; the City of Tonawanda, Salem, and St. Francis cemeteries; the Tonawanda Armory; the U.S. Post Office; and Kibler High School, of which the latter three are listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places. Although it was removed in the 1970's, the Erie Canal once extended along Niagara

Legend

- City Boundary
- Local Roads
- State Route
- Inactive/Aband. Railroad
- Active Railroad
- Proposed LWRA/Boundary

- Central Retail C2
- General Commercial CM
- General Residential R2
- Light Industrial M2
- Manufacturing M1
- Neighborhood Shopping C1
- Neighborhood Shopping 2 C1A
- Restricted Residential RC
- Single Family Residential R1
- Spaulding Commerce SPD
- Community Facilities CF
- Mixed Use-Waterfront MUW

Clark Patterson Lee

Editors Note: This version of the zoning map is unofficial as the current districts do not fully align with current property boundaries. This map attempts to reconcile those differences and highlight existing conditions.

City of North Tonawanda

Town of Grand Island

Town of Tonawanda

Niagara River

Niagara St./Route 266
Seymour St./Route 265
Main St./Route 265
Delaware St./Route 384
Military Rd./Route 265
Delaware Ave./Route 384
Interstate 290

Mullen Elem. School

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

City Zoning Districts

33

Legend

- City Boundary
- Local Roads
- State Route
- Inactive/Aband. Railroad
- Active Railroad
- Trails
- Local Parks
- Community Resources
- National Historic Site
- Private Boat Clubs
- Small Boat/Kayak Launch
- Boat Ramp

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City of North Tonawanda

Tonawanda Creek / Barge Canal
Canalway Trail
E. Niagara St.

East Athletic Fields

Long Homestead

Gateway Park

City Hall & Police Dept.

Niagara St / Route 266

Clinton Park

Niagara Shore Dr

Playground

Post Office 90NR01247

City Fire #1

Historical Society

City DPW

City Armory 93NR00514

Ellicott Creek

Eastern Park

Twin City Ambulance

Niagara River

Riverwalk Trail

Niawanda Park

City Fire #2/3

Kibler High School 99NR01438

Elmwood Park

Tonawanda Library

Kohler Pool & Rec Ctr

Boys Club

Ives Park

Town of Grand Island

Isle View County Park

Niagara St / Route 266

Veteran's Memorial Park

Tonawanda Jr/Sr High School

Fletcher Elem. School

St. Francis Cemetery

Salem Cemetery

Mullen Elem. School

Fireman's Field

Two Mile Creek Greenway

Two Mile Creek Trail

Two Mile Creek

Riverview Elem. School

Town of Tonawanda

Military Rd / Route 265

Delaware Ave / Route 384

Rails-to-Trails (planned)

Interstate 190

Ellicott Creek Rd

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Community Assets

4

Street where Niawanda Park is currently located. Several interpretive markers are found in Gateway Park, at the intersection of Main Street and Young Street.

Other social and community resources found within the City include:

♦ Tonawanda Middle/Senior High School

♦ Fletcher Elementary School

♦ Riverview Elementary School

♦ Mullen Elementary School

♦ Tonawanda Public Library

♦ Boys Club

♦ Senior Citizen's Center

♦ City Fire Department Stations 1, 2, & 3

Although the City has existed in its current stature for well over a century, few officially-designated historic resources remain. Following "urban renewal" in the 1950's, much of Tonawanda was transformed, especially along Niagara Street, losing a number of what would now be historic buildings. The few structures that remain in the City include the former Kibler High School, U.S, Post Office and City Armory.

Transportation (Map 5)

The City is well-positioned within the regional highway system, providing quick access and short commute times to the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, as well as other surrounding communities. Interstates 190 and 290 are located just south of Tonawanda, linking with Interstate 90 (NYS Thruway), as well as State Routes 219 and 400 and the towns south of Buffalo.

Several State roadways traverse the City, including Route 268 (Niagara Street), Route 265 (Main Street/ Seymour Street), Route 384 (Delaware Street) and Route 425 (Twin Cities Memorial Highway). The Twin Cities Highway, Niagara Street and Main Street, respectively, are the highest volume roadways in the City, carrying well over an average volume of 10,000 vehicles a day. This high volume, especially on Niagara Street and Main Street, can be both a benefit and a constraint for development efforts, providing the needed customer base for businesses, but potentially impacting pedestrian walkability and overall community character. These roadways also serve as truck routes, as they are State Routes. Recently, the City lowered the speed limit on Niagara Street to 25 MPH to slow down traffic and improve public safety.

Generally, neighborhood streets are arranged in a grid pattern that run parallel to the northern and southern City boundaries; newer residential developments to the east and west utilize curvilinear street patterns, which are common with suburban style neighborhoods.

The existing Main-Niagara transit stop in Tonawanda.

In addition to personal transportation, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) provides

regional bus service and currently operates four routes within the City limits. Routes #25 (Delaware) and #61 (North Tonawanda) are the major routes to downtown Buffalo, a key regional employment center, with Route #25 also providing transportation to the City of North Tonawanda. Both routes stop at the Main-Niagara transit stop and run regularly during the week, with less frequent service on the weekends.

Route #79 is a weekday-only express route providing direct service to downtown Buffalo. This route weaves through the City, near the Middle/High School, before connecting to Main Street/State Route 265. The final bus route in the City is #11 (Colvin), which runs daily connecting the industrial area of Wales Street and Fillmore Street to Young Street, terminating at the Greyhound Bus Terminal in downtown Buffalo.

Like many older suburbs, the City of Tonawanda is endowed with sidewalks on nearly every public street, making its residential neighborhoods a key asset for homeowners and potential new residents.

The Riverview Trail (also referred to as Shoreline Trail) is the most heavily used trail system in the City.
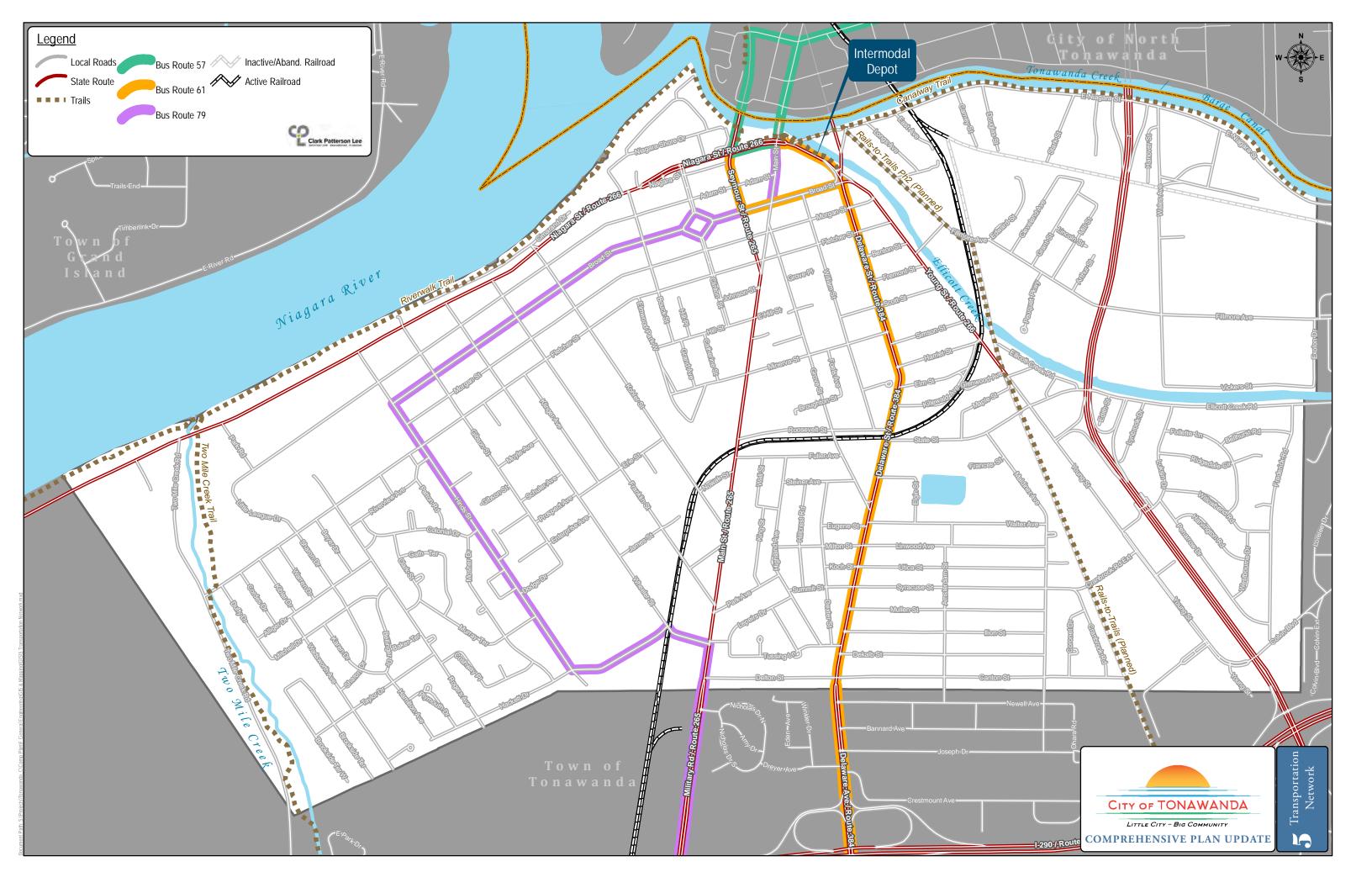
Expansion of the pedestrian network is less of concern, but rather maintenance and upgrades to ensure safety and accessibility are needed.
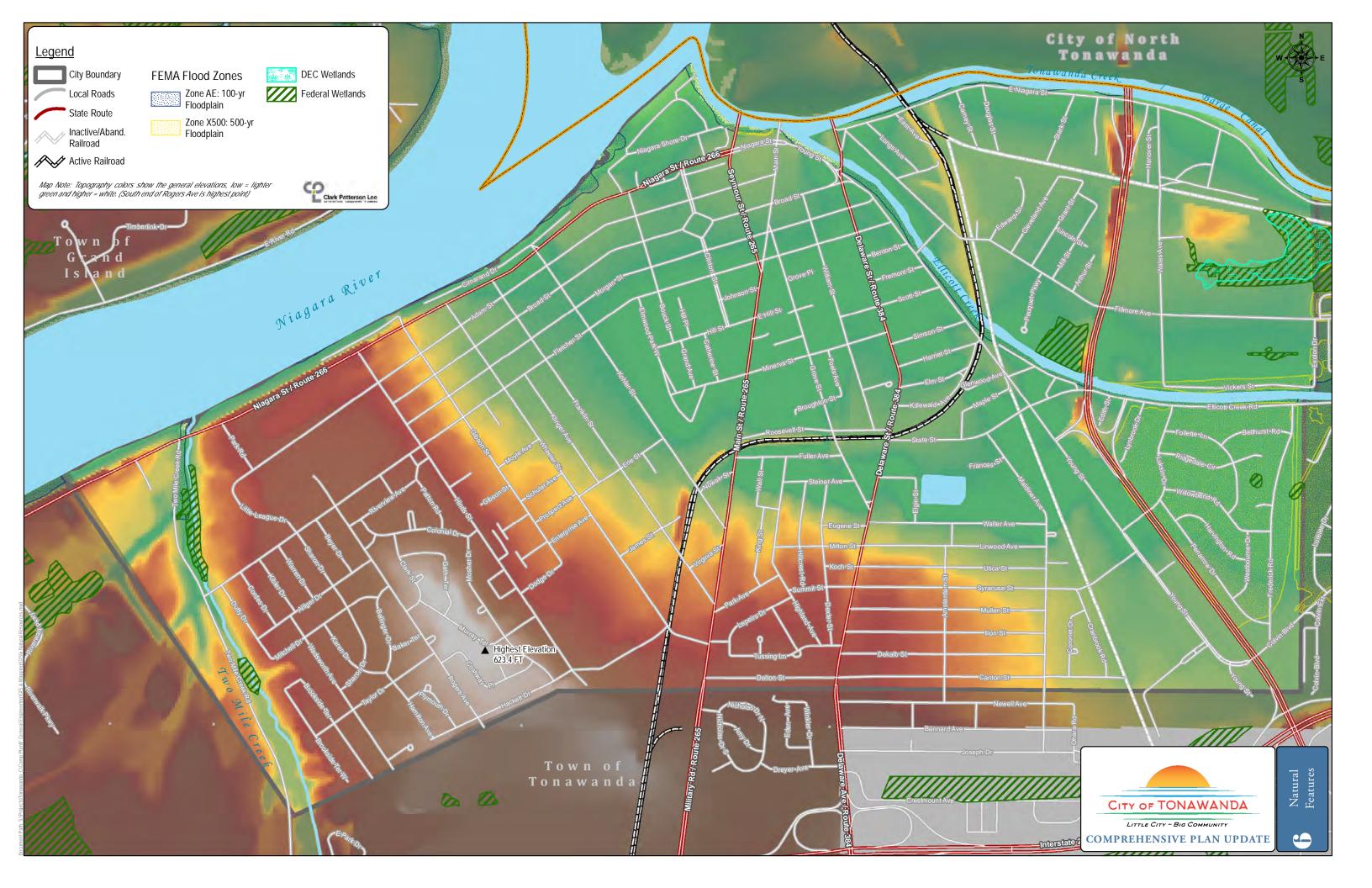
In addition to an extensive sidewalk network, numerous trails run through the City, including the Riverwalk Trail and Canalway Trail, which are regionally significant as they connect to various locations within the Erie County and beyond. The Two Mile Creek Greenway is a smaller trail on the west side of the City that follows the Creek of the same name, connecting Niawanda Park and Veterans Park to the Sherwood Greenway in the Town of Tonawanda. Utilizing the former 3.9-mile long vacant railroad bed on the east side of the City, the Tonawanda Rails-to-Trail pathway is currently under various stages of construction and design with the intention of connecting the Canalway Trail, in the City, to Shoshone Park in the City of Buffalo.

Natural Resources (Map 6)

The predominant natural resources found in the City of Tonawanda are its waterways - the Niagara River, Two Mile Creek, Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek, which make up three of the four City boundaries. These waterbodies are valuable economic assets to the City for a variety of recreational activities, including fishing, boating and passive viewing, as well as waterfront-enhanced developments, such as restaurants. The only waterbody contained within the City itself is the pond at Ives Park, which is only seasonally flooded for ice skating during the winter. The remainder of the year this area is used for soccer fields.

In addition to the waterways, topography is also a prominent feature in the City of Tonawanda, with significant slopes on the western end of Niagara

Legend

- Local Roads
- State Route
- Trails
- Bus Route 57
- Bus Route 61
- Bus Route 79
- Inactive/Aband. Railroad
- Active Railroad

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City of North Tonawanda

Intermodal Depot

Tonawanda Creek

Canalway Trail

Barge Canal

E Niagara St

Rails-to-Trails Ph2 (Planned)

Niagara St/Route 266

Niagara Shore Dr

Seymour St/Route 266

Main St

Adam St

Broad St

Morgan St

Fletcher St

Benton St

Delaware St/Route 384

Fremont St

Scott St

Young St/Route 265

Ellicott Creek

Fillmore Ave

Fillmore Ave

Town of Grand Island

Niagara River

Riverwalk Trail

Two Mile Creek Trail

Simson St

Harriet St

Elm St

Glenwood Ave

Maple St

Ellicott Creek Rd

Vickers St

Roosevelt St

State St

Fuller Ave

Frances St

Steiner Ave

Eugene St

Milton St

Linwood Ave

Walter Ave

Koch St

Utica St

Summit St

Syracuse St

Mullen St

Illion St

Dekalb St

Canton St

Delton St

Newell Ave

Military Rd/Route 265

Main St/Route 265

Bannard Ave

Joseph Dr

Two Mile Creek

Town of Tonawanda

Delaware Ave/Route 384

Crestmount Ave

I-290 / I-Route

Rails-to-Trails (Planned)

Colvin Blvd

Colvin Ext

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Transportation Network

5

Legend

City Boundary
Local Roads
State Route
Inactive/Aband. Railroad
Active Railroad

FEMA Flood Zones
Zone AE: 100-yr Floodplain
Zone X500: 500-yr Floodplain

DEC Wetlands
Federal Wetlands

Map Note: Topography colors show the general elevations, low = lighter green and higher = white. (South end of Rogers Ave is highest point)

Clark Patterson Lee

City of North Tonawanda

Town of Grand Island

Town of Tonawanda

Niagara River

Two Mile Creek

Tonawanda Creek

Barge Canal

Ellicott Creek

Highest Elevation
623.4 FT

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Natural Features

Street adjoining the Niagara River and "the hill" west of Wheeler Street. In this area, the elevation rises from an average of 570 feet in most parts of the City to over 620 feet, extending south into the Town of Tonawanda. The lands in and around Two Mile Creek are also characterized by sloping lands as compared to the rest of the City.

Several Federal and State-regulated wetlands are found within the City, primarily adjacent to Two Mile Creek, north of the former City Landfill off of Fillmore Avenue, and south of Fillmore Avenue adjacent to Ellicott Creek. Wetlands are important natural features that serve as "nature's sponges" to absorb excess waters, as well as filter groundwater through natural processes. More importantly, they provide valuable animal and plant habitat. Floodplains also function much the same way, though predominantly serving as a natural buffer to high water events or flooding. Flood plains are primarily located immediately adjacent to the creeks or rivers; no potential flooding areas exist within the developed portions of the City.

Utility Infrastructure

Overall, the City has is fully serviced by public utility infrastructure, providing service to all businesses and residents. In the early 2000s, the City transferred ownership of its municipal water system to the Erie County Water Authority (ECWA). The ECWA services the entire city through a system of water mains and laterals, with upgrades being made to the system since the merger. The City is also fully serviced with sanitary sewers, with all sanitary waste conveyed to the Town of Tonawanda for treatment. Storm sewers are physically separated from the sanitary system and discharge directly into adjacent waterways. Electricity and gas are provided to residents and businesses by National Grid and National Fuel Gas, respectively.
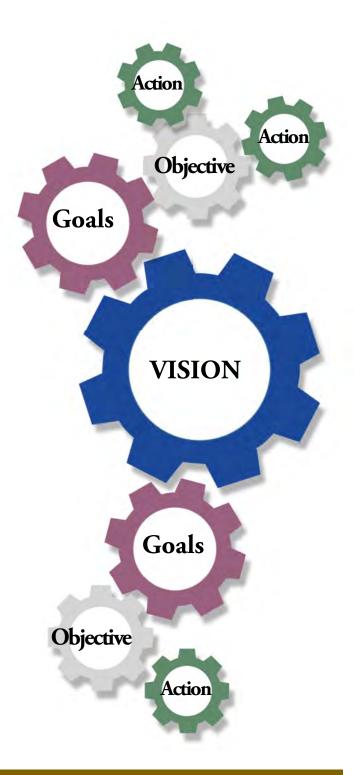
This section of the Comprehensive Plan Update presents the Vision, Goals and Objectives that have been developed with the City of Tonawanda, which focus on major issues and opportunities identified by the Steering Committee and the community at large. The goals and objectives build off the data from the community profile, as well as significant feedback from stakeholders and the public that was gathered throughout the planning process.

In general, the goals are designed to help guide future investment and redevelopment in the City. The recommendations that are included in Section 5 (Moving Forward) of this Plan include more specific actions that can be implemented to achieve the community's goals and vision for the future.

Vision for the Future

A vision statement is a broad-level, forward-thinking statement that generally outlines community values, as well as where the City aims to be in the future. It was created using input from the public, stakeholders and Steering Committee, as well as background information obtained about the community. Moving forward, this statement forms the foundation for the goals, policies, and actions in the proceeding pages, and all actions undertaken by the City and the community should relate back to, and support, the vision statement.

OUR VISION

"**Tonawanda is a historically rich waterfront community in the Buffalo Niagara Region where the Erie Canal meets the Niagara River. We engage with our residents, businesses, schools and community leaders and look ahead to make our neighborhoods and businesses vibrant. By capitalizing on our assets, both natural and man-made, we strive to be a sustainable City; a community for a lifetime.**"

Planning Themes

The tagline "*Little City, Big Community*" captures both the positive and the negative aspects of the City of Tonawanda, but also its key opportunities - it is physically a smaller city in the region when compared to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, and sometimes its size makes people forget that it's there. However, the local pride and dedication that exists in the City is what sets it apart, along with several physical assets that offer a variety of benefits to the public.

Within the context of the Comprehensive Plan, several common themes emerge that build upon the "*Little City, Big Community*" tagline, which inform the goals and objectives. While these themes do not translate directly to the goals themselves, they provide a general direction and further inform the values and priorities of the City.

These themes are:

Healthy Neighborhoods... The future of the City is undeniably tied to its most important asset: **its neighborhoods and housing**. Supporting healthy neighborhoods and housing through **maintenance** and **reinvestment** will reinforce already strong areas and **stabilize** others. In the end, public and private investments in neighborhoods and housing will make the City more attractive to families and households, while providing stable revenue for the City and more desirable   conditions for the business community.

An Active, Vibrant and Prosperous Downtown... An additionally important area for the City is the Downtown. Though small, downtown Tonawanda comprises the "**core**" of the City. The City will focus on improving **aesthetics**, attracting new uses, enhancing **public spaces**, promoting reuse of existing buildings and new development, and encouraging a greater mix and **variety** of uses in an

effort to stimulate increased investment and economic activity.

Connectivity... Connect the neighborhoods to the waterfront and beyond to enrich the **public realm** to create a more **sustainable** community environment. In addition to improvements in access and circulation for vehicles, enhancing pedestrian, bicycle and other **multi-modal** connections and wayfinding will yield more "complete streets" benefits throughout the City.

Essential Community Services & Amenities... A vibrant and attractive City maintains effective public facilities and systems to improve quality of life. The City will continue to **enhance these assets**, including public infrastructure, parks and services, which will benefit residents of the community, enrich visitor experiences, and enhance future opportunities for community improvement.

Environmental Quality... Reducing traffic congestion and improving air and water quality would benefit **public health**. Residents and visitors to the City enjoy a number of valuable resources, including a prominent waterfront and numerous local parks within a small area. These parks and other open spaces along the creeks and riverfront, and local surface waters and other natural features, merit protection as **irreplaceable and essential assets**. These resources will continue to be protected and preserved, while identifying opportunities for further **improvements and enhancements**.

Goal Areas

Building off the vision statement and the planning themes noted above, goals and objectives were developed that represent a framework for the City's vision for the future and re-establish a foundation that provides guidance for the development of recommendations and action strategies. By their very nature, goals represent a broad vision that the City wishes to achieve in the future— they can be utilized to guide decision-making across a wide range of issues. The objectives are more specific measures and strategies that the City can undertake to achieve the goals. The abbreviations that follow each goal tie the goals in with the actions items outlined in the implementation matrix found in Chapter 5.

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY (CS)

Goal 1 – Maintain the safety, quality of life, public health and safety and sustainability of our Community

Community sustainability includes recognition of the need for environmental protection, enhancement and sustainability; the importance of identifying appropriate locations for economic development to enhance local prosperity and offer increased opportunity for economic activity; improving existing and identifying new locations for recreation and public access to waterfront resources; and improving the way people move to (and between) waterfront recreational amenities, downtown and neighborhoods.

- Our natural resources, economic centers, residential neighborhoods, transportation infrastructure and public services are all key elements for building a strong, vibrant community that sustains current and future generations. Objectives to support the goal for community sustainability include:

- Enhancing the quality, service and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities to improve public benefit and enjoyment, including improved strategies and policies for parks and public open space.

- To ensure the greatest public benefits, aligning local park and recreation resources with community growth and needs.

- Recognizing and promoting the role of arts, culture and local history and their contribution to the City of Tonawanda's identity and sense of community.

- Expanding efforts to "green" the City through the expansion of parkland, improved areas of public realm (additional plazas and other public spaces) and the planting of more trees in appropriate locations.

- Maintaining the high quality of City services, including highways, solid waste management, wastewater and stormwater management systems, recreational amenities and programs, senior and youth services, police protection, libraries and other public services.

- Supporting private and public actions to improve the function and appearance of the City through investment in landscaping, streetscaping and natural aesthetics.

- Improvements that will establish effective wayfinding and connectivity throughout the City are essential for promoting walkability and improving linkages between neighborhoods, areas of economic activity and the waterfront.

- Improving public access to, and throughout, the waterfront.

- Promoting regular coordination with the school district to keep abreast of changes and to help maintain the high quality of the educational system and local schools.

- Developing synergies, coordination and cooperation between the City and School District to enhance shared services and realize cost savings.

- Encouraging the continued use of schools as neighborhood centers and a source of community identity and pride.

- Encouraging residents to be active in their community and neighborhoods, contribute to the vitality of the City, and create a sense of belonging among all residents.

- Encouraging public involvement with quality of life issues, the planning of public projects and the establishment of broad public goals.

- With City assistance, developing officially-recognized neighborhood groups/organizations that encourage collaborative neighborhood visioning and planning.

- Evaluating zoning to determine whether permitted uses accurately reflect current day activities and land use practices, and modifying zoning goals to meet current objectives.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP (ES)

Goal 2 – Support the preservation of environmental resources and features within the City

Natural resources contribute to the character of the City and provide important environmental and economic benefits. The creeks, river and riverfront, parks and other open space areas and natural features merit protection as irreplaceable and essential assets. Objectives to support the goal for environmental stewardship include:

- Expanding efforts to "green" the City through the planting of additional street trees and vegetation in appropriate areas to enhance existing, and create new, areas for wildlife habitat.

- Providing for the preservation of waterways in the City, including the Niagara River, Ellicott Creek, Tonawanda Creek and Two Mile Creek, and maintaining and undertaking actions to improve water quality and their quality as significant habitats.

- Capitalizing on trails, streetscapes, linear areas of open space and waterfront assets that take advantage of the environmental features in the City.

- Supporting and encouraging continued progress with the remediation of brownfields and former waste sites, and their appropriate reuse, to provide opportunities for economic development and improve environmental quality.

- Foster healthy surface water and riparian systems in conjunction with the provisions of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

- Utilizing green infrastructure to manage stormwater and improve water quality as an alternative to traditional gray infrastructure, where applicable.

- Continuing to incorporate sustainable practices into City government and services.

- Promoting efforts that recognize the importance and benefits of environmental protection and sustainability, such as recycling and re-use, alternative energy and efforts that result in reduced emissions.

"HOW WE LIVE" - OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING (NH)

Goal 3 – Maintain and enhance the quality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and ensure a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of all residents

Quality neighborhoods and housing includes maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for local residents and visitors through strategic investments in the downtown and along the waterfront; ensuring a diverse housing stock to support the City as a "community for a lifetime"; encouraging property maintenance to improve the quality of neighborhoods and sustain home values; maintaining support for local neighborhoods and enhancing community pride through improved communication; and maintaining and improving public safety, which further enhances quality of life.

The residential neighborhoods in the City of Tonawanda not only contribute to community character and quality of life for residents, they also are a significant component of the economic vitality of the community. Investment and improvements to neighborhoods, including housing stock and infrastructure, are critical for attracting and offering a

variety of opportunities for individuals, young families and empty nesters. Objectives to support the goal for our neighborhoods include:

- Maintaining and improving City a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents as a "community for a lifetime."

- Promoting redevelopment and infill development that provides a variety of housing types, styles and sizes.

- Encouraging the maintenance and upkeep of privately owned property.

- Strengthening building inspection practices to reduce local concerns and complaints.

- Encouraging investment and reinvestment in existing homes, buildings and neighborhoods to maintain their quality and value.

- Supporting investment and maintenance of neighborhood infrastructure and amenities.

- Conserving and promoting unique cultural and historical assets in residential neighborhoods.

- With City assistance, developing officially-recognized neighborhood groups/organizations that encourage collaborative neighborhood visioning and planning to provide residents and local businesses the opportunity to participate in shaping the future of their neighborhoods.

- Encouraging the establishment of programs to plan and finance the revitalization, sustainability and redevelopment of residential and business properties in residential areas.

COMMUNITY PROSPERITY (CP)

Goal 4 – Promote sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities that support year-round activity

Sustainable economic development includes ensuring the availability of goods, services and jobs for residents; maintaining a healthy and sustainable tax base; revitalizing and enhancing Main Street and other commercial/industrial business districts as prosperous areas in the community; improving aesthetics to enhance the overall image of commercial areas and corridors; supporting the retention and sustainability of existing commercial and industrial development and incentivizing new development; and ensuring the availability of adequate utility services to support business development.

Economic development is important to ensure that residents have adequate access to necessary goods and services and a range of employment opportunities, and that tax revenues are sufficient to support public services and otherwise contribute to a prosperous, vibrant and sustainable community. Main Street and the central business district (downtown), industrial areas, commercial corridors and the waterfront are all critical components that are woven together to improve economic growth and potential. Ensuring that existing developed areas remain attractive places to do business is an equally important priority. Objectives to support the goal for sustainable economic development include:

- Reinforcing the role of downtown Tonawanda as the primary activity and cultural center of the City.

- Linking recreational facilities to the downtown to provide easier access for residents, workers, commuters and visitors.

- Promoting greater synergy between downtown and other commercial corridors or districts.

- Attracting and supporting the creation of niche businesses that complement City assets.

- Guiding commercial redevelopment to support mixed use development and modifying zoning to reflect and enable this.

- Encouraging activities and actions that make neighborhood shops attractive and accessible places for local residents.

- Guiding commercial investment to improve aesthetics with enhanced landscaping and exterior design character.

- Keeping smaller and non-downtown business districts vital, active and attractive locations for shopping and leisure.

- Identifying and promoting investment in key geographic areas for targeted business activities (e.g., neighborhood nodes, commercial and retail corridors and Niagara and Young Streets).

- Encouraging the productive re-use of challenged real estate (e.g., functionally obsolete or abandoned lands and brownfields), including Spaulding Fibre.

- Encouraging high design standards to ensure that business areas remain safe and attractive places for public use and enjoyment.

- Ensuring that land use controls and infrastructure are consistent with the requirements of target companies, and that review processes are clear, responsive and streamlined.

- Ensuring that target businesses provide convenient access for employees and have access to raw materials and markets through multiple modes of transportation.

"HOW WE MOVE" - EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION (TR)

Goal 5 – Ensure a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system throughout the City

Transportation issues impact economic development, quality of life and community revitalization. Transportation improvements are needed in certain locations to alleviate traffic congestion or unsafe conditions. There is also support for alternatives to automobile travel, including walking, bicycling and improved public transit opportunities. Objectives to support the goal for efficient transportation include:

- Promoting a multi-modal transportation network within the City that is coordinated with neighboring communities and includes non-vehicular accommodations.

- Coordinating transportation improvements with land use needs.

- Promoting "complete streets" policies when undertaking capital projects and other public transportation improvements.

- Addressing the need for pedestrian safety improvements at critical locations.

- Promoting and improving connectivity and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations between neighborhoods, the downtown and other areas of commercial activity, and the waterfront.

- Supporting sidewalk maintenance to ensure pedestrian safety.

- Enhancing existing levels of public transportation service and expanding transit opportunities, where feasible.

- Coordinating transportation improvements with surrounding communities, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Erie County, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), and the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).

- Continuing roadway maintenance programs, including pavement rehabilitation, curbs and stormwater management systems, where necessary, to ensure the quality and efficacy of the highway system.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES (CSF)

Goal 6 – Ensure that the facilities and services required by residents and businesses are well-coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective to support a sustainable community

Community facilities and infrastructure not only contribute to the overall quality-of-life of the City, they enable life-dependent services. As such, they require continued investment and maintenance to remain effective. Further enhancement and the creative reuse of existing assets can provide additional community resources and spur investment opportunities, making the City a desirable location to live, work and play. Objectives to support the goal for quality community services and facilities include:

- Ensuring that the City's tax structure and rate is sustainable for desired and required services (e.g., police protection, highway maintenance, utility resources).

- Developing better connections between regional transportation services and pedestrian amenities to increase the ability of residents to access goods and services and employment opportunities throughout the community and region.

- Maintaining a quality system of parks and recreational amenities and community services to enhance quality of life for residents and strengthen tourism.

- Making provisions for strategic and cost effective maintenance and replacement of City-owned and operated facilities and equipment.

- Maintaining and revitalizing infrastructure, including systems and facilities for wastewater and stormwater management.

- Ensuring new water and sewer collection systems and treatment facilities, and incorporating provisions for future expansion to support increased economic development in appropriate locations.

- Maintaining and improving the relationship between the City and Erie County to strengthen coordination for community services and infrastructure improvements.

- Improving coordination and planning between public service providers in the City.

- Maintaining an enabled police force that is capable of reacting and responding to known and unknown concerns.

- Promoting public involvement and awareness to ensure transparency and inclusive planning processes and practices.

- Promoting and maintaining fire and paramedic response capabilities to ensure efficient and dependable services to effectively protect public health and safety.

- Continuing to balance quality of life and public safety initiatives, particularly when planning for public parks and areas of public realm that benefit residents, businesses and visitors to the community.

PUBLIC POLICIES (PP)

Goal 7 – Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of City government and planning processes, and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.

Intermunicipal and regional coordination and cooperation is becoming increasingly more important. There are public policies that are common to all goals and objectives, including best management practices for efficient and effective outcomes for economic development, transportation, housing, environmental protection and community services. The City influences, and is influenced by, other communities and their actions and planning, as well as those of school districts and other governmental agencies. Objectives to support the goal for effective public policies include:

- Ensuring that proper authority exists within the City to implement community development programs and initiatives, and the action strategies and recommendations set forth in the City of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan.

- Identifying policies and adopting best practices to engender a holistic approach to building and maintaining a safe, prosperous and sustainable community.

- Establishing tax incentive districts to help revitalize distressed commercial properties, i.e., façade improvements, landscaping, maintenance/repairs.

- Addressing infrastructure construction projects in a holistic manner rather than one utility at a time on any given street.

- Installing systems and programs that support public health and welfare.

- Keeping abreast of, and be responsive to, Federal and State regulations and grant opportunities.

- Recognizing and promoting regional influence and participating in regional planning efforts to ensure that City's goals and objectives recognize and reflect regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

- Maintaining a high level of collaboration and coordination of efforts with the school district, the City of North Tonawanda and Town of Tonawanda, and other levels of government.

- Exploring the potential for joint public service activities with the City of North Tonawanda and the Town of Tonawanda, and participating where benefits would result.

- Working with State and County agencies on economic development efforts to increase opportunities in the City.

- Stay involved in regional planning efforts, working with local, state and federal agencies on issues that effect or involve the Niagara River, the Erie Canal and Ellicott Creek.

Purpose

The future land use section takes the goals and objectives in the previous section one step further and illustrates the proposed form and framework for land uses in the City of Tonawanda. It answers a simple question:

What should the City of Tonawanda to look like in the future?

An excerpt from the Waterfront Plan (LWRP) showing a conceptual rendering of Niagara and Young Street.

While the City itself is significantly built out and land uses will generally not change from their current conditions, the map that was developed for future land use indicates desired areas for redevelopment and, more importantly, areas for community investment and reinvestment.

Encouraging additional land uses of a similar nature, improving key destinations, and establishing gateways are also all elements identified on the future land use map.
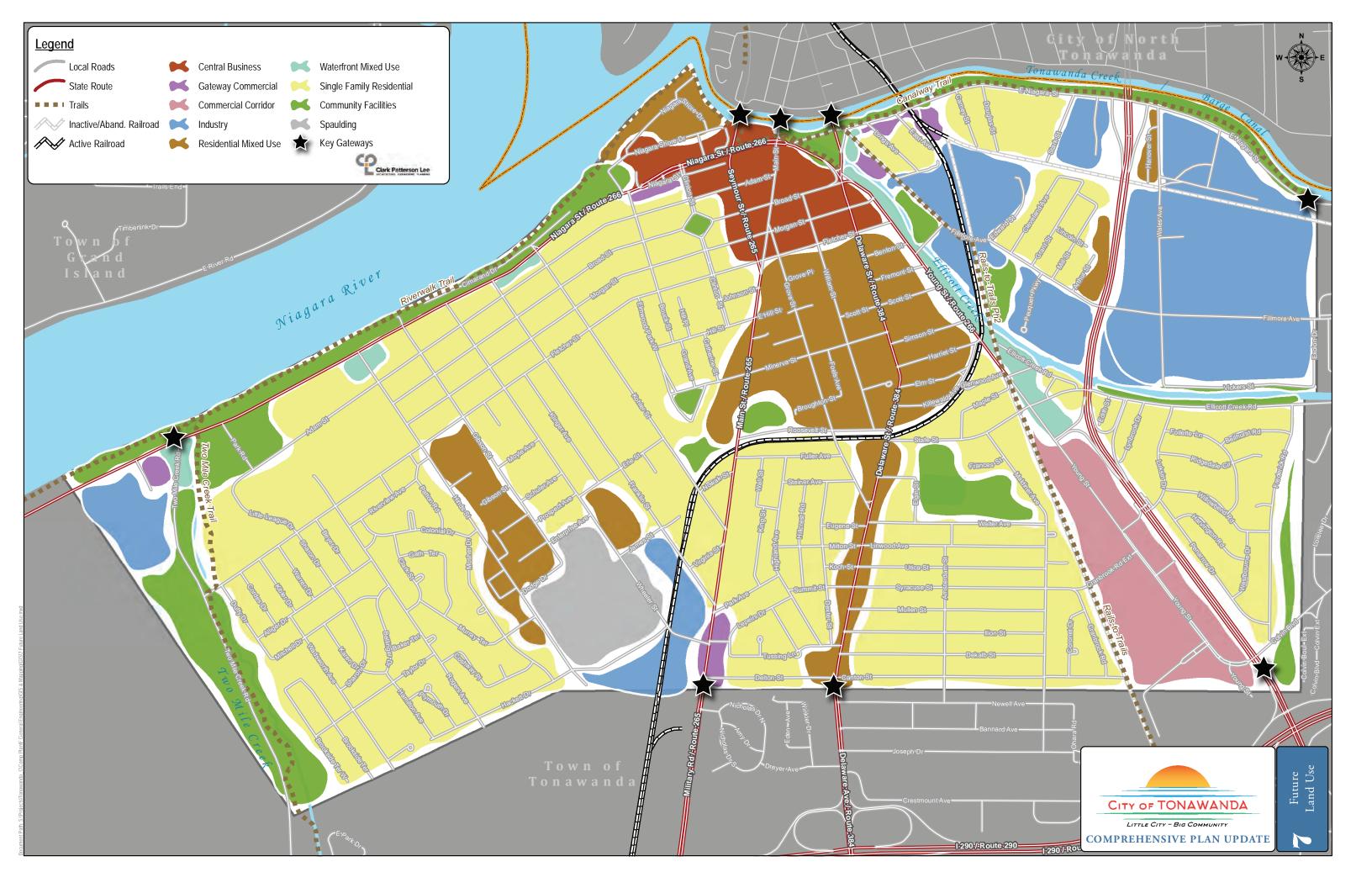
One item to keep in mind is that the future land use map is NOT a zoning map. It provides guidance on long-term decision-making about land use, including zoning changes, that implement the goals, policies, and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Changes that occur to zoning in the City, whether simply changes to intent or regulatory provisions, or actual district boundary changes or creation of new districts, must be consistent with the Plan. This is a critical connection that is supported and upheld by the courts.

Future Land Use Categories

The land uses shown on the future land use map are broken down into the following categories and described as follows:

Single Family Residential

This category encompasses most of the City and, as currently exists, consists predominantly of single-family land uses. Two-, three-, and multi-family dwellings are limited and sporadically located throughout the City, with rental-unit rates stable.

Legend

- Local Roads
- State Route
- Trails
- Inactive/Aband. Railroad
- Active Railroad

- Central Business
- Gateway Commercial
- Commercial Corridor
- Industry
- Residential Mixed Use

- Waterfront Mixed Use
- Single Family Residential
- Community Facilities
- Spaulding
- Key Gateways

Clark Patterson Lee
ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING PLANNING

City of North Tonawanda

Tonawanda Creek

Barge Canal

Canalway Trail

Rails-to-Trails Ph2

Niagara St / Route 266

Niagara Shore Dr

Niagara Shore Dr

Seymour St / Route 265

Adam St

Main St

Broad St

Morgan St

Fletcher St

Benton St

Fremont St

Scott St

Delaware St / Route 384

Young St / Route 268

Ellicott Creek

Fillmore Ave

Niagara River

Riverwalk Trail

Cimarand Dr

Broad St

Fletcher St

Morgan St

Ellwood Park

Brook St

Hill St

Hill St

E Hill St

Johnson St

Clinton St

Grove Pl

Grove St

William St

Simson St

Harriet St

Elm St

Glenwood Ave

Killewald

Maple St

Ellicott Creek Rd

Town of Grand Island

Timberlink Dr

E River Rd

Trails End

Two Mile Creek Trail

Park Rd

Adam St

Kohler St

Moyle Ave

Schuler Ave

Prospect Ave

Colonial Dr

Minerva St

Broughton St

Roosevelt St

Fuller Ave

State St

Frances St

Follette Ln

Ballhurst Rd

Ridgedale Dr

Lincoln St

Gibson St

Elm St

Franklin St

Nowak St

Wall St

King St

Steiner Ave

Hillcrest Rd

Eugene St

Walter Ave

Elgin St

Hatfield Ave

Coronet Dr

Willowbend Rd

Hamington Rd

Westbourne Rd

Two Mile Creek Rd

Little League Dr

Bayer Ct

Enterprise Ave

James St

Wheeler St

Virginia St

Highland Ave

Milton St

Linwood Ave

Koch St

Utica St

Amsterdam St

Syracuse St

Illion St

Crabbrook Rd Ext

Young St

Luskin Dr

Colvin Blvd Ext

Colvin Blvd

Hudson St

Money St

Dodge Dr

Gath Ter

Riverview Ave

Rogers Ave

Baker Ter

Cashway

Murray Ter

Summit St

Mullen St

Dexter St

Dekalb St

Crestbrook Rd Ext

Colvin Blvd

Two Mile Creek

Blackstone Dr

Broddock Dr

Codes Dr

Kibler Dr

Mitchell Dr

Allgair Dr

Taylor Dr

Sharon Dr

Warren Dr

Spruce Dr

Daly Dr

Billing Dr

Karen Dr

Park Ave

Lapara Dr

Tussing Ln

Delton St

Canton St

Hamilton Ave

Plymouth Dr

Hackett Dr

Nicholas Dr N

Nicholas Dr S

Amy Dr

Eden Dr

Withler Dr

Dreyer Ave

Joseph Dr

Newell Ave

Bannard Ave

Ohara Rd

Town of Tonawanda

Military Rd / Route 265

Delaware Ave / Route 384

Crestmount Ave

E Park Dr

I-290 / Route 290

CITY OF TONAWANDA
LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Future Land Use

The Single-Family Residential category primarily includes detached dwellings located on smaller lots (typically 7,000-10,000 SF), in a neighborhood setting with sidewalks and street trees and off-street parking space. Design styles range from post-war to contemporary to modern, but homes are in a neighborhood setting with front porches or entrances that engage the street.

The City of Tonawanda has a variety of housing styles from ornate, larger, two-story structures to smaller, simple ranch homes.

Parks, recreational facilities, schools, churches/ places of worship, community services and other minor accessory uses are also commonly found in this area. Single to multi-family conversions are not an issue, but for those who desire to do so, additional criteria would need to be met through a special permit process as a means to control such conversions and ensure they are do not adversely impact neighborhood character.

The aim in the single-family category is to support existing neighborhoods, improve conditions with targeted investment, and maintain housing stock.

Residential Mixed Use

Residential Mixed Use provides opportunities for denser residential development, such as two-family dwellings and higher, as well as other compatible commercial endeavors. The intent is create a mixed-use area that is active and walkable and has the density in "rooftops" to support Downtown. Mixed-uses could be integrated either in the same building (i.e. commercial on the lower floor, residential above) or within one individual lot.

Residential mixed-use areas incorporate design features that resemble a more residential feel, such as these views from the City of Rochester.

Much of this area already contains a variety of residential and commercial uses, including a number of potential historic buildings (as seen in the examples on the previous page). Structures that exhibit these characteristics, whether residential or commercial, should be preserved as they contribute to the urban fabric of the City. The residential mixed-use area also creates a transition between the residential areas and the downtown.

Community Facilities

Tonawanda contains a wealth of community resources that form a core component of the character and attractiveness of the City. The community facilities category includes recreational uses, such as Veterans Park and Niawanda Park, and municipal facilities like City Hall and the Recreation/Highway Department building. These resources are intended to continue as such, with investment and improvements encouraged to further support them and provide for more community interaction and access.

Spaulding Fibre

Spaulding Fibre's history in the community dates back to 1912, as one of the largest employers in the City (over 1,500 employees at its peak). It remains a critical element of the City's fabric and is also the single largest shovel-ready site in the community.
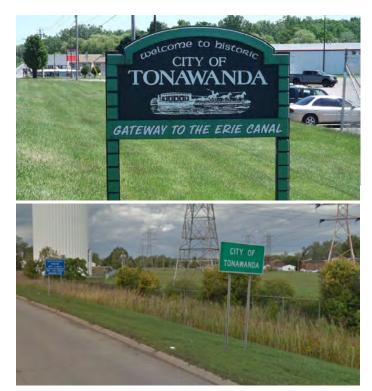
Historical aerial of Spaulding Fibre site (© The LiRo Group)

The extent of the Spaulding Fibre area more accurately reflects the actual boundary of the property, taking into account previously remediated land. Though cleared and ready for redevelopment, the site has various constraints that have effected its reuse, including an active rail corridor. More open, flexible design standards, the provision of a wider range of commercial and light industrial uses, and marketing focused on businesses that could benefit from access to the rail service, may help to encourage greater interest in the site.

Gateway Commercial

The gateway commercial category is intended to provide for a mix of uses, though predominantly commercial in nature. As the name suggests, these areas function as gateways into the City, providing visitors and residents alike the "first view" of

The City's current gateway sign on Niagara Street (top) and Twin Cities Highway (bottom). Consistency is key to establish a prominent identity for the City.

Tonawanda. Hence, the City should strive to establish a prominent identity at these locations.

This category encourages a range of services to meet daily and convenience needs of the community. Although catering to vehicular traffic, pedestrian-friendly access and frontage landscaping should be integrated along the corridor to maintain a positive City identity all the way to Downtown.

A buffer between the sidewalk/roadway and off-street, frontage parking should also be provided for commercial properties. Residential to commercial use conversions are encouraged provided they are complementary to adjacent, non-commercial uses (i.e., regular working hours, minimal signage and outdoor lighting, limited access, etc.).

Commercial Corridor

Unlike the gateway commercial category, the commercial corridor along Young Street, from the southern City line to the Twin Cities Memorial Highway interchange, is almost exclusively auto-oriented. This area exhibits the typical, suburban "big-box" and strip mall style of development; it is the only area of its kind in the City. The proximity of this area to the Interstate 290 interchange makes it a prime location for these types of uses due to the higher traffic volumes that access the area.

Rather than trying to transform this area to match the rest of the City, it should be treated as a separate environment and developed accordingly. Using the investment that is already in place with

IMPORTANCE OF GATEWAYS IN URBAN DESIGN

The intent of a gateway entrance into the City is simple: welcome visitors and residents, establish an identity, provide a sense of place, instill pride, and create a memorable location. Not to be confused with Gateway Harbor Park, attractive, high-quality gateway treatments can enhance one's experience in the City and also provide a positive perception, not only for visitors, but also for businesses and entrepreneurs looking to expand. It shows that a community puts value in its public spaces and invests accordingly, creating a more attractive and welcoming business environment. Signage should include strong landscaping components, lighting, and be designed to conform/complement existing wayfinding signage systems. At a minimum, key locations include:

* Niagara Street at Two Mile Creek
* Military Road/SR 265 at City line
* Delaware Avenue/SR 384 at the City line *(northern and southern ends)*
* Seymour Street at the City line
* Main Street/SR 265 at the City line
* East Niagara Street at the City line
* Twin Cities Memorial Highway at the City line

Gateway signage can range from large simple, sign designs with landscaping (far right) to projecting signs (above) or monument style structures.

the existing building stock and parking, adaptive reuse of these structures for commercial and non-retail use is encouraged. Flexibility in uses may provide greater marketability and could include medical centers, institutional and other social service uses, multi-family housing (in a mixed use setting), or even urban agriculture (i.e. hydroponics, breweries, etc).

Although the recent closure of Gander Mountain was on the Town of Tonawanda side, the bottom line is that this area has significant footprint within the community - both economically and physically.

With the expansive amount of pavement and low utilization rates, infill and outparcel development should also be permitted, especially along the main access road off of Young Street.

Any proposed improvements to properties in this area should not be limited to merely "facelifts" of existing façades, but should include increased landscaping and vegetation within parking areas and along roadways to break up the monotony of extensive pavement and improve overall site aesthetics.

Access management is also recommended along this corridor to eliminate the numerous curb cuts, provide more efficient traffic flow, improve traffic and pedestrian safety, and minimize conflict/accident points.

Many redevelopment options exist for these suburban-style developments, including multi-family residential (top). Regardless of design style, additional landscaping should be incorporated to break up the expansive area of asphalt and provide a more visually appealing (and marketable) environment.

Industry

Industry, encompassing both light industrial and manufacturing uses, has traditionally covered an expansive portion of the City in terms of zoning. Many areas that were zoned as such were, in fact, commercial or light industrial in nature. While industrial uses still have an important place in the City and will be encouraged to continue and expand, the market dictates that the intensity of such uses be geared more towards lower-intensity industrial businesses, within a park like setting.

The industrial land use category more accurately reflects existing conditions within the City, while still providing opportunities for future growth. Expansions and new development are encouraged to focus on complementary design and visual character, keeping operations within enclosed areas and providing adequate buffers to non-industrial properties and uses. Properties that are subject to environmental easements or restrictions due to past operations or cleanup will be limited in their development potential, but will still be required to have complementary design.

Waterfront Mixed Use

This category was developed during the *Living Niawanda: City of Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Update* and has been incorporated into this planning effort. The waterfront mixed use category is aimed at enhancing public access to the water, encouraging waterfront-related economic development to make encourage year-round activity, and improving/ expanding on existing waterfront amenities. This is limited to specific nodes of activity along Niagara Street, where waterfront-related businesses exist, as well as the extensive strip development along Ellicott Creek to encourage additional businesses that support and engage waterfront activity.

Pavilion in Nlawanda Park.

Central Business

The central business category encompasses all of Downtown Tonawanda, as well as portions of Niagara Street, much the same as it was in the former Comprehensive Plan. Unlike other land use categories in the City, the central business category is the epicenter of the community in terms of function and diversity of uses and activity.

This area will continue to exhibit a traditional urban fabric with a higher land use density and a compact, pedestrian-friendly scale; walkability is a key component to encourage more activity. It will continue to support a variety of uses including civic, cultural, retail/commercial, restaurant, professional offices and residential, in a mixed use setting. The focus will be placed more on design and user experiences, rather than just the use itself.

Main Street Tonawanda

The reality is that while Downtown Tonawanda does have a prominent Main Street, land use and economic conditions have, over time, started to erode its urban fabric. Several areas have taken on more of a "suburban" character, with single use buildings surrounded by parking and little to no architectural design style or quality. However, revitalization efforts have been started to counter this with the formation of *Tonawanda Main Street*

(City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation - LDC) and other initiatives, including the update the Comprehensive Plan and *Living Niawanda* (LWRP/ waterfront revitalization program).

The City of Tonawanda LDC was formed to implement economic development initiatives and to encourage the attraction, development or retention of businesses within the downtown area, through activities including, but not limited to:

- Encouraging the restoration, rehabilitation, and sustainable use of historic buildings within the downtown district and other remedial actions to eliminate the physical, economic, and social deterioration of the this district and adjoining neighborhoods.

- Acquisition by purchase, grant, gift or other method of real property within the City (including property that is contaminated); to improve, maintain and manage such property (or to contract for the improvement, maintenance and improvement of such property); to enter into contracts to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of such property; and to mortgage such property and otherwise take steps to facilitate the redevelopment, preservation, use or reuse of vacant, underused or deteriorated properties within the City.

- To provide grants and loans to businesses and/ or property owners in order to financially support economic development activities in the City.

To further support revitalization efforts and encourage a more vibrant, active Downtown for Tonawanda over time, the following design principles apply to all areas within the central business category.

- While most of Tonawanda's downtown building stock are two stories in height, infill development of up to four stories is encouraged and can be incorporated, while maintaining the existing character of Main Street. Any new development or redevelopment of property fronting a public roadway should be a minimum of two stories in height.

- Extend the character of Main Street along the entire corridor (beyond just the segment from Broad Street to Niagara Street), with two to three-story buildings with zero setback, wide sidewalks, and architectural character.

- Discourage non-urban building and site plan designs (i.e., McDonalds and Rite Aid) in favor of traditional urban development. Drive-throughs and other suburban-style amenities are discouraged, as well.

Integrating traditionally suburban businesses into urban settings can be achieved, such as this McDonalds in Edinburgh, Scotland.

- Parking located to the rear or side only, in addition to on-street parking, which should be restricted to customers only, with coordination between employers and Main Street residents to enforce this provision.

♦ Encourage central, shared parking areas and increase walkability of the Downtown. This can be achieved through various means, including maintained sidewalks, pedestrian amenities (especially benches and shade trees for older population and those with kids), engaging storefronts, scaled wayfinding/destination signage (e.g., distance to/walking times), municipal parking that is clearly identified, and visible/maintained crosswalks (use of decorative or alternative materials is encouraged).

♦ Redesigning municipal parking lots to be easier to navigate, and to connect with Main Street and the rest of Downtown, can help as well.

♦ The "five-minute walk" is the typical reference for how far most people will comfortably walk before opting to drive (obviously in Western New York the weather plays another key factor to be considered). This translates to about a 1/4 mile or about 1,300 feet (or 500 steps). The central business area encompasses a radius of only 900 to 1,000 feet as the crow flies from the geographic center (approximately Broad Street and Main Street); therefore, one can easily navigate Downtown within five minutes or less.

♦ Tie Downtown into the waterfront with signage, marketing, design and other techniques. The waterfront is, and will continue to be, the biggest asset of the City, bringing thousands of visitors to Tonawanda each year.

Creating a public square with a promenade, landscaping, and well-designed buildings could be one avenue for revitalizing the "suburban feel" of areas in the central business area. (Fort Collins, Colorado)

Although not exhibiting the vertical density of traditional urban downtowns, many other communities have a similar "small town" feel like Tonawanda ,with two to three- story buildings, coupled with good design and an active, engaging public realm. (Fort Collins, Colorado)

An analysis of existing conditions outlined in the Community Profile (Chapter 2), and the results of the public outreach efforts, shed light on a number of findings, issues and opportunities. Public input for the Comprehensive Plan was gathered through a number of means, including public meetings, focus meetings with stakeholders and youth, input from City officials and department heads, tactical/strategic community events and public surveys, and comments gathered on the City's website. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan highlights major findings and outlines recommendations for future actions, which have been organized to correspond with the central themes established in the Goals and Objectives (Chapter 3).

Major Findings

- The City of Tonawanda is a vibrant urban area with a small-town atmosphere.

- The City has capitalized on its waterfront location, with extensive parkland amenities along the Niagara River, Tonawanda Creek (Erie Canal) and Two-Mile Creek, and growing recognition of Ellicott Creek.

- Water use is strong, with a high volume of boating and fishing activity on local waterways, and a growing demand for kayaking and canoeing.

- Tonawanda benefits from a system of regionally connected multi-use trails.

- Main Street, in the downtown central business district, is ripe with opportunity from its traditional street pattern and historic buildings that are set within the context of a dense residential community.

- Tonawanda is considered a safe and friendly community, with quality services.

- Seasonal events and activities in local parks are popular attractions and enjoyed by many residents.

- There is a need and desire for more restaurants, small shops and retail shopping opportunities in the downtown (and more diversification of businesses).

- Residents must go outside of the City to purchase clothing and groceries, hardware or home furnishing; for entertainment; or to seek medical or dental services.

- The City has an ample supply of single-family housing stock, but there are a number of vacant structures and abandoned properties, and there is concern about housing conditions among residents.

- Residents feel there is a need for more single-family and starter homes in the community and a lack of incentives for businesses.

- There is a need to improve overall aesthetics in the community, including a desire for more street trees.

- There is a need for building design standards in the downtown and neighborhood commercial areas.

- Signage and wayfinding along the waterfront needs to be improved.

- Traffic and pedestrian safety on Niagara Street and in other places in the Downtown and community is an issue, and there is a need for traffic calming measures.

Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

The following SWOT analysis was prepared using comments and other input gathered from discussions with the Steering Committee, local stakeholders and the public, as well as the findings of the analysis of existing conditions. This SWOT analysis identifies the strengths and weaknesses that affect the City of Tonawanda (internal factors over which the City generally has some measure of control), and the opportunities and threats that come from outside the community (external factors over which the City has essentially no control). This analysis is useful in helping to identify strategies for helping the City achieve the goals and objectives for the future.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*	
Location (of the City in the region & County) History and culture Ready for growth Waterfront Bike paths, parks and recreational opportunities Attractive housing market (quick sales) Community interest and pride Intact Urban Core Access to higher level elected officials Quality City services Change toward housing improvements Quality housing stock County and regional planning and program support	Quick turnover of housing Aging population and over saturation Lack of a sense of place Lack of a diverse central business district Zoning / land use regulations Lot size density without walkability Lasting effects of past urban development Communication Vacant/abandoned housing—Absentee landlords Renovation expenses 2001 plan not implemented Disconnect with School District Insufficient capacity of City staff for community development coordination Decisiveness/council interaction for development	INTERNAL TO THE CITY
Opportunities	*Threats*	
Trends toward urbanism Available properties for infill development Market Trends Favorable housing locations Value-added opportunities Implementation strategy County, regional and State programs and support County population on the rise Improving job market	Lack of Place recognition Market trends Regional shovel ready competition County and State Roadway infrastructure Reputation with development Transit options Focus on just lowering taxes, rather than comprehensive investing/improvements Political support/buy-in	EXTERNAL FORCES

"A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work"

~ Colin Powell

Implementation

An effective Comprehensive Plan establishes a process that ensures that the document remains relevant and is actively implemented. The City of Tonawanda has worked diligently to engage the community, solicit feedback, identify opportunities and weaknesses, develop a vision and goals for the future, and outline recommendations to achieve the vision. The Plan is a roadmap to an actual end product, which is an improved and better community, but the Comprehensive Plan cannot be considered a success unless its provisions and recommendations are put into action and achieved.

The implementation plan, as described on the following pages, outlines strategies, priorities, and means of using the Comprehensive Plan on a daily basis for accomplishing the recommendations contained herein, moving the City forward toward achieving its vision and goals.

How to Use the Plan

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to be a "living" document that will guide actions undertaken by and for the City, including government, staff and local boards. As actions, policies, regulations and development occurs, it represents a step forward in the physical form of Tonawanda.

A daily guide for decision-making...

To make the Plan a "living," active document, it must guide each individual development decision.

The City, including Boards and City staff, should refer to it and consider the overall vision, goals, and recommendations contained therein as they make significant decisions that effect the future of the community. As development opportunities present themselves, whether from outside entities (e.g., developers) or within (e.g., the LDC), the broad concepts and design elements identified in this Plan should be incorporated so that their intent becomes a part of the meaningful whole in planning the future of Tonawanda.

Potential improvements, such as intersection/crosswalk design idea on Niagara Street, should respond to community desires and needs, as well as other planning efforts.

Plan for flexibility - updates and amendments...

Approximately every five years, or as circumstances dictate the need, the Comprehensive Plan should be more thoroughly reviewed and updated, as required, to reflect current priorities, needs and

goals, using the annual update reports to assist in this effort (see *monitoring and review* below).

At the end of this more extensive review and update, the City should incorporate all changes into an updated plan, and undergo formal adoption procedures (including public hearings and SEQR review) to accept the updated plan. Unless there are major changes to circumstances or conditions in the City, it is anticipated that these reviews and re-adoption procedures will not be complicated.

They are important, however, to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a relevant and useful document to guide growth and development in the City and help the citizens of Tonawanda realize their vision and goals for its future.

Monitoring and review...

The City of Tonawanda understands that local planning is an on-going process. The preparation of the City's Comprehensive Plan Update is only a first step.

One of the key recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan Update is for the Tonawanda City Council to establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee that will conduct an annual review of the Plan to ensure that it remains a dynamic and useful document that continuously aims to achieve the overall vision. goals and recommendations of the City.

Whether this review is performed by a stand alone committee comprised of City and community representatives, or this function is undertaken by an existing committee or Board, i.e., the Planning Board, is up to the City. The end goal, is for Tonawanda to ensure that the Plan is kept "fresh" by monitoring changing conditions, evaluating measures and following through on actions.

The annual review should include the following:

- All **site plan and subdivision approvals** issued during the previous year should be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Update to determine where development activity has occurred or is proposed, if it has been designed to be consistent with the vision and recommendations of the Plan, and the overall impact of planning approvals on general land use trends in the City.

- All **rezoning decisions** approved during the previous year should be reviewed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan to determine if these actions were undertaken in conformance with the vision and recommendations of the Plan, and if the overall impact of the rezoning decisions are consistent with the general land use trends in the City.

- The **priority Zoning Code amendments** specified in the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming years. The Comprehensive Plan Committee should also determine if there are any new zoning amendments that should be added to this list.

- The list of other **priority projects** and other items identified as priority actions, as outlined in the following Implementation Matrix, should be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished during the previous year. It should also be determined if there is a need to update or amend this list.

- Comments from the City Council, City departments and committees, and public input gathered during the previous year should be

evaluated in conjunction with the information ascertained from the reviews outlined above, and an action plan for Comprehensive Plan implementation activity in the coming year should be developed.

- A statement outlining the **accomplishments of the past year**, including a listing of all site plan, subdivision, and rezoning approvals, and a list of accomplishments in terms of Zoning Code amendments and other activities, as specified in the Implementation Matrix. This information, along with the action plan for the continuing implementation efforts for the Comprehensive Plan proposed for the coming year, should be presented to the City Council for their review and approval.

By following this procedure, the City will be able to continually monitor the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan for achieving the future vision it articulates. It is anticipated that the Comprehensive Plan Committee, will need to meet several times during the first year to establish procedures and review priority actions. As items are implemented and the procedure becomes more established, less frequent meetings are likely to be required. The adjustments, amendments and changes recommended by the Committee and approved by the City Council will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by acceptance of the Council, and provided as an annual update document.

Key Implementation Tools

Several tools are available to the City that can be employed to help bring the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan Update to fruition, including the following.

Capital Improvement Program

Capital improvement programming (CIP) is a valuable tool for local governments to identify present and future needs within the community that require capital infrastructure. These programs operate for a shorter duration (3-5 years) and contain a variety of planned projects or programs along with revenues and financing sources. The City of Tonawanda maintains a five-year CIP.

As a blueprint for the future, the City's Comprehensive Plan outlines numerous economic, land use and infrastructure projects and programs that include elements related to residential housing, transportation and public facilities, among other things. By connecting these two community documents, the City would not only be addressing the expressed needs and desires of residents and local businesses, but also be better positioned to respond to market conditions and growth opportunities. As noted, the CIP is a powerful tool for implementing the City's Comprehensive Plan:

- *Little City, Big Community – the City of Tonawanda's Comprehensive Plan* should provide the vision for capital projects plans and investments. The vision that is outlined in the plan represents the community's future outlook, supported by demographic data, realistic goals, trends, market conditions and solid financial policies.

- Capital improvement and investment decisions should be aligned with the Comprehensive Plan. Consistency between the documents ensures that priority actions are addressed to provide the foundation for subsequent actions. Funding available in the CIP defines the local capacity for carrying out actions and identifies avenues for outside funding sources (i.e. grants).

Relationship to City Budget

Unlike the CIP, the City budget sets aside money and identifies actions to be funded every year. Capital and operational funding decisions should reflect the goals and policies of the plan, serving as a point of discussion for priorities year-to-year.
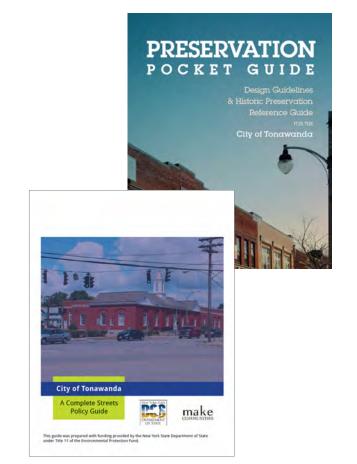
Development Regulations

The City's development regulations, including, but not limited to zoning, subdivision, and design standards, are essential tools for implementation. While the Comprehensive Plan provides the guidance and long-term vision, it does not carry any regulatory authority; policies and actions must be carried out through City regulations. Updates to any regulations should, and must be, consistent with the Plan. Alignment between the Plan and City zoning should be one of the earliest first steps.

Coordination with other plans/initiatives

Several other planning efforts have been undertaken during the course of this Plan update, including:

- *Preservation Pocket Guide: Design Guidelines and Historical Preservation Guide for the City of Tonawanda (Landmark Society)*

- *Main Street Vacant Property Abatement Report (Make Communities)*

- *Complete Streets Tonawanda Policy Guide and Action Plan (Make Communities)*

- *Residential Historic Property Investigation (Buffalo State)*

- *Housing Conditions Assessment and Code Enforcement Report (Buffalo State)*

As the City of Tonawanda continues to plan for its future, and implements various strategies and actions, these other plans should be consulted and coordinated with to maintain clear and consistent direction.

Staff support

In addition to oversight by City Council, coordination with department heads, and assistance from the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, the City would benefit from establishment of a dedicated Community Development/Planning position to manage the numerous planning initiatives currently being undertaken by the City. The staff position would be responsible for not only local planning management,

but would also focus on housing programs, initiatives, and policies. Neighborhoods and housing are, and will continue to be, a significant component of the City, both from an economic perspective, as well as contributing to the overall community character. The staff position could also be responsible for identifying and securing grant money for projects, with funds for administrative and program/project delivery used to directly offset costs of the position.

Though numerous department heads and City employees already engage in various aspects of these efforts, a dedicated staff position would provide a more efficient process, acting as a liaison among the different departments, agencies, Boards, and City officials, while focusing solely on planning, development, and housing in the City.

Generally, planning in the City can be divided up into three categories:

- Current planning - Day to day operations for planning tasks, such as site plan and subdivision applications, rezonings, variances and code enforcement. This is handled by **existing City staff**.

- Long-range planning - Developing, implementing, monitoring and updating plans and programs that pertain to planning over a longer period of time. A **dedicated planning staff position** is best suited for this effort.

- Community Development - Primary focus is housing and neighborhood plan/program development, implementation and monitoring to preserve and improve neighborhood conditions

and engagement. A **dedicated planning staff position** is best suited for this effort.

The end goal is to have in-house capacity to implement planning programs within the City without placing additional burden on existing staff, whether this is managed through a part-time capacity shared with other organizations (e.g., the LDC), a dedicated part-time staff position that is built-up as progressis made in the City, or a full-time paid staff position.

To provide greater clarity to the duties and responsibilities of this role, a model job description for a Community Development/Planning position, along with an LDC description is provided in Appendix C.

Align City Departments/Other Organizations

The Plan contains a number of programs, policies, initiatives and projects that could be undertaken by not only existing City departments, but also outside entities, such as, but not limited to, the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (LDC) or another future department, position or organization. Recommendations and actions outline potential partnerships, but they are not exclusive or exhaustive by any means. As actions are undertaken, coordination should be initiated immediately to ensure service and project delivery are efficient and in line with the goals of the Plan.

Build Community Capacity/Engagement

A comprehensive plan is a community-driven document; residents and business-owners are key components in its implementation to act as

"cheerleaders", as well as to provide necessary support and buy-in to carry out the recommendations in the Plan. To that effect, the community should continue to be informed of the progress, utilized for additional information and to help build capacity, and remain engaged in transforming the City. Government and staff cannot, and should not, be expected to do it alone; both must strive to move forward in unison toward common goals.

Action Plan

In chapter 3 (Vision & Goals), individual goals and objectives/policies were outlined; without viable mechanisms and actions to carry them out, results would be difficult to realize. The Implementation Matrix on the following pages outlines key recommendations and projects for the City to undertake, organized based on the type of action it is and its priority.

The recommendations contained within the Matrix do not make an attempt to address and identify EVERY action that is required, nor the exact method for carrying it out. As the overall Plan itself is a guidance document, the recommendations provide direction for action; how the City ultimately moves forward is within its own discretion.

Recommendations/Actions are categorized as:

- **Policy/Administrative Decisions**
- **Programs**
- **Projects/Planning**
- **Regulations**

Priorities Actions and Projects are divided up into four categories:

- **Ongoing** – These are actions that would likely be initiated relatively early on, following the adoption of the plan, and continue throughout the life of the plan. These are typically associated with policies and communication efforts.

- **Near-term** (1 to 2 year timeframe) – These actions or initiatives are the most important to address following the completion and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan update and typically consists of policy decisions or regulatory/administrative changes. Without following through on these actions, subsequent work to carry out the recommendations of the Plan will be difficult to achieve. These actions may not be associated with a specific recommendation or goal, but rather the entirety of the Comprehensive Plan itself.

- **Mid-Term** (3 to 5 year timeframe) – While equally important, these actions may require some additional work to establish partnerships, seek funding opportunities, or undergo planning and discussion among City staff or the community. The actions contained in this category may be integrated with the City's Five-Year capital planning process.

- **Long-Term** (over 5 year timeframe) – Long range projects and initiatives that may require additional funding, resources or strategic partnerships, or my rely on the outcome of earlier actions and decision-making in order for to be undertaken. These are typically larger-scale, higher-cost projects that could be

associated with State agencies, such as the Departments of Environmental Conservation or Transportation, that share financial and technical resources.

In order to the Implementation Matrix more active, useful and working document for the City, two additional components are included - Participant and Partners (those involved in the actual or potential action) and a Status to monitor progress. The Participant and Partners column identifies a lead department or organization who is responsible for initiating or coordinating the action, along with a preliminary list of potential partners (both within the City, as well as outside agencies/groups) who can help to coordinate efforts, collaborate, share resources/expertise and explore shared funding avenues. Those agencies that could provide potential funding are also included and further expanded upon at the end of this Chapter. The Status column provides the City space to track and monitor progress over the life of the plan.

Prior to undertaking any action identified in the Matrix, the Comprehensive Plan Update must be officially adopted by the City Council by resolution. Adopting the Comprehensive Plan Update demonstrates the City's commitment for managing the future growth and development of the Tonawanda community and ensuring stronger compliance with, and use of, the Plan by other municipal agencies.

Community Sustainability

Goal 1 – Maintain the safety, quality of life, public health and safety, and sustainability of our Community

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CS 1 – Prepare a walkability and pedestrian plan to identify gaps and improve connectivity and access throughout the community	Planning/ Projects	Near-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** City Parks and Recreation Community Development Staff NYSDOS	
CS 2 – Undertake a community-wide wayfinding study to identify where signage and connectivity can be improved between amenities and points of interest	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** City Engineer Community Development Staff NYSDOS	
CS 3 – Establish an Architectural Review Committee to identify and help protect areas of historic significance, including the Erie Canal and local neighborhoods containing structures that are important to the City's culture and history	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**Mayor (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant Community Development staff NYSOPRHP	
CS 4 – Promote Gateway Harbor as an attractive location for tourism and passive recreation	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** Chamber of Commerce	
CS 5 – Designate an individual or organization to oversee ongoing maintenance of public spaces	Policy/ Administration	Near-Term	**Mayor (Lead)** COTDPW City Parks and Recreation	
CS 6 – Develop a capital plan for visitor amenities	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**Mayor (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant City Council/Mayor City Parks and Recreation	
CS 7 – Improve entrances to the City as community gateways, with focus placed on major intersections and entry points into the community	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term/ Mid-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW NYSDOS ECDEP/Erie County Highway	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CS 8 – Support the development of a local newsletter or other means of strengthening community outreach and participation	Programs	Mid-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant	
CS 9 – Encourage the use of underutilized or vacant spaces that detract from the aesthetics and vitality of the community	Programs	Mid-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** CTLDC	
CS 10 – Encourage community groups/ associations to participate in planning and improvement decisions at the neighborhood level to increase a local sense of pride and engagement	Programs	Ongoing	**City Council (Lead)** Community Development Staff Mayor Community groups ECDEP	
CS 11 – Expand and offer more community events throughout the year	Programs	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** City council City Administrative Assistant Community Development staff	
CS 12 – Investigate opportunities for capitalizing on the City's heritage through stronger interpretation and improved use of existing resources (e.g., Long Homestead)	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City council/Mayor City Parks and Recreation NYSDOS NYS Council for the Arts NYSOPRHP	
CS 13 – Recommend historically significant structures and sites for inclusion on the National and State Registers of Historic Places to historic character and open avenues for funding improvements/investment	Policy/ Administration	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** Planning Board NYSOPRHP CTLDC	
CS 14 – Recognize and promote the role of arts, culture, local history and artistic creativity to foster a better sense of place in the City	Programs	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Parks and Recreation Visual Arts Board NYSOPRHP NYS Council for the Arts	
CS 15 – Coordinate with the School District to keep abreast of changes and identify opportunities to improve youth opportunities in the community	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** Community Development staff School Superintendent/School Board	
CS 16 – Investigate ways to engage youth in the community (forums and outreach events integrated into school curriculum; establish committees and groups)	Programs	Ongoing	**Youth Board & Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor School Superintendent/School Board	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CS 17 – Coordinate and cooperate with the School District to identify opportunities for shared services and encourage the continued use of schools as neighborhood centers	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Mayor (Lead)** City Council Community Development Staff School Superintendent/School Board ECDEP	
CS 18 – Develop more downtown and waterfront events and coordinate them with the hours of operation of local businesses	Programs	Ongoing	**City Administrative Assistant & City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** Tonawanda Main Street Committee	
CS 19 – Align local parks and recreational resources with community growth and needs	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** Community Development Staff	

Environmental Stewardship				
Goal 2 – Support the preservation of environmental resources and features within the City				
Recommendation	**Action Type**	**Time Frame**	**Participants & Partners**	**Status**
ES 1 – Undertake a repair and replacement program for stormwater management infrastructure to improve water quality	Projects/ Planning	Long-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** NYSDEC Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper Environmental Facilities Corps.	
ES 2 – Implement an invasive species management and control program (including Canada geese) to improve ecological sustainability throughout the community	Projects/ Planning	On-going	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** NYSDEC Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper NYSDOS City Engineer	
ES 3 – Undertake a continued inflow and infiltration (I&I) repair program to the sanitary sewer system, wherever practical, to address water quality degradation issues	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW Erie County Health Dept. NYSDEC Environmental Facilities Corps.	
ES 4 – Expand efforts to "green" the City through the expansion of parkland, improved areas of public realm (additional plazas and public spaces) and the planting of more trees in appropriate locations	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Engineer CTDPW NYSDOS NYSOPRHP	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
ES 5 – Capitalize on trails, streetscapes/ vistas, linear areas of open space and waterfront assets that highlight environmental features in the City	Programs	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** NYSDOS	
ES 6 – Promote and encourage continued progress with the remediation and appropriate reuse of brownfields and former waste site properties for economic development	Policy /Administrative	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** CTLDC ECIDA NYSDEC	
ES 7 – Utilize green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff and improve water quality, wherever possible	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** NYSDEC Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper	
ES 8 – Promote efforts to improve/ increase recycling and reuse, use of clean energy systems, and reduce carbon emissions	Policy / Planning / Administrative	Ongoing	**COTDPW (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Engineer ECDEP NYSERDA NYSDEC	

"How We Live" – Our Neighborhoods and Housing

Goal 3 – Maintain and enhance the quality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and ensure a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of all residents

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
NH 1 – Identify and develop a Vacant Properties Registration Ordinance (VPRO) and a Landlord Registry (LLR) that can help to combat high rates of housing vacancy, abandonment and issues with code compliance, based on the abilities and capacities of the City	Regulations	Near-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** Code Enforcement City Council/Mayor ECDEP NYSDHCR	
NH 2 – Create partnerships between residents, stakeholders and City officials to increase manpower capacity and improve code compliance to address housing conditions and quality	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Asst. Code Enforcement	
NH3 – Undertake a program to improve sidewalk conditions and plant street trees where needed (and pursue funding for this effort)	Projects/ Planning	On-going	**City Engineer and Parks & Rec (Lead)** COTDPW ECDEP City Grants Consultant Community Development Staff	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
NH 4 – Undertake a street tree inventory and planting program as a means of neighborhood revitalization and pursue grant funding for this effort	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Park & Rec (Lead)** COTDPW City Grants Consultant Cornell Cooperative City Engineer NYSDEC	
NH 5 – Actively enforce property maintenance standards to maintain housing quality for occupied or vacant homes. Consider creating distributable information as part of this to educate residents on these standards.	Regulations	Mid-Term	**City Code Enforcement Staff (Lead)** Community Development Staff ECDEP NYSDHCR	
NH 6 – Utilizing the results of the housing study, institute a place-based neighborhood revitalization program to identify and implement community development strategies (e.g., Cities of Geneva and Jamestown)	Programs	Mid-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor ECDEP Code Enforcement	
NH 7 – Undertake a program to evaluate, establish standards for, and replace existing lighting to improve energy efficiency and neighborhood aesthetics	Programs	Ongoing	**Mayor (Lead)** COTDPW City Engineer NYSERDA National Grid	
NH 8 – Prioritize and target investment in neighborhoods with a higher number of zombie homes or dilapidations to counter decline	Policy/ Planning/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** Code Enforcement ECDEP NYSDHCR	
NH 9 - Promote redevelopment and infill development that provides a variety of housing types, styles and sizes to meet community needs	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff & Code Enforcement (Lead)** ECDEP NYSDHCR	
NH 10 - Encourage the establishment of programs to plan and finance the revitalization, sustainability and redevelopment of housing and business properties	Programs	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff & CTLDC (Lead)** ECDEP NYSDHCR	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

"How We Work" – Community Prosperity

Goal 4 – Promote sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities that support year-round activity

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CP 1 – Utilizing earlier work undertaken by the City, zoning direction and County assistance, develop a strategic plan for the redevelopment of the Spaulding Fibreproperty that includes site design guidance, mechanisms for establishing incubator and start-up business space on the site, and marketing strategies for promoting investment	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** CTLDC City Engineer ECIDA ECDEP Code Enforcement Empire State Development Corps. WNY REDC	
CP 2 – Administer a capital improvement program for Main Street to enhance commercial properties	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** CTLDC Tonawanda Main Street Committee ECDEP New York Main Street Program	
CP 3 – Engage the ECIDA and other agencies to more actively promote sites in the City for light manufacturing and industrial use, particularly the Spaulding Fibre properties and available sites along the Fillmore corridor	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC ECIDA	
CP 4 – Actively target/recruit providers that offer a diverse mix of goods and services, with emphasis on things that are lacking (e.g., books, clothing, music) and areas of high growth in the community	Programs	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC ECIDA Chamber of Commerce	
CP 5 – Develop promotional materials to market the Spaulding Fibre property and distribute to developers, site selectors and other real estate and business interests	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** CTLDC	
CP 6 – Conduct a "developers' forum" to increase awareness and visibility of shovel/investment-ready sites in the City and identify potential barriers to development and redevelopment	Programs	Near-Term / Ongoing	**City Administrative Assistant (Lead)** CTLDC ECIDA ECDEP	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CP 7 – Request a CDBG reserve fund from Erie County to support infrastructure and direct business investment at the Spaulding Fibre site	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**City Administrative Asst. (Lead)** CTLDC City Engineer ECIDA ECDEP	
CP 8 – Incorporate 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	Regulations	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor Planning Board Code Enforcement	
CP 9 – Revise zoning standards to allow upper level residential use over existing storefronts in the downtown and artist installations and residences as a means of activating vacant storefronts or commercial space	Regulations	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor Planning Board Code Enforcement	
CP 10 – Develop commercial design standards for the downtown, commercial corridors and industrial areas to improve visual quality	Regulations	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC City Council/Mayor Planning Board Code Enforcement	
CP 11 – Develop commercial design standards for Delaware Avenue and Young Street corridors to promote infill development/adaptive reuse, increase landscaping and reduce impervious surfaces, and increase aesthetics and marketability	Regulations	Near-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC City Council/Mayor Planning Board Code Enforcement	
CP 12 – Drive economic development efforts beyond Main Street, to other areas of the City	Policy/ Administrative	Long-Term	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CP 13 – Maintain support for and strengthen the Tonawanda Main Street Committee and the Local Development Corporation (CTLDC)	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** City Administrative Asst. CTLDC Tonawanda Main Street Committee	
CP 14 – Utilize the CTLDC to secure economic development funding from federal, state and regional sources, including Community Development Block Grant funding from Erie County	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC City Grants Consultant ECDEP ECIDA	
CP 15 – Work with Erie County to develop an ongoing retention program to ensure that businesses are matched with available resources, and opportunities for expansion are maximized	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC ECIDA ECDEP	
CP 16 – Develop and/or coordinate entrepreneurial training programs and technical assistance for local businesses that is offered by entities such as Buffalo Niagara SCORE, the Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Development Center	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC Chamber of Commerce Small Business Development Center/SCORE ECDEP	
CP 17 – Identify and actively market vacant storefronts on Main Street, especially those with prominent ground level retail space	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** CTLDC Tonawanda Main Street Committee Chamber of Commerce	
CP 18 – Reinforce and promote the role of downtown Tonawanda as the primary activity and cultural center in the community	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** CTLDC Tonawanda Main Street Committee Chamber of Commerce Community Development Staff	
CP 19 – Ensure that land use controls and infrastructure are consistent with the requirements of target businesses and that review processes are clear, responsive and streamlined	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** Code Enforcement City Engineer CTLDC ECIDA Planning Board	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

"How We Move" – Efficient Transportation

Goal 5 – Ensure a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system throughout the City

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
TR 1 – Improve sidewalks and crosswalks with safe, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly accommodations, particularly along Niagara Street	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW NYSDOT	
TR 2 – Construct the next phase of the multi-use trail, from State Street to East Niagara Street, to complete this amenity as a regional connection	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** City Parks and Recreation ECDEP GBNRTC NYSDOT Traffic and Safety Board	
TR 3 – Identify locations where on-street parking could be removed to undertake improvements that are more pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and promote walkability	Projects/ Planning	Mid-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** Community Development Staff COTDPW ECDEP NYSDOT Traffic and Safety Board	
TR 4 – Identify areas where "road diets" and complete street treatments can help to calm traffic and improve transportation efficiency and local aesthetics, particularly along Young Street and Niagara Street	Projects/ Planning	Mid-Term	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW Erie County NYSDOT GBNRTC Traffic and Safety Board	
TR 5 – Recognize growing demand by providing more opportunities for alternative modes of transportation (biking, walking and public transit)	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** City Parks and Recreation Community Development Staff GBNRTC NYSDOT NFTA Traffic and Safety Board	
TR 6 – Focus on creating a multi-modal transportation network within the City that is coordinated with neighboring communities	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW Community Development Staff ECDEP GBNRTC	
TR 7 – Promote connectivity between neighborhoods, commercial areas, downtown and the waterfront	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Engineer City Parks and Recreation	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
TR 8 – Enhance and increase, as needed, opportunities for public transportation	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**Mayor & Council (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant City Engineer NFTA	
TR 9 – Coordinate transportation improvements with surrounding communities and State and local agencies	Policy/ Programs/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW NYSDOT Erie County Highway GBNRTC Town of Tonawanda City of North Tonawanda	
TR 10 – Continue roadway maintenance programs and improvements, including pavement rehabilitation, curbing and stormwater management systems	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**City Engineer & COTDPW (Lead)** Erie County Highway Dept. NYSDOT NYSDEC Environmental Facilities Corps.	

Community Services and Facilities

Goal 6 – Ensure that the facilities and services required by residents and businesses are well coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective to support a sustainable community

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CSF 1 – Prepare a Parks and Trails Master Plan to manage recreational facilities, connections and amenities and improve programming	Programs/ Planning/ Projects	Near-Term	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Engineer ECDEP NYSOPRHP NYSDOS	
CSF 2 – Identify locations to establish additional non-motorized boat launch facilities along local waterways	Projects/ Planning	Near-Term	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** Community Development staff City Engineer NYSDOS NYSDEC NYS Canal Corporation	
CSF 3 – Utilize solar powered and other alternative energy fixtures and facilities, where feasible	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Mayor (Lead)** COTDPW NYSERDA National Grid	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
CSF 4 – Upgrade street lighting throughout the City to improve energy efficiency and aesthetics	Projects/ Planning	Ongoing	**Mayor (Lead)** City Engineer COTDPW National Grid	
CSF 5 – Maintain the high quality of City services, programs, parks and facilities to enhance opportunities for seniors, youth, community recreation, tourism and public safety	Programs	Ongoing	**City Parks and Recreation (Lead)** City Council/Mayor COTDPW Community Development staff ECDEP Various NYS Agencies (as appropriate)	
CSF 6 – Improve coordination and planning between public service providers, the County and the City to ensure quality services, facilities and infrastructure	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant City Engineer ECDEP	
CSF 7 – Maintain and refurbish water and sewer management and collections systems and facilities and ensure provisions for future expansions to support increased economic development, where appropriate	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Engineer (Lead)** COTDPW ECDEP Environmental Facilities Corporation NYSDEC	

Public Policies

Goal 7 – Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of City government and planning, and strive to improve interactions with other communities and agencies

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
PP 1 – Develop an organization roster of City department, boards, agencies and committees that outlines roles and responsibilities	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**City Administrative Assistant (Lead)** Community Development Staff	
PP 2 – Transfer site plan approval and other non-legislative approval powers to the Planning Board	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant Planning Board	
PP 3 – Develop a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee to review the Comprehensive Plan and recommend actions annually	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**Community Development staff & City Administrative Assistant (Lead)** City Council/Mayor Planning Board	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
PP 4 – Establish a dedicated Community Development staff position to focus on housing and help manage, coordinate and administer land use planning and development actions in the City	Policy/ Administrative	Near-Term	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** City Administrative Assistant	
PP 5 – Achieve status as a Certified Local Government to further other recommendations pertaining to historic preservation and enhancement of cultural resources	Policy/ Administrative	Mid-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant ECDEP NYSOPRHP	
PP 6 – Adopt legislation to accomplish historic preservation and architectural review	Regulations	Mid-Term	**Community Development Staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant Architectural Review Committee	
PP 7 – Establish a capital fund line item in the budget for the purchase of distressed properties for rehabilitation and resale/marketing to strengthen community revitalization efforts	Policy/ Administrative	Long-Term	**Community Development Staff & City Treasurer (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant City Engineer BENLIC ECIDA	
PP 8 – Ensure that the recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and LWRP are integrated into the City's Capital Improvement Program, as appropriate	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Council/ & Mayor (Lead)** Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee City Administrative Assistant Community Development Staff	
PP 9 – Maintain a high level of coordination and collaboration with the City of North Tonawanda and Town of Tonawanda (e.g., shared services opportunities and cross border planning and economic development opportunities)	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Mayor (Lead)** City Council North Tonawanda City Council/Mayor Tonawanda Town Board/ Supervisor ECDEP Community Development Staff	
PP 10 – Make provisions for strategic and cost-effective maintenance and replacement of City-owned and operated facilities and equipment	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**COTDPW (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant City Engineer	

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Recommendation	Action Type	Time Frame	Participants & Partners	Status
PP 11 – Address infrastructure projects holistically, rather than one project at any one time on any given street	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Engineer & COTDPW (Lead)** City Council/Mayor Local Utility Companies NYSDOT ECDEP	
PP 12 – Recognize and promote regional influence and participate in regional planning efforts to help achieve the City's goals and objectives to community and economic development	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Engineer CTLDC GBNRTC ECDEP WNY REDC	
PP 13 – Work with State and County agencies on economic development efforts and stay involved in regional planning efforts that affect or involve local waterways	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**City Council/Mayor (Lead)** COTLDC City Administrative Assistant ECIDA ECDEP Empire State Development Corps. NYSDOS NYSDEC	
PP 14 - Develop a City newsletter, electronic and/or paper, to engage residents, inform them of events/ projects/initiatives, and provide a dedicated means for disseminating official City communication	Policy/ Administrative	Ongoing	**Community Development staff (Lead)** City Council/Mayor City Administrative Assistant City Clerk	

Common acronyms used:

BENLIC	- Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation	**NYSDEC**	- NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation
COTDPW	- City of Tonawanda Dept. of Public Works	**NYSDHCR**	- NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal
CTLDC	- City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation	**NYSDOS**	- NYS Dept. of State
ECDEP	- Erie County Dept. of Environment & Planning	**NYSDOT**	- NYS Dept. of Transportation
ECIDA	- Erie County Industrial Development Agency	**NYSERDA**	- NYS Energy Research and Development Authority
GBNRTC	- Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council	**NYSOPRHP**	- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Places
NFTA	- Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority	**WNY REDC**	- Western NY Regional Economic Development Council

Near-Term: 1-2 years | Mid-Term: 3-5 years | Long-Term: over 5 years

Funding Opportunities

In addition to local funding,, various other sources exist for the City to seek to carry out the projects, programs and other actions contained within the plan. The current nature of grant funding in New York State, administered through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) changes yearly, though the grants listed below are generally available each cycle, beginning in late spring. As these funding sources become available, the City should review the list of action items and identify the potential grants that could utilized.

Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)

- Empire State Development – Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies, Grant Funds

- Community Development Block Grant Program

- New York Main Street Program

- Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation – Environmental Protection Funds, Recreational Trails Program

- Department of State – Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, Canalway Grants

- Department of Environmental Conservation/ Environmental Facilities Corp. – Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering/Planning Grant

- Environmental Facilities Corp. – Green Innovation Grant Program

- Climate Smart Communities Grant Program

- Department of State – Local Government Efficiency

- State Council of the Arts – Arts and Culture Initiatives

NYS Department of Transportation

- Consolidated Local Street & Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS)

- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

- Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP)

- Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP)

- BRIDGE NY

Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Niagara River Greenway Commission

The development *Little City, Big Community* the City of Tonawanda's Comprehensive Plan Update would not have been possible without the dedication of the Steering Committee, volunteers made up of City staff and officials, Planning and Zoning Board members, City residents, business owners, and representatives from the County and other local groups/organizations.

The City would also like to thank the community-at-large, who contributed to the plan at public meetings and other events, and who completed surveys, offering their thoughts to local officials on the future of their neighborhoods.

Steering Committee Members

Rick Davis - City Mayor

Charlie Rech - City Administrative Asst.

Erik Lindhurst - Tonawanda Code Enforcement Officer

Jason LaMonaco - City Engineer

Mark Warren - City Planning Board

Janice Bodie - City Resident/former City Clerk

Ned Schimminger - City Resident

Alice Roth - City Planning Board/former Mayor

Jason Knight - City Resident/Buffalo State professor

Ken Swanekamp - Erie County Planning

Paul Maziarz - Tonawanda City School District

Rubie Harris - Tonawanda City School District

Dr. Timothy Oldenburg - Tonawanda City School District Superintendent

Dr. James Newton - Tonawanda City School District Superintendent *(retired 2017)*

Jackie Smilinch - Common Council *(former)*

Amanda Lofft - City Recreation Dept. Director

Technical consulting services were led by Clark Patterson Lee

And assisted with the dedication from the following

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APPENDIX A
COMMUNITY OUTREACH & INPUT

As noted in the Plan, public input is a valuable component of the process as it is the community itself that drives the development of many of the priorities and helps to identify issues and opportunities. Throughout the process, a number of outreach events were undertaken. A brief summary of each of these is included below with specific feedback on the following pages.

♦ **Public Kickoff Meeting (April 2016)** - Introduce residents to the Plan and process and solicit preliminary feedback.

♦ **General Community Survey (online)** - Identify initial opportunities and concerns in the community in the realm of housing, downtown/economic development, and general quality of life. Over 350 responses received.

♦ **Artwalk booth (July 2016)** - As part of the annual Artwalk event, a booth was set up to solicit feedback from folks at the event or out enjoying the weather in Niawanda Park.

♦ **City website and Facebook project page (ongoing)** - Events and updates to the Plan were posted in both locations in an effort to communicate with the community.

♦ **Youth Outreach (January 2017)** - The Tonawanda High School has a Youth Leadership class consisting of over 30 students from grades 10-12. A brief overview of the Comprehensive Plan process was provided and input obtained regarding issues that were important to Tonawanda's younger residents.

Students taking part in the youth outreach presentation/activity.

♦ **Industry survey (January 2017)** - Although not a significant land use within the City in terms of total area, industry still maintains a presence economically. The existing industrial businesses were contacted and provided a focused survey to obtain their feedback on current conditions, trends, and outlook for the future in the City of Tonawanda.

- Neighborhood Workshop (April 2017) - In order to reach further out into the neighborhoods of Tonawanda and (1) find out the issues specific to them and (2) identify preferred design solutions and improvements, a neighborhood workshop was held at Tonawanda High School, in conjunction with a student planning studio at Buffalo State College. In addition to introducing residents to the plan and process (for those who did not attend the initial kickoff meeting), two exercises were presented to garner feedback. The first was a visual preference survey (VPS) that provided attendees a series of

pictures in several categories, asking them to choose which they preferred over the others. The end result of this exercise is to identify various elements within each image that are preferred that can, in turn, be translated into future site design, zoning, and other City improvements.
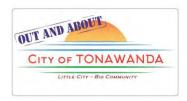
The other exercise allow residents and other stakeholders to describe, discuss, and explore the characteristics and elements they value in their community and neighborhoods. These elements were broken down into three categories:

⇒ Historic - the historic characteristics of the community/neighborhood that are valued and that cannot/should not be changed (e.g. architecturally pleasing homes)

⇒ Current - existing characteristics (e.g. neighborhood schools)

⇒ Future - Thinking ahead, what are the core values, priorities, and goals for the neighborhood/ community (e.g. improved housing conditions)
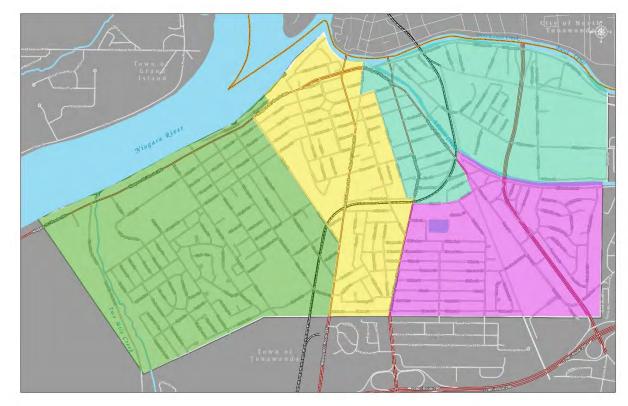
An additional question asked residents if they could change, improve, implement, or create only **one thing**, what would it be?

♦ Council Workshop (May 2017) - Though geared more towards City Council, this workshop was open to the public to hear about the various planning efforts and initiatives underway in the City. This gives a comprehensive view of the projects, how they relate, what they are doing for the community, and areas for coordinated implementation.

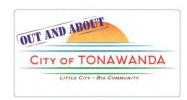**Public Kickoff Meeting (April 2016)**

As part of the public kickoff, guests were asked to divide up into four groups based on their location within the City. They were then asked any specific concerns/opportunities in their areas and overall in the City as well as identifying those areas on a map. The raw results of that exercise are below.

Blue Section (Northeast City)

- North side of East Niagara Street – reinvest. Create an interactive park, clean it up.
- East Athletic Park – reinvest. Park infrastructure.
- Walgreens – Young Street parking needs reinvestment
  - Issues of parking/problems with crossing Young Street at Walgreens
  - Young Street between Smoke on the Water parking issues.
  - Respecting neighbors with parking issues/enforcement
- Major redevelopment at Young Street and Delaware Street intersection
- Underutilized parcels for reinvestment on Young Street
- Redevelopment of sidewalks and roads on Cleveland and Fillmore (infrastructure)
- HSBC building prime for redevelopment
- Need for a development corporation – business owners need assistance
- Revitalize – landfill for nature preserve/playfield
- Waterfront reinvestment @ peninsula, generally
- Lack of incentives for businesses
- Reinvest/revitalize the kayak launch

- Creating a gateway along Young and Fillmore (?) Avenue
- Delaware St code enforcement issues
- Infill housing development
- Design standards for neighborhood streets
- Historic District Designation for tax credits
- Beautification of the Rover/Creekway
- Fillmore – speed controls

Green Section (Central City)

- Niagara Mohawk light poles need repair
- Sewer backups in basements, especially in 2nd ward
- New sidewalks and street trees
- Existing trees – trim/prune correctly, maintain, treat them as an <u>asset</u>
- Can't get from the River to the Canal
- Safety to get from neighborhoods to the water
- Bike sharing program with supporting infrastructure

Yellow Section (Southeast)

- Move City Hall, Fire Dept, Police Station in the heart of the City and away from the water – Clinton small building (?)
- Reinvest in properties that are vacant
- Revitalize parks
- Open roads (Luskin) for traffic flow rather that direct traffic toward congested areas
- Metro (bus) service through City of Tonawanda to Niagara Falls and Buffalo

Purple Section (West)

- Traffic calming along Fletcher Street
- Solar street lighting? Solar on all City buildings
- Sidewalk bridge over Two Mile Creek from Fletcher to Two Mile Creek Road?
- Cleanup/revitalize the south end of the City along the Town of Toanwanda and landfills
- Improve crossing of Niagara Street at Gibson Street
- Strengthen the property code
- Zombie homes and vacant properties
- Better park connection between Veterans Park and Niawanda Park
- More food service
- Pop-up and seasonal stores along/within Niawanda Park
- Activities for all ages
- Our neighborhood is:
    - Friendly
    - Safe

- o Quiet
- o Changing
- o Convenient
- o Natural
- o Ideal
- o Close to the River, bike path, parks
- o Beautiful
- o Scenic
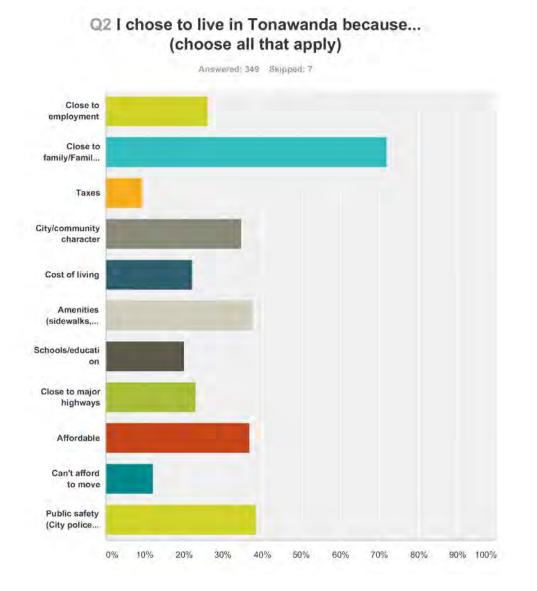
General Community Survey

General Survey Summary
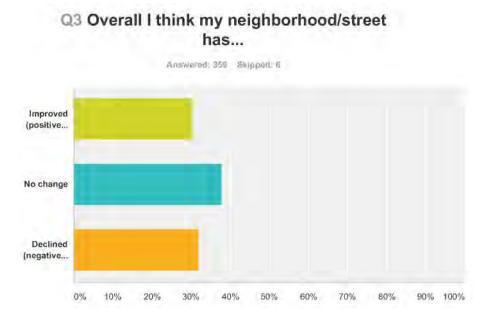
The following represents a generalized summary of the results of the survey that was made available through the project Facebook site, at City Hall, and at various events. Where applicable, representative charts or graphs are provided.

- **"I chose to live in Tonawanda because…"** Most people choose to live in Tonawanda to be closer to family, followed by amenities, affordability, public safety, and community character.

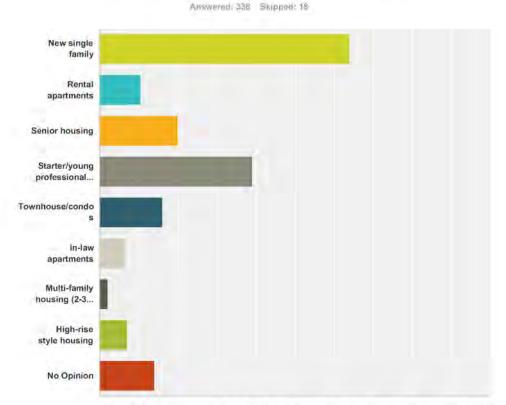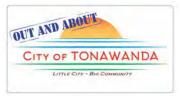- **"Overall, I think my neighborhood/street has…** (improved/positive change, no change, declined/negative change**"** There is almost an even split among residents in their perception of how their neighborhood has changed. Housing conditions and road/sidewalk conditions were the biggest influencing factors.

Q3 Overall I think my neighborhood/street has...

Answered: 359   Skipped: 6

- **"In terms of housing & neighborhoods, the City should focus more on…"** Vacant/foreclosure homes received the most response as well as continuing to focus on safety and crime.

- Overall, most respondents find the conditions of the public roadways and other street features (trees, signage, lighting, bike facilities/lanes, sidewalks) to be in good to fair shape. Sidewalk conditions were rated fair to poor.

- **"What type of housing do you think is needed more in the City?"**

Answered: 338   Skipped: 18

- **"What do you think the City needs more or less of?"** Local retail/shopping and restaurants/dining received the most, while most others were "about right."
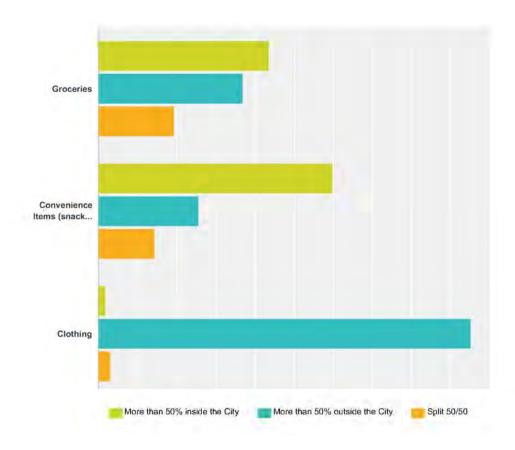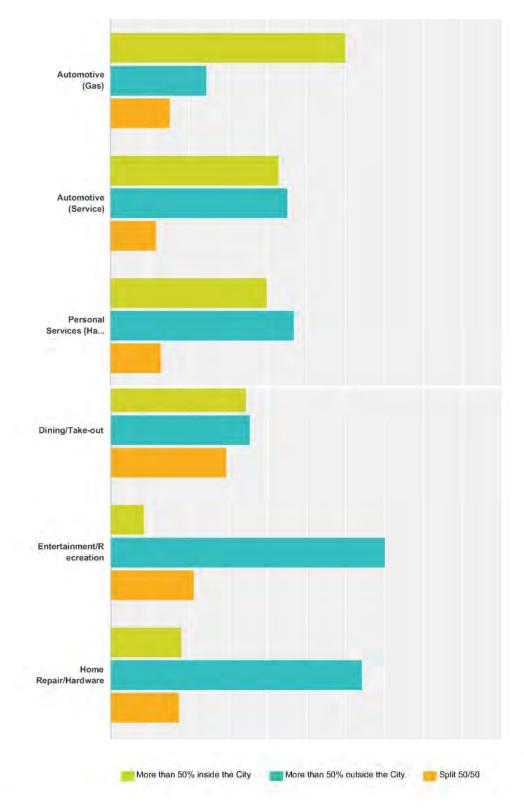
	More	About Right	Less	Total
Commercial/Office Development	43.79% 141	46.58% 150	9.63% 31	322
Local Retail & Shopping	76.31% 248	23.38% 76	0.31% 1	325
Chain/Franchise Retail & Shopping	41.56% 133	42.81% 137	15.63% 50	320
New Residential Development	49.53% 159	38.01% 122	12.46% 40	321
Light Industrial	33.96% 109	49.84% 160	16.20% 52	321
Mixed Use Development (Retail/Office, Retail/Residential, Office/Residential)	40.43% 131	48.46% 157	11.11% 36	324
Restaurants/Dining	68.11% 220	30.34% 98	1.55% 5	323
Lodging (motel, hotel, B&B, etc.)	42.24% 136	45.65% 147	12.11% 39	322

- **"Where do you typically spend your money for the following?"** Overall, there is opportunity to increase businesses related to clothing, entertainment/recreation, home repair/hardware, health/fitness, home furnishings, and medical/dental.
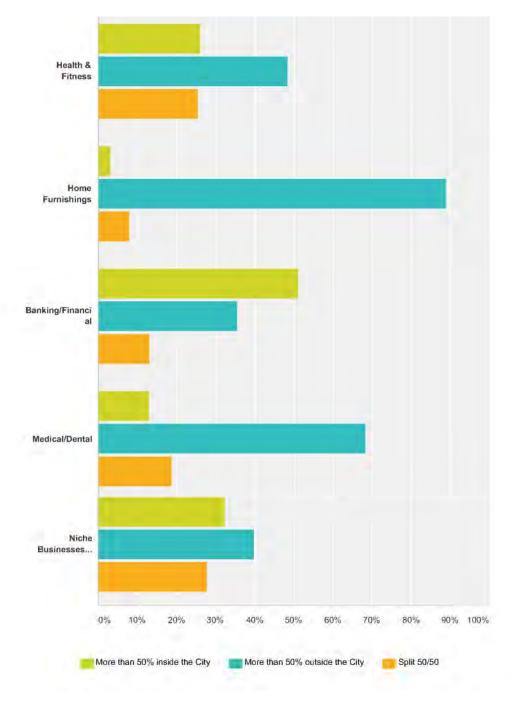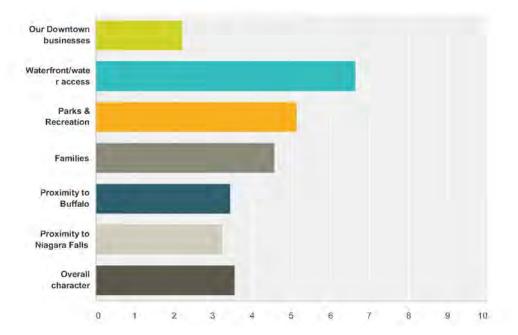
Legend: More than 50% inside the City — More than 50% outside the City — Split 50/50

- **"Where do you typically spend your money for the following?"** CONTINUED

Legend:
- More than 50% inside the City
- More than 50% outside the City
- Split 50/50

Categories shown (top to bottom):
- Automotive (Gas)
- Automotive (Service)
- Personal Services (Ha...
- Dining/Take-out
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Home Repair/Hardware

- **"Where do you typically spend your money for the following?"** CONTINUED

Legend: More than 50% inside the City | More than 50% outside the City | Split 50/50

5
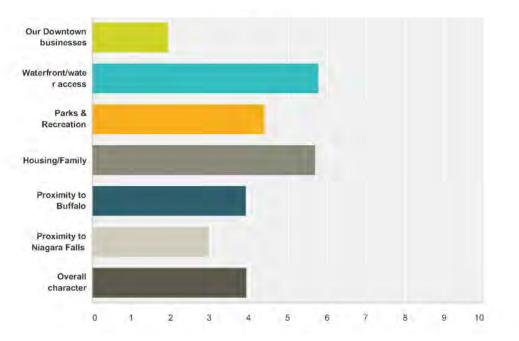
- **"What do you think attracts VISITORS to the City?"**
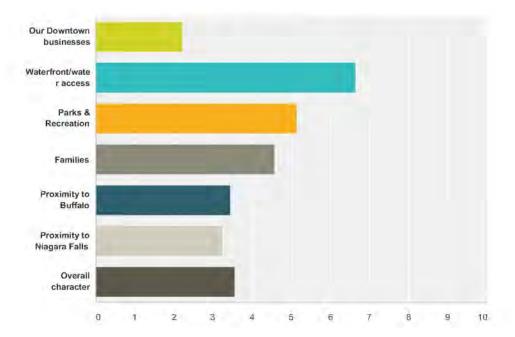
- **"What do you think attracts NEW RESIDENTS to the City?"**
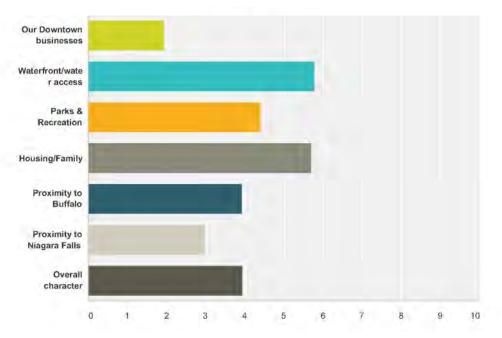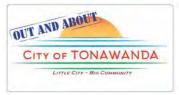
- **"What do you think attracts VISITORS to the City?"** Waterfront and water access topped the list followed by parks and recreation and families.

- **"What do you think attracts NEW RESIDENTS to the City?"** Waterfront and water access again was #1, followed by housing/family and parks and recreation. Proximity to Buffalo and overall character were also high.
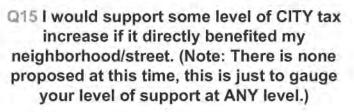
- Of the 360 respondents, over 76 percent drive when shopping downtown, but almost 25 percent walked or biked.
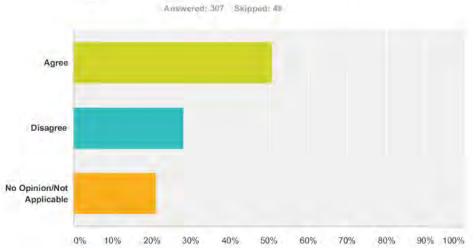
- **"What would bring you Downtown more?"** Waterfront and water access topped the list followed by parks and recreation and families.

Answer Choices	Responses	
More variety of retail stores	80.92%	263
Better parking	29.85%	97
Improved condition of storefronts/facades	35.38%	115
More amenities (bike racks, benches, street trees, landscaping, etc.)	23.69%	77
More variety of restaurants/dining	72.92%	237
Better sidewalks	13.85%	45
Improved signage	11.08%	36
Special events	53.54%	174
Store promotions	29.23%	95
Regular store hours	27.69%	90
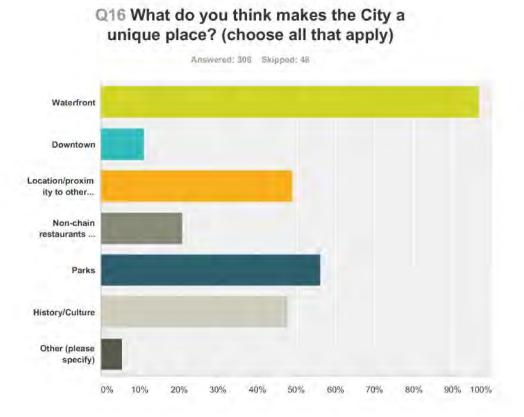
- Question 15 is a general question that gauges level of citizen support for a tax increase if it were dedicated to neighborhood improvement. It is part of a larger conversation and does not imply any tax increases, real or perceived.

Q15 I would support some level of CITY tax increase if it directly benefited my neighborhood/street. (Note: There is none proposed at this time, this is just to gauge your level of support at ANY level.)

Answered: 307   Skipped: 48
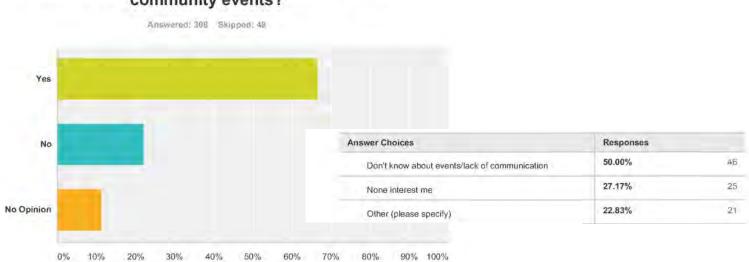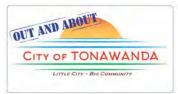
- **"What makes the City unique?"** While it is very obvious that it is the waterfront that makes the City, what if the City didn't have that resource available? What other elements of the City make it or could make it unique? Our Downtown is rated quite low, so there's opportunity to build on that while also bolstering parks/recreation and our history.

Q16 What do you think makes the City a unique place? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 308   Skipped: 48

- Question 17 is a general community/quality of life question to find out about community involvement and events. The follow-up question looks into why a respondent doesn't/wouldn't participate; the lack of communication is noted as being the primary reason.

Q17 Do you participate in neighborhood or community events?

Answered: 308   Skipped: 48

Answer Choices	Responses	
Don't know about events/lack of communication	50.00%	46
None interest me	27.17%	25
Other (please specify)	22.83%	21

- **"What do you believe are the most important challenges facing the City?"** Quality schools top the list along with more retail/other businesses Downtown for the most important challenges facing the City. Capital investment and park/recreation choices are the runners up with traffic congestion being the top in the "least important" field (although still felt as an "important" challenge to address).
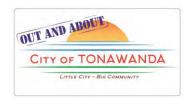
	More Important	Important	Least Important	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Providing a wider array of housing choices/options	18.87% 57	40.07% 121	34.44% 104	6.62% 20	302	1.71
Improving non-car (bike, walking, transit) access	11.55% 35	47.19% 143	34.98% 106	6.27% 19	303	1.64
More retail and other businesses Downtown	49.84% 152	37.05% 113	10.16% 31	2.95% 9	305	2.34
Variety of park and recreation choices	27.96% 85	59.54% 181	11.18% 34	1.32% 4	304	2.14
Capital investment in community facilities	28.67% 86	50.33% 151	15.00% 45	6.00% 18	300	2.02
Enhancing public safety	42.67% 128	46.00% 138	9.33% 28	2.00% 6	300	2.29
Local (City) tax rates	38.28% 116	48.51% 147	8.91% 27	4.29% 13	303	2.21
Promoting compact, pedestrian friendly redevelopment Downtown	32.67% 99	47.85% 145	15.51% 47	3.96% 12	303	2.09
Quality development design & construction	30.46% 92	49.67% 150	13.25% 40	6.62% 20	302	2.04
Traffic congestion	13.67% 41	41.00% 123	39.67% 119	5.67% 17	300	1.63
Quality schools	65.12% 196	27.57% 83	3.99% 12	3.32% 10	301	2.54

- **"What should the City do with Little League Drive (the City-owned, non-parkland areas)?"** This was an open-ended question in which respondents were permitted to write in their own thoughts/feelings on the topic. All responses were reviewed and tallied based on their general direction - there were no interpretation of answers. There were 354 total responses and 266 answered this question. The "develop" response was non-residential and the "rec/housing" was a combination of both in one response.

Recreation	35%
Housing	38%
BLANK	
Nothing	13%
Sell	3%
Develop	9%
Landscape	1%
Rec/Housing	1%

Artwalk booth (July 2016)

Art on the Riverwalk (July 10, 2016)

What do you think is the most important issue facing our neighborhoods today?

- Veterans Park/Little League Drive
- Speed limit on Niagara Street/enforcement
- Too many people from outside the area
- Less rentals/fix zombie homes
- Urban decay & housing decay
- Zombie/vacant houses & quality
- Future outlook, stupid vandalism
- Keeping family friendly (Riverside School)
- Garbage/litter
- Two Mile Creek > dumping leaves, bad odor
- Slumlords/housing quality
- Rundown housing – park is great, neighborhoods
- Empty/dilapidated houses

How can we improve our Downtown?

- Bars and restaurants along Niagara & Young
- Similar to Webster Street transformation
- More outside eateries and diverse shops to go to
- Shops are nice, just not a shopper
- Upscale, more shops and restaurants
- Businesses that stay around longer/stability
- Personality/place identity
- More businesses needed/businesses that draw people
- Close Young, force people to go down Main

Any other important issues/topics that should be prioritized in the City?

- No new development near Veterans [Park]
- Worried about downtown roundabout
- Don't want to attract people to the Pak [Niawanda] from outside the City
- Big fan of the area, great job with streets and garbage
- More winter activities
- Largest waterfront, city hall location
- Inland canals and docking
- Housing
- Move city hall to HS/soccer field
- Veterans Park/Little League Drive -> no new development, "focus on restoring park space"
- Rats along concrete (waterfront?)
- Best park in WNY, city is great
- City Hall location

- Grant programs (NY Main Street)
- Storefronts should be open

City of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan Update

What do you see in the future of the City?

The City of Tonawanda is in the beginning stages of updating their 2002 Comprehensive Plan and we invite **YOU** to be a part of it.   The Plan is a guide for the future of the City that provides a framework for decision-making on a variety of social, natural resource, economic, and overall quality of life issues that are valued and supported by the community.

How can you participate??

FOLLOW ... us on Facebook for input and more events! (*City Tonawanda Future*)

CHECK ... the City website for information (*under Plans & Projects*)

LOOK ...for the logo!

VOICE ... your thoughts on the survey! (*take a postcard...*)

SPREAD ... the word to friends, family and neighbors!

Youth Outreach & Industry Survey (January 2017)

HS Leadership Class (youth outreach) - January 30, 2017

What do you LIKE about growing up in Tonawanda?
- Non-violent, safe community
- Small scale, inclusive City
- Walkable
- Everyone knows each other
- Good options for fast food
- Waterfront and bike path
- Clean neighborhoods
- Friendly community
- Good road maintenance
- Canalfest and fireworks
- Events in Niawanda Park
- Sledding hill
- Water recreation
- Schools tied to the community
- School sporting events
- Community programs/sports

What do you DISLIKE about growing up in Tonawanda?
- Coke factory (ToT)
- Need more small shops in downtown
- Mighty Taco
- Dirty canal – water quality, etc.
- Better promote community events
- Perceptions (not as good as could be)
- Lack of winter events & more summer events
- Not enough to do in Main Street/downtown area
- Modernize downtown (outdated)
- Make use of old football and soccer stadium
- More attractions in downtown to make city a better destination
- Lack of evening opportunities

Where do you see yourself in the future?
- Majority would not come back to the City – lack of opportunities, City too small, doesn't have the "no place like home" feel

What do you change?
- Modernize – be more attractive to younger people
- Redevelop/fill empty spaces
- Movie theater
- Ice rink at stadium site
- All-season recreation center/event center
- More niche/boutique establishments

- More housing options
- Expand downtown
- Landscape downtown
- One campus for elementary schools (Fletcher)
- Beach on waterfront
- Public art
- Be more like Elmwood Village
- Better use of land and space
- Bigger inland park
- Move city hall and police away from waterfront

As part of a follow up project designed by the teacher, students were to propose ideas that would revitalize the City and "bring both citizens and outsiders" to it. Students were split into groups and each came up with a proposal and model/blueprint (PENDING).

Idea #1 – Boardwalk at Franklin that would include food, an arcade, shopping and seasonal activities

Idea #2 – Family/Sport complex at Clint Small Stadium, especially geared towards youth of the City as there is "nothing to do" and would allow year-round sports and other activity

Idea #3 – Revitalize Main and Broad Street. Renovate existing buildings with new and upcoming shops and improve appeal with "benches, awnings, and flowers."

Idea #4 – Indoor Sports Center at Spaulding Business Park on Gibson Street. The facility would include turf for soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc. and an ice rink. Needed as the nearest indoor sports complex is SportPlex in NT, which is extremely outdated.

Idea #5 – Beach at Niawanda, replacing the docking area near Old Man River for approximately 50 yards.

Industry Survey (February 2017)

6 responses:

1. *How long have you operated in the City?*
83% more than 10 years, 17% five to ten years.

2. *What attracted you to your current location?*
Main attraction to City was building site/availability, followed by close to major highways and regional location.

3. *Does your company have more than one location?*
No industries have multiple locations.

4. *Are you looking to keep your business in the City long-term?*
All looking to stay in the City long term.

5. *Does your company/business have any plans for expansion?*
Evenly split between Yes/No/Unsure for expansion potential.

6. *Do you think the City of Tonawanda is supportive of existing industrial businesses OVERALL?*
All think the City is supporting of industry overall.

7. *Do you think the City of Tonawanda is supportive of YOUR industrial business?*
All think the City is supportive of their particular business.

8. *Are there any improvements that could make it easier to operate in the City?*
Railway bridge on Fillmore and general gateway enhancements

9. *What could City do to help your business grow or do better in the community?*
    a. Lower school/property taxes
    b. Communicate better
    c. Cut taxes

Neighborhood Workshop (April 2017)

City of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan – Community Outreach

Introduction

Welcome!

Tonight's Agenda

- Comments from Mayor Davis
- Community Link Icebreaker
- The Comprehensive Plan
- Visual Preference Survey
- History – Current – Future Exercise

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

Icebreaker!

Community link… what do we have in common?
- Three things
- "LINK!" if something matches about you

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Background

What is a Comprehensive Plan anyway?

- A future vision and policy guide for the land use management and economic development in the City ("framework")
- Looks at the entirety of the City
  - *Transportation, environment, land use, zoning, community services, quality of life, economic development, etc.*
- Community-supported document that turns **values** into **actions**
- 10 year timeframe +/-

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Background

Who's steering the ship?

- Steering Committee
  - *Manage & oversight*
  - *Review work by consultants*
  - *Liaison to the community*
  - *City staff, Erie County, business owners, residents...*

- YOU!

Your Face Here!

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Background

Who's steering the ship?

Clark Patterson Lee
ARCHITECTURE | ENGINEERING | PLANNING

GEOGRAPHY & PLANNING
BUFFALO STATE

THE HARRISON STUDIO

W*W*S Planning

JOY KUEBLER
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, PC

NEW YORK STATE
DOS
DEPARTMENT
OF STATE

Clark Patterson Lee
DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Background

So why now??

- Last plan was done in 2002
- Revisit with fresh eyes
- City is being progressive with planning
  - *Proactive, not reactive*
  - *LWRP/Waterfront Plan nearing completion*
  - *Consistency with concurrent planning actions*

City of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan
Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement

Clark Patterson Lee
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Planning Process

Concurrent Planning Efforts

The Comprehensive Plan update will help inform two additional efforts also underway in Tonawanda:

- **Main Street Program** – a downtown economic development and historic preservation effort
- **Community Housing Project** – An effort to address zombie and distressed properties in the City and develop policies to support neighborhood investment

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DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Planning Process

Plan Kickoff → Inventory → Vision, Goals & Policies → Land Use Plan → Action Plan → Draft Plan → Review → Final Plan

Outreach

Summer 2017

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Planning Process

Basic Plan Elements

- Community Profile
  - *What is and has been happening – what do we have to work with…*
- Vision & Goals
  - *What do we want for the City in the future…*
- Objectives/Actions
  - *What do we want to do / where do we want to be…*
- Implementation Plan
  - *How do we make it happen and get there…*

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Planning Process

What's been done so far?

- Steering Committee meetings
- Brainstorming
- Project branding
- Website/Facebook
- Draft vision
- Initial community outreach

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Planning Process

Draft Vision Statement

"Tonawanda is a historically rich waterfront community in the Buffalo Niagara Region where the canal meets the Niagara River. We engage with our residents, businesses, schools and community leaders and look ahead to make our neighborhoods and businesses vibrant. By capitalizing on our assets, both natural and man-made, we strive to be a sustainable City, a community for a lifetime."

Clark Patterson Lee
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Visual Preference Survey

What is it?

A *visualization* technique that allows:
- Citizens and decision-makers to determine preferences for various types of community design, architectural styles, land/streetscaping, and/or built-environment options.
- Stakeholders to determine which components of a plan or project contribute positively to a community's overall image or features.

A *public engagement* technique/tool that provides for:
- Citizen-based land-use planning
- Visualization in land-use, development, and transportation planning
- Visioning and consensus-building

Source: completecommunitiesde.org

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Visual Preference Survey

Tonight we will ask participant's about their

values and preferences:

- *Neighborhoods*
- *Housing*
- *Street trees*
- *Signs*
- *Pedestrian and bicycle routes and amenities*
- *Lighting*
- *Building design*
- *Parking lots*

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Visual Preference Survey

Activating your clicker

To activate your clicker, you'll select "GO," then input the provided receiver ID number (41), and then "GO" again. If done properly, the light should turn green, indicating it is active and ready to go!

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VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

Ok, let's try!
Does your clicker work?

A. Yes
B. No

100%

0%

Yes   No

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NEIGHBORHOODS

Which of these street scenes best aligns with how you envision and value neighborhoods?

A.

B.

C.

D.

73%

5%

0%

23%

A   B   C   D

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PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

When considering these houses, which of these images best represents your expectations of housing quality in your neighborhood?

A.

B.

C.

D.

50%

27%

18%

5%

A   B   C   D

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STREET TREES AND URBAN FOREST

Thinking about street trees, which of these would you prefer as your street?

A.

B.

C.

D.

64%

32%

0%

5%

A   B   C   D

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PEDESTRIAN-PARKING BUFFERS

Thinking about buffers between sidewalks and commercial uses and parking lots, which do you prefer in your community and neighborhood?

A.
B.
C.
D.

73%
14%
14%
0%

A B C D

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BUILDING AND STOREFRONT SIGNS

Thinking about building signs in walkable downtown shopping areas, which type of sign do you prefer?

A.
B.
C.
D.

42%
26%
16%
16%

A B C D

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15

When considering these images, which type of building and design would you prefer in your community?

A.

B.

C.

D.

48%

33%

14%

5%

A   B   C   D

BUILDING DESIGN

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Visual Preference Survey

Done!

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DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

17

What do you want out of your neighborhood and your City?

The City has been working on updating our Comprehensive Plan with professional planning consultants in order to prioritize policies and investment in the future. Our neighborhoods are a vital component, so we need your input. We will be holding a neighborhood workshop to discuss how we can make our neighborhoods and City an even better place to live, work, and play.

We won't know your ideas…

Unless you share them!

We invite all residents to join us at the High School – young and old, your opinion matters! Families, do bring your children/teens as well, kids have great ideas too!

Wednesday, April 19th

6:30-8:30 PM

Tonawanda High School

CITY OF TONAWANDA

LITTLE CITY – BIG COMMUNITY

The City of Tonawanda:
Comprehensive Plan Outreach Meeting

PLN 431 Planning Practicum Spring 2017

David Aldridge, Andrea Folgherait, Timothy German, Malik Murray, Jonet Rodolph, Timothy Sabey, Nick Swallow, Alexei Turkleson

Advised by Jason Knight, PhD, AICP

Introduction

The City of Tonawanda is currently engaged in the process of updating its comprehensive plan. Tonawanda's currently adopted plan was last updated in 2002. The typical timeframe for a comprehensive plan is 10-15 years, and as the City moves forward to progressively plan for the future, community input remains a priority. With this in mind, the City has recently engaged in a number of public outreach initiatives in order to effectively gauge the values of the community with regard to plans for future development. Using its social media presence, the City was able to present a community survey to residents and stakeholders in late 2016, followed by an informal business survey used to gain firsthand insights on community issues, concerns and opportunities in the downtown area. Most recently, outreach efforts extended to include the insights of Tonawanda's high school students regarding their hopes concerning the future of their community. Responses from these recent outreach efforts greatly influenced the composition of the current public outreach meeting. Other City-led outreach initiatives include:

- Steering Committee meetings
- Brainstorming
- Project branding
- Website/Facebook
- Drafting a community vision

Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision Statement

"Tonawanda is a historically rich waterfront community in the Buffalo Niagara Region where the canal meets the Niagara River. We engage with our residents, businesses, schools and community leaders and look ahead to make our neighborhoods and businesses vibrant. By capitalizing on our assets, both natural and man-made, we strive to be a sustainable City, a community for a lifetime."

The Role of Community Engagement

When preparing community plans, community outreach and engagement should play an important role in plan development. The most effective way to reach consensus on community issues is to engage residents on matters that may affect their lives, as they offer first-hand knowledge on the strengths and weaknesses of their community. By including resident and stakeholder ideas and feedback, City officials benefit from diversity of thought and perspectives that may have been otherwise overlooked. Community engagement not only increases citizen knowledge about a community issue, but also encourages the application of said knowledge to community building. This creates opportunities for citizens to engage with each other, and serves to ensure that these opportunities are regular and ongoing.

Public Outreach Meeting

To gain community feedback for the purposes of shaping a new comprehensive plan, Buffalo State urban planning students developed and conducted a public outreach meeting on April 19, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. at Tonawanda High School.

Purpose and Goals: The purpose of the meeting was to gain an agreed-upon set of collective values, and desired vision from stakeholders to guide future development of the built environment within their community.
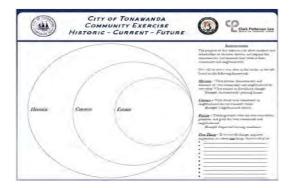
Meeting: At the public meeting, a total of 22 local residents were in attendance. Upon their arrival, residents were asked to place a pushpin on to a map of Tonawanda indicating where they reside. Next, participants entered the school's auditorium, where City of Tonawanda Mayor Rick Davis welcomed stakeholder and spoke about the City's ongoing efforts and the importance of community input and engagement.

Exercises

Visual Preference Survey (VPS): A VPS is a visualization tool that allows participants to provide feedback on various images. For planning purposes, examples of architectural styles, landscaping, streetscaping, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and signage are a few of the many possibilities. This process involves showing participants a number of images within each built environment category and asking them to select their preferred image.

After explaining the purpose of a VPS and how it will help shape the future of Tonawanda, Brian Kulpa of Clark Patterson Lee conducted the survey portion of the meeting, allowing participants to choose their preference among a number of options regarding various aspects of the built environment. Once the visual preference survey was complete, participants in the public meeting were then were taken to the cafeteria to participate in a historic-current-future exercise. Lastly, participants were given an opportunity to express one potential change they would like to see in the City of Tonawanda.

Historic-Current-Future Exercises: This exercise is meant for residents to develop a consensus on community values and goals. The residents and stakeholders were asked to identify historic, current, and future values for the community. After doing this simple activity, the residents and stakeholders can come to an understanding of what the community means to them, and what steps are necessary to meet its goals.

Results

With the success of the public outreach meeting, responses from the VPS and Historic-Current-Future exercises were compiled, shown in Figures 4, 5, and 6.

Visual Preference Survey Example Questions

Historic-Current-Future

Recommendations

Based on results from the public meeting, some recommendations were formulated. The majority of the input received from the participants was related on the built environment, neighborhood, economy, and quality of life. In addition to this, recommendation's for a higher level of resident and stakeholder engagement in public meetings were also explored. With these findings, the City of Tonawanda may want to consider the following:

Downtown/Main Street Area
- Explore form-based zoning regulation
- Implement solar powered facilities where feasible
- Consider road diet, primarily on Young St.
- Utilize incentives to attract business to Main Street and Niagara Street
- Encourage artistic creativity to foster a sense of place
- Encourage alternative transportation by constructing applicable facilities

Neighborhoods
- Extensive tree and vegetation planting
- Inter-city bike paths and facilities
- Incentivize investment in housing stock
- Develop and frequently update absentee landlord registry

Built Environment
- Improve sidewalks and crosswalks with safe, pedestrian/bicycle friendly, contemporary designs (e.g. bump outs)
- Encourage form continuity through zoning
- Identify City entrances and stylize accordingly

Quality of Life
- Build kayak launches on Riverwalk
- Improve openness and communication between government and residents
- Strictly enforce smoking ban in parks
- Provide movable seating for Niawanda Park events

Public Outreach and Engagement
- Formally acknowledge POE program and adopt goals to develop a long-term communications plan, inclusive of public outreach and engagement, employee communications, media relations, marketing, and website management
- Conduct walking neighborhood tours to gain field response from residents
- Monitor and evaluate communications initiatives
- Investigate opportunities to improve youth engagement
- Secure additional staff for communications support

City Council Workshop (May 2017)

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP

May 23, 2017

Tonight's Agenda

- Introductions
- Workshop intent
- Mayor's Vision & Strategy
- Market/Economic Analysis
- Programs/Initiatives
- Where we go from here

Introductions

Mayor
Rick Davis

Administrative Assistant
Charlie Rech

City Engineer
Jason LaMonaco

City Department Heads

City Council
Jenna Koch
Chuck Gilbert
Jackie Smilinich
Sean Rautenstrauch
Timothy Toth

Introductions

Workshop Intent

- Many planning projects/initiatives underway

- Proactive… not reactive

- Interconnectedness

- Understanding

"Planning through detailed analysis identifies the strengths and weakness of a community. Pin-pointing the opportunities to grow, while locating areas that need support in order to flourish"

Mayor's Vision & Strategy

- **Vision**

  ❖ We have so much we haven't gone after – must have **vision & a plan**

  ❖ What is our niche, strengths, focus, anchor?

  ❖ **Capitalize** on our waterfronts, historic downtown, quality of life possibilities!

Mayor's Vision & Strategy

- **Strategy**

  ❖ **LWRP** – unlike 1986 & 1991, includes **Downtown**

  ❖ **Comprehensive Plan** – **entirety** of the City

  ❖ **Main Street Program** – **focal point & driver** we have never had

  ❖ **Residential Program** - 80% of the City is **residential**, critical component

  ❖ **Blue & Greenways Hub** – 1st piece of larger plan

Mayor's Vision & Strategy

- **Opportunity** is now – Let's get it done!

    - ❖ Unique – it's all there, opportunity won't come again

    - ❖ Make it happen now or passes us by

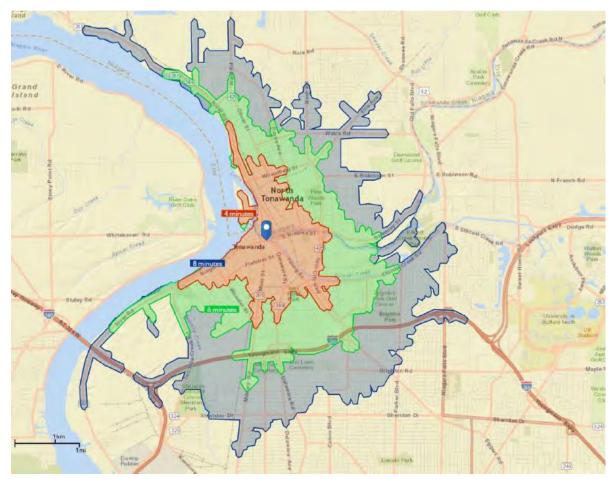   - ❖ "We" are… Mayor, Council, Residents & Businesses

Market/Economic Analysis

- **Setting the stage**
  Some key indicators:

  - ✓ Manufacturing & wholesale trade declines

  - ✓ 9.6% of City residents work in the City
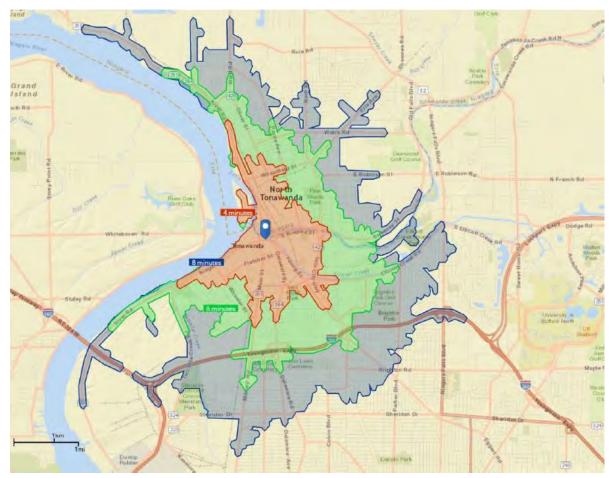
  - ✓ Increasing unemployment (7.3% vs 5.5% in 2010)

Market/Economic Analysis

- **Setting the stage**
  Some key indicators:

  - ✓ Prominent retail trade…

  - ✓ …though more out of area.

  - ✓ "Leakage" primarily speciality goods – clothing, books, & music
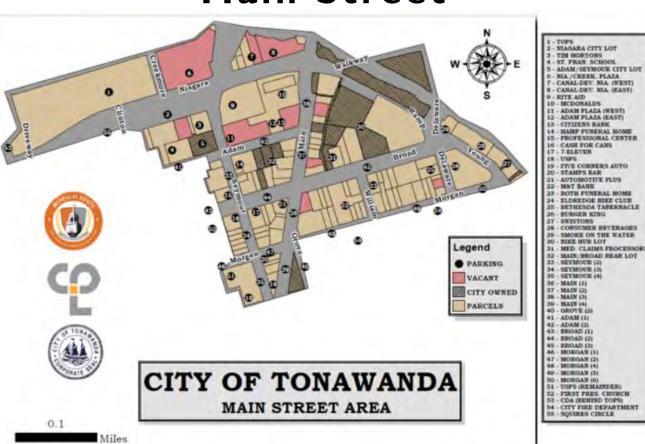
Market/Economic Analysis
- Main Street -

- Need a coordinated vision

- Significant turnover

- No retail concentration

CITY OF TONAWANDA
MAIN STREET AREA

0.1 Miles

1 - TOPS
2 - NIAGARA CITY LOT
3 - TIM HORTONS
4 - ST. FRAN. SCHOOL
5 - ADAM/SEYMOUR CITY LOT
6 - NIA./CREEK. PLAZA
7 - CANAL-DEV. NIA. (WEST)
8 - CANAL-DEV. NIA. (EAST)
9 - RITE AID
10 - MCDONALDS
11 - ADAM PLAZA (WEST)
12 - ADAM PLAZA (EAST)
13 - CITIZENS BANK
14 - HAMP FUNERAL HOME
15 - PROFESSIONAL CENTER
16 - CASH FOR CANS
17 - 7-ELEVEN
18 - USPS
19 - FIVE CORNERS AUTO
20 - STAMPS BAR
21 - AUTOMOTIVE PLUS
22 - M&T BANK
23 - ROTH FUNERAL HOME
24 - ELDREDGE BIKE CLUB
25 - BETHESDA TABERNACLE
26 - BURGER KING
27 - SWISTONS
28 - CONSUMER BEVERAGES
29 - SMOKE ON THE WATER
30 - BIKE HUB LOT
31 - MED. CLAIMS PROCESSORS
32 - MAIN/BROAD REAR LOT
33 - SEYMOUR (2)
34 - SEYMOUR (3)
35 - SEYMOUR (4)
36 - MAIN (1)
37 - MAIN (2)
38 - MAIN (3)
39 - MAIN (4)
40 - GROVE (2)
41 - ADAM (1)
42 - ADAM (2)
43 - BROAD (1)
44 - BROAD (2)
45 - BROAD (3)
46 - MORGAN (1)
47 - MORGAN (2)
48 - MORGAN (4)
49 - MORGAN (5)
50 - MORGAN (6)
51 - USPS (REMAINDER)
52 - FIRST PRES. CHURCH
53 - CDA (BEHIND TOPS)
54 - CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
55 - SQUIRES CIRCLE

Legend
- ● PARKING
- VACANT
- CITY OWNED
- PARCELS

- Increase density

- Group to regulate allowable businesses

- Maintenance

Market/Economic Analysis

- **So what can we do?**

  ✓ Opportunities to strengthen retail (e.g. "boutique" stores)

  ✓ Occupy vacant storefronts & underutilized spaces (2nd floors)

  ✓ Increase marketing as destination for active recreation

  ✓ Appeal of higher quality retail for visitors and residents

DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

Blue & Greenways Hub

- **Koenig's Alley** – Improvement needed…
    - ❖ 2.6 acres
    - ❖ Option #1: Resurface, $695,000
    - ❖ Option #2: Reconstruct, $1.4 million +
- Other opportunities available?
- Prior plans have not worked out
- A trail hub? Why?

Blue & Greenways Hub

Prominent location…

Blue & Greenways Hub

Blue & Greenways Hub

The Niagara River
GREENWAY
Trail Map & Attractions

- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
- Stakeholder Groups and the People of Western New York who assisted in the development of the Niagara River Greenway Plan
- Photo Credits: Paul G. Leuchner, NYS OPRHP

www.niagaragreenway.org

Welcome to the Niagara River Greenway!

Whether it's stunning vistas or intimate forests, a raging river or lazy streams, dazzling nightlife or the quiet solitude of a walking path, the Niagara River Greenway has something for everyone! A celebration of natural and man-made diversity, the Greenway is a 36-mile long corridor that extends the length of the Niagara River in the counties of Niagara and Erie. Encompassing an area of 237 square miles, it features over 100 miles of shoreline as well as four major cities and several villages.

The Niagara River Greenway features a world-renown waterfall and gorge, rivers, forests, wetlands and an array of wildlife. The Greenway's parklands and trail networks provide easy access to the natural environment and abundant waterfront recreational opportunities.

corridor of places, parks and landscapes that celebrates and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and heritage resources and provides access to and connections between these important resources while giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.

region hosts Farm Markets that bring forth a great bounty of locally grown fruit, vegetables, flowers as well as a variety of handicrafts. Fruit orchards, corn mazes and pumpkin patches attract thousands of visitors each year. The growing prowess of the Niagara viniculture provides another popular venue in the region. Wine connoisseurs make annual visits to the Niagara Wine Trail to sample their favorite vintages.

Greenway resources include passive and active recreation as well as cultural, educational and historical sites. It features a wealth of museums, architectural treasures, industrial heritage sites, forts and battlefields. The Greenway also encompasses the western terminus of the Erie Canal, a Presidential Inaugural site and numerous Underground Railroad venues. There is a vital and active visual and performing arts community. The region's diverse cultural heritage is celebrated though numerous summertime festivals and the bounty of nature evident in its many farmers' markets and viniculture.

A fundamental objective of the Greenway initiative is to steward the integrity and vitality of natural areas through continuing efforts of maintenance, improvement and preservation. It also serves to preserve historical and cultural treasures, revitalize urban areas, expand local economies and collaborate with municipal, state and federal agencies to promote Greenway objectives.
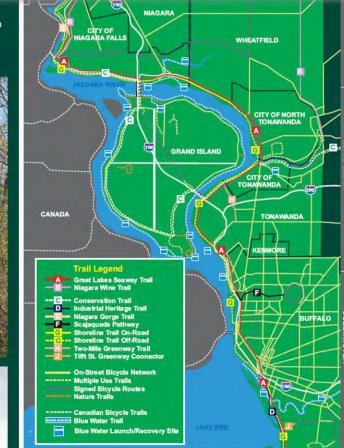
Trail Legend
- Great Lakes Seaway Trail
- Niagara Wine Trail
- Conservation Trail
- Industrial Heritage Trail
- Niagara Gorge Trail
- Scajaquada Pathway
- Shoreline Trail On-Road
- Shoreline Trail Off-Road
- Two-Mile Greenway Trail
- Tifft St. Greenway Connector
- On-Street Bicycle Network
- Multiple Use Trails
- Signed Bicycle Routes
- Nature Trails
- Canadian Bicycle Trails
- Blue Water Trail
- Blue Water Launch/Recovery Site

Blue & Greenways Hub

First piece of a larger plan...
Opening August 5th
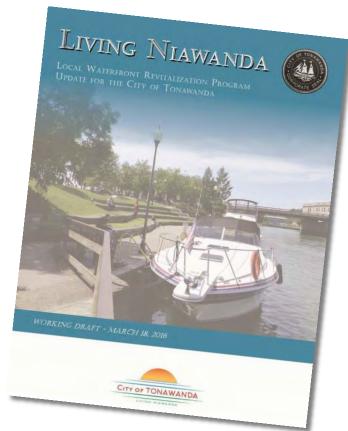
DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

- Local planning specifically for the **waterfront**

- Complete draft delivered in February (City and DOS)

- **Next steps**:

  - ❖ Preliminary DOS review > revisions

  - ❖ Official 60-day review

  - ❖ SEQRA

  - ❖ Final revisions
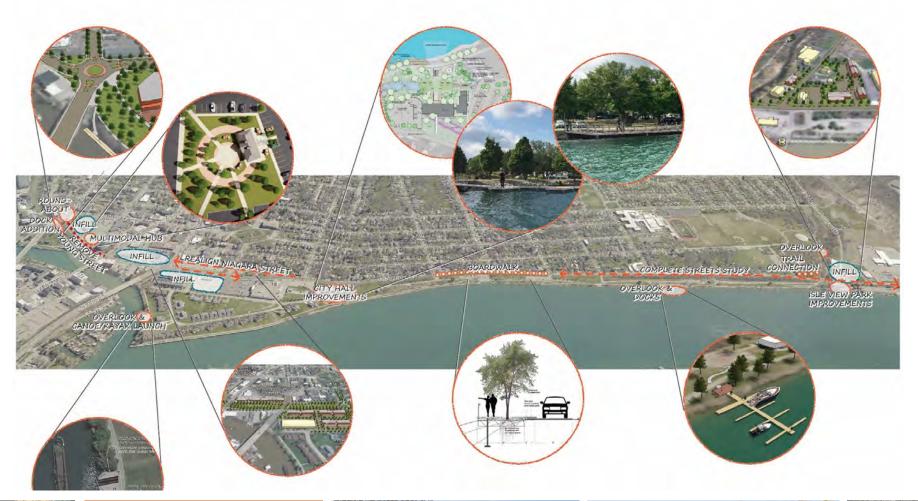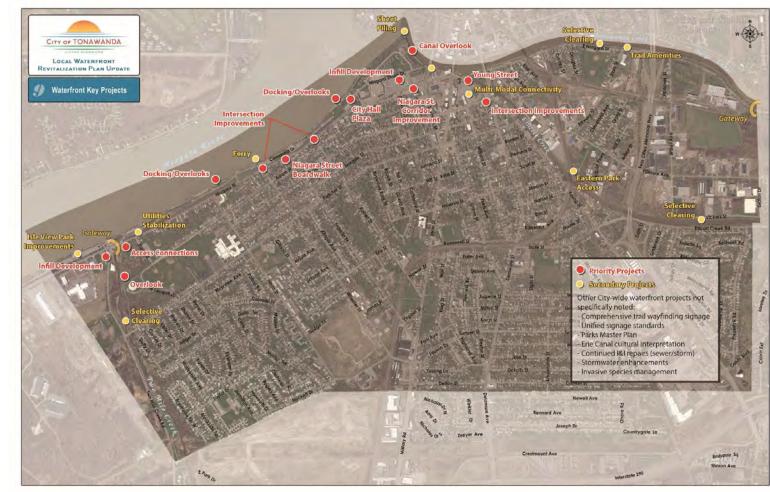
  - ❖ **City adoption** (zoning!)

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

Major projects:

- Niagara Street Corridor

- Young Street

- Docks (public/police)

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
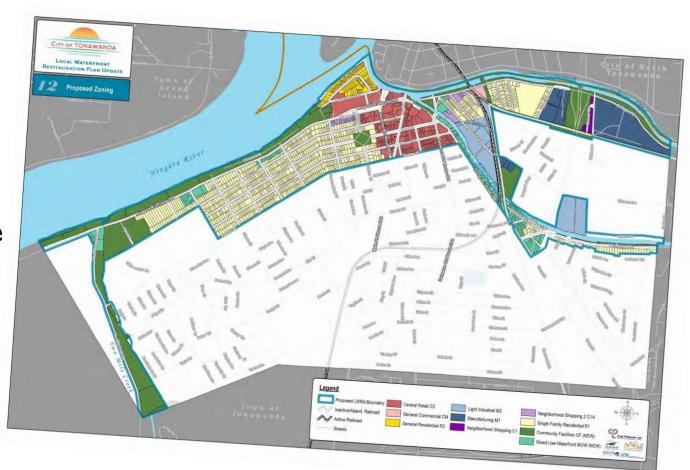
Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

- New **zoning** regulations
  - ❖ **Community Facilities** (protect existing recreational assets)
  - ❖ **Waterfront Mixed-Use** (promote waterfront activity/opportunities, form-based)

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

Comprehensive Plan Update

- **What it is:** City-wide vision and policy guide 10-15 year timeframe

- **Why now:** Last done in 2002, progressive with planning efforts

- **Updated Vision…**

"Tonawanda is a historically rich waterfront community in the Buffalo Niagara Region where the canal meets the Niagara River. We engage with our residents, businesses, schools and community leaders and look ahead to make our neighborhoods and businesses vibrant. By capitalizing on our assets, both natural and man-made, we strive to be a sustainable City, a community for a lifetime."

Comprehensive Plan Update

- **Basic elements:**
  - ❖ What do we have to **work** with… *(Community Profile)*
  - ❖ What do we **want** for the City… *(Vision & Goals)*
  - ❖ What do we **do**… *(Objectives/Actions)*
  - ❖ How to we **get** there… *(Implementation Plan)*

Comprehensive Plan Update

- **Outreach**

    ❖ Monthly committee meetings

    ❖ Facebook project page

    ❖ Public meeting, Community Survey,
    Student Workshop, Industry
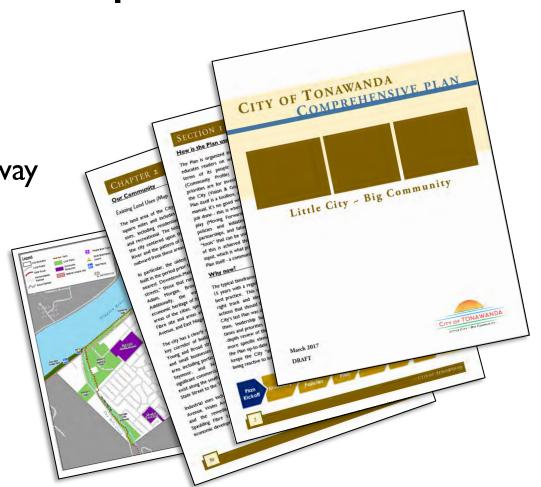   Survey, Neighborhood Workshop

Comprehensive Plan Update

- **Progress**
  - ❖ Community Profile completed
  - ❖ Goals, Policies, Action Items underway
- **Integration with other projects**

Comprehensive Plan Update

- **Preliminary goals/policies:**

  ❖ Dedicated community development

  ❖ Communication/engagement with the community

  ❖ Reinvest in the neighborhood

  ❖ Strengthen existing industry

  ❖ Historical preservation

  ❖ Build on recreation assets

  ❖ Revitalize/activate Main Street

  ❖ Revise & update zoning

DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS
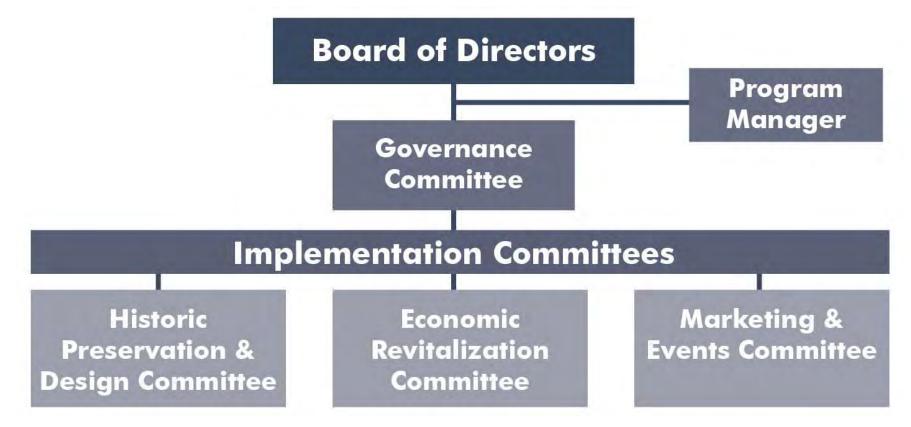
Main Street Program

- **Purpose:** To provide a **framework** that guides community based revitalization efforts

- **Mission:** The mission of the Tonawanda Main Street Program is 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.

- **Vision:** Tonawanda Main Street Program envisions an attractive, abundant, historic downtown area that will serve as the **heart of the City** and encourage pride, engagement and growth within the community at large.

Main Street Program

Tonawanda Main Street: Organizational Chart

Main Street Area

Legend

- – – – Main Street Area Boundary
- ▮ Parks
- 🅟 Municipal Parking Lot

Parks, Landmarks & Notable Buildings

1 Benjamin Long Homestead
2 Clinton Park
3 Former HSBC
4 Former Legion Building
5 Future Intermodal Depot
6 Historical Society of the Tonawandas Museum
7 Niawanda Park
8 Riverwalk
9 Tonawanda Towers
10 Tonawandas Gateway Harbor
11 Tonawanda's Harbormaster Office

Social Organizations & Athletic Clubs

12 Eldridge Bicycle Club
13 Elks Lodge 860
4 Goombas Boxing Club
14 Tonawanda Senior Center
15 Vietnam Veterans of America

Office

16 Amato, Fox & Company, PC
17 Aspire
18 Commercial Collection Corp.
19 J.J. Gutt & Associates Inc.
20 John F. Donohue Attorneys at Law
21 Mark A. Doane Attorney & Counselor at Law
22 Medical Claims Processor, Inc.
23 Mueller Services
19 T.P.W. Websites
18 United Way

Restaurants, Bars & Eateries

17 Beijing Garden
24 Billygans Cafe
25 Colosso Taco
26 DQ
17 Edible Arrangements
26 Joe's NY Style Pizza
27 Legion Bar & Lounge
28 McDonald's
29 Mooney's
30 Shanghai Chinese Food
31 Smoke on the Water
32 Stamps... the bar
17 Subway
33 Swiston's Beef & Keg
34 Tim Hortons / Cold Stone Creamery
35 TNT Pizza

Retail

36 7-Eleven
26 Advance Auto Parts
37 Attic to Basement Repeats
21 Cats Like Us
38 Complete Healthcare
39 Consumer's Beverage Center
17 Cricket
26 Dollar General
26 Family Dollar
40 Lane Jewelers
41 metro PCS
42 Rite Aid
43 Salt Water Paradise (SWP)
44 Sports from the Past
45 Sweet Briar Antiques
46 The Mulberry Tree
47 Tonawanda Wine & Liquor
48 Tops
49 Vape E's
50 Walgreens

Services

51 Al's Super Service
30 Allstate
52 Ana's Hair Design
53 Atomic Barbershop and Salon
43 Aurelios
54 Automotive Plus
55 Cash for Cans
43 Cipriano Inc. Realtors
41 Citizens Bank
49 Coin Laundry
56 Dick's Garage
21 Haircuts $10.00
57 Hamp Funeral Home Inc
58 Historical Society of the Tonawandas Resource Center
17 Horizon Health Services
59 John O. Roth Funeral Home, Inc.
60 M&T Bank
61 Neil's Five Corners Automotive
62 Northeast Cleaners
63 Patrick Sean Daley Studios
64 Styles Unique Hair Salon
26 Supercuts
53 Sweet Heart Pinup Studio
65 The Hearing Advantage
66 The Insurance Market
67 Tops Fuel
30 Twisted Tiki Tattoo Lounge
68 U.S. Post Office
26 Unyts Donate Life
26 Western New York Dental Group

Scale: 0 — 0.125 — 0.25 — 0.5 Miles

N

Main Street Program: Tools for Revitalization

- ✓ Structure
- ✓ Website
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Newsletter
- ✓ Work Plan

- ✓ Complete Streets Action Plan
- ✓ 2-Year Planting Program

Organization · **Economic Vitality** · **Design** · **Promotion**

Downtown Revitalization

- ✓ **Historic Preservation Guidebook**
- ✓ Vacant Property Abatement
- ✓ Factsheets

- ✓ Event Participation
- ✓ Downtown Day
- ✓ Marketing Materials & Updates

Utilizing the Four Points of the Main Street Approach from Main Street America™

Main Street Program: Organizational Potential

- Steps being taken create tremendous **opportunity**

- Specifically Downtown, but translates to entire City

- Tonawanda Main Street (TMS) – lead in business **recruitment**

- Toolkit for incentives for business **investment** (commercial & mixed use)

- Targeted acquisition/rehabilitation program for commercial properties

Main Street Program: Get Involved!

- We are currently seeking new board members and are conducting a public call for applicants from now until June 1st.
  - Please download an application by clicking the "Apply to Join the Board" button on our webpage: www.tonawandamainstreet.org/our-organization
- Our Committees are open to all who are interested.
- Sign up for our email newsletter!

DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

Housing Program

- **Why are neighborhoods important?**
  - ❖ Over **80%** of City is residential (**70%** of total value)
  - ❖ Smaller communities, less impact regionally
  - ❖ Tremendous asset, greater impact on community as a whole
  - ❖ Greater demand for higher quality neighborhoods
  - ❖ Economic development **AND** neighborhood investment needed
  - ❖ "Race to the bottom" for property taxes

Housing Program

- **Facts about our neighborhoods…**
  - ❖ Number/characteristics of neighborhoods not comparable
  - ❖ Increase in poverty rate (**6.5%** to **11.5%**)
  - ❖ Per capita income up slightly…
  - ❖ Median household income **dropped 20%** ($44,805)
  - ❖ Change in total income since 1990 dropped by $29 million *(less disposable money available for households)*

Housing Program

- **What do we do about this?**
  - ❖ **Compete** for quality households
  - ❖ **Support/retain** existing quality households & neighborhoods
  - ❖ Build on **assets**
  - ❖ **Engage** the community
  - ❖ Think outside the box, be **creative**

Housing Program

- **How we got this:** City applied for/awarded $150,000 from State
    - ❖ Community and Housing Strategy
    - ❖ Bank foreclosed homes (zombies)
    - ❖ Vacant & distressed properties
- **What it's used for:**
    - ❖ Foreclosure prevention
    - ❖ Code enforcement
    - ❖ Distressed property database
    - ❖ Housing Market Report

Housing Program

- **Deliverables:**
  - ❖ Homeowner assistance
  - ❖ Condition assessment City-wide
  - ❖ Computer database/management
  - ❖ Vacant/rental registries
  - ❖ Code enforcement
  - ❖ Short- to long-term policy changes
    (cheaper/faster to slower/more transformational)

Housing Program

- **Status:**
    - ❖ Kicks off tonight! (**Housing Task Force**)
    - ❖ Faster delivery – more time/effort to **ideas** and **policy** initiatives
    - ❖ Community engagement opportunities (walks, tactical event)
    - ❖ Directly informs/complements Comprehensive Plan efforts

What makes a good neighbor?
What makes a good neighborhood?

DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS

Where we go from here...

- Finish Comprehensive Plan

- Build upon Main Street program

- Initiate Housing Program

- Dock Improvements

- Hub construction, opening, next phases

- Other grant pursuits

- **Implement!!**

APPENDIX B
PLANNING IN CITY OF TONAWANDA
SUPPLEMENTAL RESEARCH REPORT

APPENDIX B
PLANNING IN CITY OF TONAWANDA
SUPPLEMENTAL RESEARCH REPORT

Planning in City of Tonawanda

Supplemental Research Report

David Aldridge |Andrea Folgherait | Timothy German| Malik Murray

Jonet Rodolph | Timothy Sabey |Nick Swallow | Alexei Turkleson

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Executive Summary

This report was conceived as a collaborative effort between Buffalo State College's graduating senior class, City of Tonawanda, and Clark Patterson Lee. In preparation of the drafting of a new Comprehensive Plan in Tonawanda, the team of students conducted preliminary research to supplement current and future planning initiatives in Tonawanda. This report consists of primary data collected in the field, as well as information collected from other municipalities, researchers, and authorities.

This report focuses on four distinct categories. The first section concerns the Main Street Area of Tonawanda, which is also referred to as the Downtown Area. Market place reports, and field data collection are among the resources used to report on current trends, as well as offer suggestions of how to attract outside dollars to this business district. The second section details community outreach. Described therein are the benefits of public participation. Also included are the results of, and lessons learned from a recent community meeting that was facilitated by all aforementioned collaborators. The third section provides an extensive overview of contemporary code enforcement polies, procedures, and techniques. As Code enforcement is widely regarded as a key tool for achieving a community's preferred outcomes with respect to the built environment, the detail of this section is commensurate with its importance. Topics such as tools, techniques, and enforcement philosophy are thoroughly explored. The last section explains the importance of historic preservation, the rules and officials that govern it, and the incentives available for municipalities that take measures to preserve their community's roots.

1. Main Street Area Market Analysis

Legend
- ● PARKING
- ▨ VACANT
- ▨ CITY OWNED
- ▨ PARCELS

1 - TOPS
2 - NIAGARA CITY LOT
3 - TIM HORTONS
4 - ST. FRAN. SCHOOL
5 - ADAM/SEYMOUR CITY LOT
6 - NIA./CREEK. PLAZA
7 - CANAL-DEV. NIA. (WEST)
8 - CANAL-DEV. NIA. (EAST)
9 - RITE AID
10 - MCDONALDS
11 - ADAM PLAZA (WEST)
12 - ADAM PLAZA (EAST)
13 - CITIZENS BANK
14 - HAMP FUNERAL HOME
15 - PROFESSIONAL CENTER
16 - CASH FOR CANS
17 - 7-ELEVEN
18 - USPS
19 - FIVE CORNERS AUTO
20 - STAMPS BAR
21 - AUTOMOTIVE PLUS
22 - M&T BANK
23 - ROTH FUNERAL HOME
24 - ELDREDGE BIKE CLUB
25 - BETHESDA TABERNACLE
26 - BURGER KING
27 - SWISTONS
28 - CONSUMER BEVERAGES
29 - SMOKE ON THE WATER
30 - BIKE HUB LOT
31 - MED. CLAIMS PROCESSORS
32 - MAIN/BROAD REAR LOT
33 - SEYMOUR (2)
34 - SEYMOUR (3)
35 - SEYMOUR (4)
36 - MAIN (1)
37 - MAIN (2)
38 - MAIN (3)
39 - MAIN (4)
40 - GROVE (2)
41 - ADAM (1)
42 - ADAM (2)
43 - BROAD (1)
44 - BROAD (2)
45 - BROAD (3)
46 - MORGAN (1)
47 - MORGAN (2)
48 - MORGAN (4)
49 - MORGAN (5)
50 - MORGAN (6)
51 - USPS (REMAINDER)
52 - FIRST PRES. CHURCH
53 - CDA (BEHIND TOPS)
54 - CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
55 - SQUIRES CIRCLE

CITY OF TONAWANDA
MAIN STREET AREA

0.1 ▬▬▬ Miles

Map 1.1: Main Street Area

1.1 Introduction and Purpose

As part of the ongoing planning efforts in the Main Street Area (MSA) of the City of Tonawanda, we engaged in a multifaceted effort involving a market area analysis using ESRI Business Analyst Online, a physical inventory of commercial buildings in the area, and a survey of parking capacity. The end goal is to use data from both of these efforts to make recommendations regarding new, in-demand businesses, and what industries or uses best fit the currently available space.

Market research of this type is a crucial step in developing a marketing and business plan for the Main Street Area, as it continues to re-brand itself and re-define its place in the region. Through this process, we have gained a better understanding of the Tonawanda area residents, as well as their

preferences and priorities. This will contribute to the ability of local businesses to stay competitive within the regional economy, and to develop strategies for catering to those residents in the most effective way possible. There is also a reduced risk from firms marketing themselves in a way that does not fit the customer base. Both businesses and residents have voiced their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of Main Street. This public input has been combined with the market analysis data to generate a set of strategies that Main Street can use going forward. *See Section 2 for information on the community outreach.*
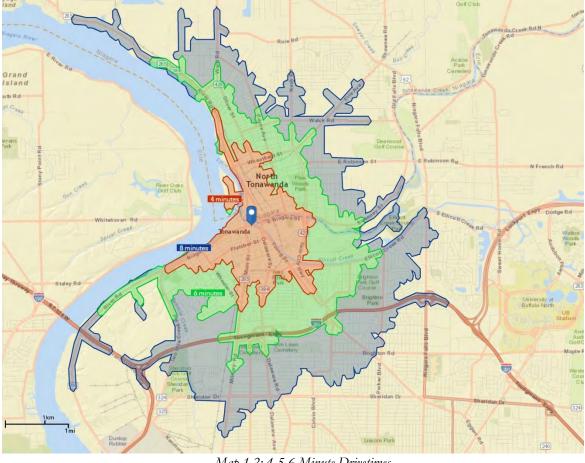
1.2 Methodology and Data

ESRI Business Analyst is a tool that has been developed to assist a diverse range of businesses with market research and site selection. This software draws its data from a variety of sources, integrates it, and presents it in an intuitive and user-friendly way. Drive time polygons are calculated using current street networks, including speed limits and other factors that determine what area can be reached within a given timeframe. For its Tapestry Segmentation information, ESRI uses data from the 2010 Decennial Census, the American Community Survey, and consumer data from the research firms GfK MRI and Experian. Market potential is calculated by combining Tapestry Segmentation data with a GfK MRI dataset called Doublebase. This is a combination of four consumer surveys to determine the spending patterns for a variety of consumer segments and products. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is also included. To calculate leakage and surplus factors, ESRI compares data from the 2012 Census of Retail Trade with Consumer Expenditure Survey data from the BLS.

1.3 Drive Times

In defining our study area, we created drive-time polygons of four, six, and eight minutes as seen in Map 1.2. Drive-time polygons are useful especially in this geography, given the City's location along a large water body, the Niagara River. Concentric circles are less well suited for this analysis because they would capture part of Grand Island, which is not representative of the actual market area of downtown Tonawanda. The size of the polygons must depict areas where people would conceivably travel to Main Street for various consumer items. For this reason, the area should not extend far beyond either Niagara Falls Boulevard or Sheridan Drive, the two major commercial arteries in the area. Beyond those roads, consumers would likely travel to other businesses before reaching Tonawanda. The chosen extents are more concise than the alternative of five, seven, and

ten minutes, respectively. They do not spill beyond the major commercial corridors, and better represent the immediate market area of Main Street. Each of these areas will provide insights into the unique demographics and consumer behaviors present therein.

1.3.1 Extent

Map 1.2: 4-5-6 Minute Drivetimes

The geographic extents accessible by vehicle from 6 Main Street in Tonawanda can be described as follows:

1.3.1.1. Four Minutes

The four minute polygon captures the innermost section of Tonawanda, notably Downtown, Gastown, Clinton Park, and the western extent of the long streets –Adam, Broad, Morgan and Fletcher Streets–, as well as a small part of North Tonawanda. The Hill, Delawanda, and Mill Stream are largely excluded.

1.3.1.2. Six Minutes

This area captures almost the full extent of Tonawanda proper, extending beyond the southern and western boundaries of the city and reaching as far as I-290 to the south, and Parker Boulevard to the east. A larger portion of North Tonawanda is also represented.

1.3.1.3. Eight Minutes

In addition to the entire area of the City of Tonawanda, the largest of the three polygons captures a significant portion of both Town of Tonawanda and City of North Tonawanda. Its southernmost tip almost touches the Village of Kenmore. It reaches Niagara Falls Boulevard to the east and barely enters the Town of Wheatfield to the north.

1.4. Market Potential

A Market Potential Index, or **MPI**, measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified area to exhibit certain consumer behaviors or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. (ESRI). An index of 100 represents the U.S. average, while indexes above or below 100 indicate greater or lesser prevalence compared to the U.S. overall. In addition, they are shown as percentages of the population within the market area, a useful tool for analyzing the market area itself. By and large, the MPIs for most consumer products in this market area are on par with the U.S. average. However, there are some items that stand out, offering clues about the attitudes and priorities of area residents.

	4 Minutes		6 Minutes		8 Minutes	
	Percentage	MPI	Percentage	MPI	Percentage	MPI
Buying American is Important to Me	47.60%	112	48.00%	113	48.10%	114
Usually Buy Based on Quality Over Price	19.30%	108	18.50%	103	18.00%	100
Price is More Important Than Brand Name	27.80%	106	27.70%	106	27.20%	104
Usually Use Coupons For Brands I Buy Often	22.50%	119	21.60%	114	20.90%	111
Likely to Buy a Brand That Supports a Charity	36.00%	103	35.70%	102	35.50%	102

Table 1.1: Market Potential

The most telling results fall under the Psychographics category, which provide a snapshot of these attitudes and priorities. According to this analysis, American-made products are a priority throughout the market area, and this inclination is stronger in the larger areas (Table). Consumers in the 4-minute region have a relatively strong tendency to buy based on quality rather than price. However, consumers here are still very price-conscious, and consider price to be more important than brand name. People like to use coupons for common household purchases, more so in the central region that in the outlying area. Finally, residents are willing to patronize brands that support charity. These results can be combined with the other Business Analyst results, as well as the feedback that was received from the public meeting, to produce a picture of some desirable traits for downtown businesses.

The greatest competition in the region will likely come from the Boulevard Mall, containing almost a million square feet of gross leasable area, and a great many major retailers and commercial outlets. Tonawanda will need to offer something unique in order to compete with this destination, as well as the commercial corridors along Sheridan and the Boulevard. A final thought here is that the city could perhaps capitalize on attracting a corporate business to lease commercial or professional office space. Since Tonawanda is characterized as a bedroom community, offices might capture some of the workforce that leaves the city daily to work in other localities.

1.5. Leakage and Surplus

The leakage and surplus reports represent retail industries for which the market is either saturated or has some potential for new business. The marketplace profile reports consumer demand for each industry based on consumer behavior, the reported sales for that industry, and the retail gap, or the difference between that supply and demand. If demand exceeds supply, then there is **leakage**, or market potential that is lost to outside areas. If the supply exceeds demand, then the market is **saturated**, and it is unlikely that new businesses of that type would thrive. Reports have been produced for each of the drive time polygons. Several factors must be considered regarding the Leakage and Surplus reports. Throughout the public participation process, many residents and stakeholders have expressed the desire for a restaurant of some kind. However, it should be noted that the market for foodservice establishments in the area is heavily saturated, and any new restaurant in the Main Street area would be in direct competition with existing area restaurants,

several of which are just across the canal in North Tonawanda. *For leakage/surplus reports, see Appendix C.*

	4 Minutes		6 Minutes		8 Minutes	
	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor
Furniture & Home Furnishings	N/A	N/A	$5,357,221	29.1	$12,254,583	34.9
Electronics & Appliances	$2,779,957	22.1	$12,076,186	40	$20,488,992	32.3
Lawn & Garden/ Hardware	$1,989,527	15	$9,964,671	31.4	$23,306,615	38.2
Clothing, Shoes, & Accessories	$6,211,792	48.9	$21,980,820	72.6	$45,725,686	79.1
Sporting Goods/ Hobby	$862,928	17.2	$1,859,040	12.9	$4,363,691	15.7
Books & Music Stores	$269,783	27.8	$1,281,162	59.3	$2,025,367	42.5
Office Supplies, Stationery, Gifts	$888,811	44.8	$3,001,973	60.6	$5,991,208	61

Table 1.2 Retail Leakage Gaps, ESRI

With this in mind, there are several retail sectors that have considerable retail gaps, and these should be considered when thinking about building the retail presence downtown (Table 1.2). These are displayed by both dollar amount, and leakage factor, which indicates the relative magnitude of the opportunity. The most significant leakage is in the clothing stores category, with leakage that holds consistently across all areas. Office supply stores is another significant category, followed by book & music stores, and electronics and appliance stores. In addition to these, other desirable traffic-generating possibilities include a café or bakery, ice cream or candy shop, sandwich shop, and a bar or nightclub. While auto dealerships have a considerable leakage factor, they would not necessarily contribute to a walkable, bustling downtown area.

1.6. Tapestry Segmentation

Within four minutes, about half of the population consists of the **Rustbelt Traditions** group. This is the traditional middle-class population in the region. The workforce is primarily white-collar, with a higher concentration of workers in manufacturing, retail trade, and health care. They are family-oriented and moderately mobile. The vast majority own their own homes. They typically use

convenience stores and watch a lot of television. They can be thought of a traditional Middle America population.

	4 Minutes		6 Minutes		8 Minutes	
	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor	Dollar Amount	Leakage Factor
Furniture & Home Furnishings	N/A	N/A	$5,357,221	29.1	$12,254,583	34.9
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Clothing, Shoes, & Accessories	$6,211,792	48.9	$21,980,820	72.6	$45,725,686	79.1
Sporting Goods/ Hobby	$862,928	17.2	$1,859,040	12.9	$4,363,691	15.7
Books & Music Stores	$269,783	27.8	$1,281,162	59.3	$2,025,367	42.5
Office Supplies, Stationery, Gifts	$888,811	44.8	$3,001,973	60.6	$5,991,208	61

Table 1.3: Dominant Tapestry Segments by Percentage

Moving outward to six minutes, the dominant segment is **Traditional Living**. They are generally younger, with lower incomes than Rustbelt Traditions. They are still family-oriented suburbanites, working in similar industries as their rust belt counterparts. The home ownership rate is typically lower. They represent younger couples that are just starting out raising a family. Discount stores are popular with this group, and many have credit cards and student loan debt. Fast food is also very popular with this group.

The next most common group is **Midlife Constants**. These residents are seniors, or approaching retirement age. They are another suburban group, with incomes like those of Rustbelt Traditions. They are very involved in their communities, participating in church activities, fraternal orders, and charitable organizations. They are homebodies that invest in home maintenance. Finally, they are not especially fond of newer technology.

From this data, we can tell that the vast majority of residents in the market area are traditional and family-oriented. The main factor that distinguishes them is their age. By and large, they tend to

settle and remain in the same area for extended periods of time, investing in those places for the long-term. They will likely not be looking for anything that is very fancy or trendy. The best way to reach them is likely through well-established business models and marketing methods. Many in the Tonawanda area are price conscious, but value quality products. They also prefer American-made products when possible. To reach this demographic, the focus should be on family-oriented and more old-fashioned means. *For tapestry reports, see Appendix B.*

1.7. Building Inventory

A rudimentary survey of the 70 commercial structures within City of Tonawanda Main Street Area was conducted on foot. The intent of the research was to identify the level of business vacancy present within existing buildings. With this information, planners will have a clearer picture of how much readily available space they have to market to prospective enterprises.

1.7.1. Field Survey Methods

The survey was completed on foot, and a simple spreadsheet was constructed to log the findings. Included in the form was the address, section block lot (SBL) number, property class code, property description, and address as off the most recent parcel file provided by Erie County. Vacant lots, including those with improvements, were excluded from the study.

To supplement more detailed research in the future, the team documented the current occupants of these properties, and also included a brief description of the façade of the building, with respect to materials. As many of the buildings had a single SBL with multiple storefronts, the *occupant* column of the spreadsheet reflected each individual storefront. These storefronts and similar ground floor commercial were the focus of the survey; upper floor information was not logged. A determination of vacancy was made as best as can be done without access or detailed records. The judgement was at the discretion of the team, and based upon telltale signs, such as the absence of furnishings, excessive interior debris, and similar signs these places were abandoned.

1.7.2. Findings

There were nine parcels found in the area which contained at least one vacant storefront. They are as follows:

SBL	Type	Address	Occupant	Notes
39.46-6-4	Det Row Bldg	26 Delaware St	Vacant	Grey Siding
39.45-2-25	Att Row Bldg	19 Main St	Allstate |Vacant | Shanghai |Twisted Tiki	For Sale. Red Brick Row Building
39.45-4-14.121	Branch Bank	20 Main St	Citizens Bank | Metro Pcs | Vacant	Orange Vertical Brick, Stucco Trim
39.45-2-18	Att Row Bldg	57 Main St	Atomic Barber Shop And Salon | 59 Sweet Heart Pin Up | 61 Vacant | 61.5 Vacant	Glass Front, Tan Brick
39.45-1-6	Bank	6 Main St	Vacant	Red Brick Bank
39.53-2-1	Det Row Bldg	67 Main St	67 Cats Like Us | 69 Vacant |71 Mark A Doane, Attorney | 73 Haircuts	Orange Brick
39.45-7-1.11	Nbh Shop Ctr	100 Niagara St	Family Dollar | UNYTS | Joes NY Style Pizza | Vacant | WNY Dental | Dairy Queen | Supercuts | Advanced Auto Parts	Red Brick
39.45-1-5	Det Row Bldg	24 Niagara St	Vacant	Tan Stucco, Tinted Windows
39.45-6-4	Restaurant	75 Niagara St	Vacant	Restaurant, Orange Brick, Tan Stone

Table 1.4: MSA Vacancy

The first property at 26 Delaware, which is located at the southeast boundary of MSA, appears to be an abandoned office. There are desks, dated equipment, trash strewn about on the inside, and the stairs are caked with leaves and debris as if from disuse. This size and location of this office indicates it would best serve a small professional firm, such as a law office.

The second vacancy is located in an otherwise occupied row building within the heart of Main Street. The location was previously a nail salon, and its condition clearly indicates it is uninhabited. The strategic location of this storefront –on the busiest section of Main Street; first two blocks after Niagara Street moving southbound; high commercial activity; several storefronts– it should be a priority. The lack of immediate vacancy in this key area lends to the importance of ushering it into the highest and best use.

The third vacancy was also within the first two blocks of Main Street. It lies in an oblong circular building full office suites. The vacant office directly abuts Main Street, and is equipped with blank signage. Any outfit that is accustomed to operating out of a strip mall would be a fit at this location.

The fourth parcel with vacancy is in a similar position to the previous two, in that it lies in the same key area of Main Street. There are two connected addresses: one which reads as 61.5 Main, and the adjacent storefront which reads 61. Several packaged products line the floor, giving the

appearance that it may have been, or still is being, used as storage for another business. PhoenixSuite, LLC, a company that appears to operate out of the building next door, and some materials bearing this name can be observed at 61.5. The storefront at 61 Main was likely a memorabilia shop. A wall could potentially be knocked down to accommodate a more space–intensive enterprise.

Figure 1.1: Trinity Place Bar & Restaurant, New York, NY

Possibly the most intriguing vacancy in the area is located at 6 Main Street. This prominent corner structure was previously a bank. It is a tall single story red brick building with large windows and columns at the entrance. It lies at a key intersection, which signifies the entrance to the MSA from Niagara County. Ornate, oversized buildings are in demand for the purpose of conversion into restaurants, bars, and even homes. The City should consider aggressively pursuing this space with whatever instruments or incentives they have at their disposal. In the right hands, this structure can be turned into a major attraction. Figure 1.1 is an example of a bank that was converted into a contemporary restaurant.

The sixth vacant storefront is in a row building with three other actively used shops. It is located on the southern end of the aforementioned key area of Main Street. This space benefits from the fact that it can attract foot traffic from the neighboring businesses: a law office, a barber, and a clothing store.

There was a vacancy in perhaps the newest shopping plaza in the area, which is located at 100 Niagara. Of the eight storefronts there, only one is vacant. It was difficult to ascertain whether the space had ever seen use. Should overall demand increase, this space should move quickly. Also, if

the City plans to prescribe any continuity in form, the materials and style used in this structure may be the one to replicate going forward.

The property at 24 Niagara makes the list by technicality. The structure has mirrored glass, which made peering in difficult. However, the exterior is brand new. The front has three garage style doors. The gas meter was also active. It does not appear this property will remain vacant for long. The garage style doors are similar to those at bars and restaurants that, weather depending, open them to give an outdoor patio feel.

The next vacancy is a building that used to be operated by *Moonies,* which now has its Tonawanda location down the road on Main St. Several years' worth of phone books lie in the doorway to this day. This row of building shows signs of disrepair, and will be a bit more difficult to address. They do benefit from a healthy offering of parking in front, but is somewhat cutoff from the majority of foot traffic. A cash-flush entrepreneur in search proof a spacious property with infrastructure already in place may find this space attractive

1.8. Parking Survey and Analysis

To support the efforts of the Tonawanda Main Street Program, as well as overarching economic development efforts, the team conducted a full parking count of the MSA. While many contemporary planning authorities disregard parking in favor of alternative transportation, adequate capacity for vehicles remains and important aspect of city living, and a constant concern of local citizens everywhere.

1.8.1. Methodology

Satellite imagery, and orthoimagery were used to compile the numbers. Inconsistencies, such as the spaces removed during the current construction of the **Intermodal Hub**, were subsequently verified in the field. The accuracy of the count was strengthened by the fact that the vast majority of the parking –approximately 85%– is individually marked. As for the on-street parking that was either unmarked, or where a large spot was marked to fit as many cars as possible –identified as 'multi-car' in *Appendix D*–, the following formula was applied:

Marked Individual Spaces + ((Usable Space - Curb Cuts)/20)

The amount of usable parking space along the right of way, as well as the length of the multi-car spaces was measured, in feet, using satellite and orthoimagery. The resulting number was then divided by 20, and rounded. The necessary space of 20 feet per vehicle was estimated using the average length of a midsized sedan –just under 16 feet in 2007– and allotting for two feet of room in the front and back of the vehicle (Woodyard 2007). While cars and trucks come in many varieties of shapes and sizes, it was intended that the indiscriminate rounding offset some of the variance. Curb cuts were sometimes used as natural breaks in the usable space. When they were included in the measurements, 10 feet was deducted per the number of vehicles that could simultaneously use the driveway. Commercial driveways typically accommodated 2-4 cars, and most residential properties, only one. Purely residential driveways were not accounted for. In some situations, parking space fell outside the Main Street Area proper –identified as *Fringe* in Appendix D–, but was near enough that it may be utilized by people whom have destinations within the Area. In these cases, off street parking was excluded from the total, while on street parking was included.

1.8.2 Findings

The Main Street Area was found to have 1,853 public and private parking spaces. Of the total, just over 1,500 were located in off- street lots and about 348 were on-street. The largest lot by far is the Tops supermarket lot, which, excluding the partial portion in the rear has 383 individual spots. There were 409 spaces sprinkled among City lots, but about 47% of these were located in a single lot: that which now houses the Intermodal Hub. There were 134 parking spaces which fell within the "fringe" category. Save for the 11 spots in the "USPS (Remainder)," which houses the local fleet of postal delivery trucks, the remainder will likely be used by visitors to the Area during peak times, such as the annual Tonawanda's Canal Fest Celebration, which can draw 200,000 – 250,000 visitors to the Main Street Area (Canalfest of the Tonawandas, Inc).

1.8.2.1 Oversupply

While an extended study of daily parking trends will need to be conducted to fully understand the parking situation around Main Street, it does appear that the area is fairly over parked for its usual conditions. There are 934 employees of working in the Main Street Area (Esri, 2016). Suppose we only look at workers in the industries most likely to deal directly with customers (including retail, finance, insurance, real estate, and the services). There are 577 workers in these fields. If we assume that every worker in these industries were each assisting a customer, with one additional person in

queue, and that all of these employees and customers commuted alone in a single passenger vehicle, there would still be further parking spaces available within the 3.7 square mile area. Since we can assume that all workers, especially those in the services, will not be working simultaneously, and that, excluding the supermarket, it is equally unlikely for any customer presence to rival that of the employees on duty, we can also assume that this is a significant overestimate of the amount of parking-needy vehicles in this area at any given time.

A primary reason for this situation is the minimum parking requirements as currently outlined by the zoning ordinance. In Sec. 82-35. of the zoning ordinance, each use in the City is prescribed a minimum parking amount, irrespective of specific circumstances. Most of the allotments for commercial uses are based either upon square footage or the amount of use-specific fixtures or infrastructure present at the business. Some of the particularly restrictive standards include one space per 75 square feet of gross floor area for eating and drinking establishments, and one for each five seats in school and sports auditoriums and churches. Any attempt to remedy the parking situation will require reevaluation of this ordinance. *For the selected zoning ordinances in City of Tonawanda, see Appendix E.*

1.8.2.2 Two-Hour Parking Problem on Main

Main Street, and the majority of on street parking in the MSA operates on a two-hour parking rule. A problem lies in that two hour parking is difficult to enforce, and would require ongoing dedicatee resources to do so. There is no readily observable disincentive for employees of businesses to refrain from utilizing on street parking in the area. Ideally, the best parking options –located directly in front of businesses– should be reserved for patrons. The most salient example of this quandary is on Main Street. It is well known locally, for instance, that workers in 63 Main Street occupy these best parking options daily. This is in spite of the fact that there is ample parking in the rear of the building. There is a mention of these and similar workers in the zoning code. It mandates they obtain a parking permit to partake in the activity. However, there is no mention of a permit for this area of the City on the municipality's website.

1.9. Recommendations

The following sections detail recommendations for continuing planning efforts in the MSA.

1.9.1. Parking

One option for the City to explore would be a full transition into a form-based zoning code, or the implementation of a form-based overlay district covering the Main Street Area. Removing parking minimums, instituting parking maximums, or developing shared parking options are some of the techniques being utilized by municipalities who enact such ordinances. The City of Buffalo became the first major city to abolish minimums, and while it is untested as of yet, they plan to do conduct a parking analysis for projects over 5,000 feet which will factor alternative transportation options into future parking mandates (Poon 2017). On a smaller scale, the City of Decatur, Georgia too did away with its minimums. In the wake of a similar excessive parking situation, they instead opted for maximums with regard to most commercial uses (Quednau 2015). The City also instituted other requirements of businesses, such as providing a bike space for every 20 parking spaces it requires. This method discourages excessive parking, while providing a tradeoff in which the community benefits in the instances significant spaces are absolutely necessary.

Any in-demand central business district or similar commercial corridor should hope for a situation where demand exceeds supply. Difficulty finding parking is usually a sure sign that you are in a place that people desire to be. It may be wise to avoid over parking in future zoning requirements, and I instead opt for the Donald Schoup approach of "almost always, but seldom" (Shoup, 2005). In other words, keep enough parking to give the impression that adequate accommodations are being provided, and shortage stem from significant demand.

1.9.1 .1. Road Diet

Considering the vast amount of parking available in the Main Street Area, opportunities for removal of capacity should be explored. One of the primary candidates for such an action is the last block –traveling west to east– on Broad Street. According to Map 1.2, traffic counts from 2015 on the surrounding streets do not indicate volume that exceeds 6,000 vehicles a day. The two primary roads which would filter vehicles onto Broad, Young and Main only accounted for about 5,750 and 3,200 vehicles, respectively, at the time of the count. While not expressly included, Broad's position with respect to these roads implies it has a similar or lower volume.

Broad is approximately wide enough to accommodate 2.5 cars in each direction. It is equipped with two hour parking on both sides of the road, and due to the abundant off-street parking for the businesses on this section of road, the capacity for 63 vehicles to park on streets appears to only be

reached in theory. If the road was minimized to one lane in each direction, it would allow the City to explore **placemaking** techniques in the Main Street Area. Flower planters and other vegetation along the north side could be used beautify a key road that is adjacent to the newly constructed Intermodal Hub. Trees could be used to break up the monotony of the remaining surface lot, obscuring it from passerby until they reach retail storefronts on the western end near Main Street. The added space can be used to add sidewalk width, and human level infrastructure which encourages visitors to get out of their vehicle and walk, or simply stay a while. Being one of the places a visitor on bike may exit from the hub, this also may be a suitable location for a Main Street Area map, or other wayfinding materials.

Map 1.3: Traffic Counts, ESRI

Another possible addition could be an alternative bike lane. The lane could follow Broad Street to Clinton Park, and use Bouck Street and Oldenburg Drive to reconnect to the **Rails to Trails** bike path. While it can be argued that the majority of bikers would opt for the more scenic route along the water, there is something to be said for having multiple alternative ways to comfortably negotiate a place outside of a vehicle. Having safe passage directly through the heart of Main Street may also encourage less inclined bikers to dismount and spend their dollars.

For best practices with respect to decommissioning, the Town of Matthews, NC Downtown Streetscape Improvement plan would be a useful guide. They provided an animated version of their streets as currently existed at that time, as well as a proposition of how they could look and operate after being reworked. Figure 1.2 was generated using the same program Matthews incorporated in

their plan. It shows how the same 78 feet of width can be repurposed into a more pedestrian friendly space. More importantly, they also used cross sections and 3-D imagery to portray the future should their propositions be accepted. A similar approach, in combination with a visual preference exercise can be a great way to draw out the preferred physical characteristics of a community. *For an excerpt from Town of Matthews' streetscape plan, see Appendix F.*
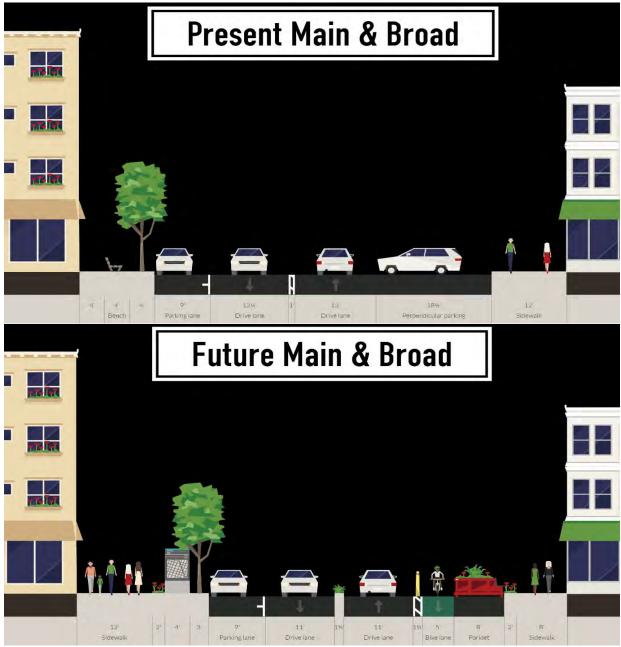
Figure 1.2: Main and Broad - Now and Future

1.9.1.2 Two Hour Parking Problem on Main

The Aforementioned City of Decatur again serves as a source for parking best practices. Since parking permits within the MSA have seemingly failed to launch, metered parking should be explored. It serves as a low maintenance, low resource method of providing a desired outcome. Downtown Decatur provides multiple, place-dependent options. It also has a rate for people making short trips, including a nickel charge for 2 minute trips. In the most high-demand areas, there is an exponential rise in charges after a few hours. This would be the key to deterring workers from occupying important spots. The key would be finding the sweet spot, which does not discourage visitors, but is sufficient enough for employees to make a short trip from the rear lot. A single, digital meter per side of block, with online payment options would cut down on reconciliation time and resources. *See Appendix G for Decatur's parking rates.*

2. Comprehensive Plan Community Engagement

2.1. Introduction

The City of Tonawanda is currently engaged in the process of updating its comprehensive plan. The Plan has not been augmented since 2002. The comprehensive plan is the culmination of a planning process that establishes the official land use policy of a community and presents goals and a vision for the future that guides official decision making (Coon, 2015). While a comprehensive plan is not a requirement for municipalities in New York State, Tonawanda's currently adopted plan was last updated in 2002. The typical timeframe for a comprehensive plan is 10- 15 years, and as the City moves forward to progressively plan for the future, community input remains a priority. The City has had success in their community outreach programs, including those for Local Waterfront Redevelopment Program (LWRP), and the Main Street Area. Steering committee meetings, public meetings, project branding, developing social media resources, and drafting a community vision are among the initiatives to date. Supplemental to the Main Street market Area Analysis of this report, an initial outreach method for the Tonawanda Main Street Program involved engaging the downtown business community in the program's development.

In late 2016, an informal business survey was conducted primarily through in-person interviews with business owners and representatives. The purpose was to reveal firsthand insights regarding community issues, concerns, and opportunities for growth in the Main Street Area, as well as help the City develop a database of information pertaining to downtown businesses. Just a few months prior, with the connectivity afforded by a social media presence, the City was able to present a community survey to residents and stakeholders asking key questions about how residents view and feel about the community they live in. Most recently, the City has also worked with high school students to ascertain what the younger desires their City. The responses that resulted from these recent outreach efforts, specifically the community survey, were referenced in the team's development of a public outreach meeting aimed at better understanding resident and stakeholder values regarding the built environment.

2.1.1. Community Survey

The City of Tonawanda conducted a general community survey in 2016. The 20 questions therein

served to gauge residents' impressions of existing housing stock, commercial activity, and overall quality of life within the municipality.

There were 356 respondents who participated in the online survey, most of whom were residents of the City. When asked why they choose to reside in Tonawanda, 71% of respondents cited being close to family a determining factor. Around 9% favored the tax rate. Respondents also expressed desire for increased focus on safety, crime, vacancy, and foreclosure prevention, all aspects which reflect a direct relation to, or can largely be influenced by the built environment. Of the infrastructure in the City, roads were viewed as fair, while sidewalk curbs were perceived to be in need of work. Several respondents showed an interest in the construction of more new single-family homes, and less multi-family units. The lack of local retail, shopping, and restaurants was a shared concern among survey-takers. On a positive note, the waterfront and housing were viewed as the best assets for attracting new citizens. For residents, city services, city schools, and recreational activities are very important to the quality of life in Tonawanda. Over half of the respondents of the survey would support an increase in the city taxes, should they be met with superior services.

It is without question that the other recent public outreach efforts by the City are valuable to the purpose of the comprehensive plan update. However, the knowledge gained through this particular survey provided insight on resident perspectives in a way that allowed their general observations to be molded into a more specific set of questions, with an intent to further inform current planning efforts specific to the built environment.

2.2. The Role of Community Engagement

When preparing community plans, community outreach and engagement should play an ongoing role in plan development. Citizens are 'engaged' when they play a meaningful role in the deliberations, discussions, decision-making and/or implementation of projects or programs affecting them (Bassler, 2008). There are many different ways to effectively obtain resident opinions and feedback, including conducting online surveys, traditional surveys, and visual surveys. Whether the goal of community outreach is to inform, consult, engage, or collaborate, there are many ways to effectively accomplish these tasks. Some outreach methods include focus groups and workshops, design charrettes, surveys and interviews, web-based engagement such as social networking, or in this case, a public meeting.

In 2014, a Community Planning Toolkit was developed to guide community outreach and engagement efforts. Public meetings provide an opportunity to consult large numbers of people, and can be organized to allow for small group discussions, where the community can provide feedback. There are often opportunities for participants to set or influence the agenda, and to ask questions. According to this guide for effective outreach and engagement techniques, small groups are an essential element of public meeting to engage people effectively (Community Places, 2014). These factors were taken into consideration in the planning and implementation of the public outreach portion of this report.

2.2.1. Importance of Community Engagement

When a municipality truly covets the input of its citizens, community plans begin to echo the will of the people. To fall short in this respect could mean disenfranchising a constituency, and eventually losing their support. The most effective way to reach an acceptable consensus on community issues is to consult residents on matters that may affect their everyday lives. The most valuable asset any community has is the people that live, work, and play there. These residents offer first-hand knowledge on the strengths and weaknesses of their community. Therefore, with the inclusion of their ideas and feedback, City officials benefit from diversity of thought, and a laymen's perspective that may have been overlooked if residents were not involved. Allowing the residents to be involved in the planning process gives them a sense of belonging and importance. As a result, the relationship that a governing body has with its stakeholders and residents becomes more trustworthy and healthy.

2.2.2. Why Engage Citizens in the Comp. Plan?

According to research conducted by the Pennsylvania State University Cooperative Extension, citizen engagement involves the following five elements:

1. Increasing citizen knowledge about a community issue
2. Encouraging application of said knowledge
3. Applying said knowledge to community building
4. Creating opportunities for citizens to engage each other
5. Ensuring that these opportunities are regular and ongoing
   (Bassler, 2008).

Engaging citizens in the comprehensive plan increases the likelihood that projects will be accepted. It creates a local network of community stakeholders that are willing to work together. This allows for ongoing discussions of improving communities, communication between residents, and an increased understanding on how local governments works. Participating in the planning process can build trust within a community between its residents. With trust comes an explicit responsibility to one another, which could in theory, could prompt more vigilant property maintenance and reporting of violations.

2.3. Exercises

2.3.1. Visual Preference Survey

A VPS is a visualization tool that allows participants to provide feedback on various images. For planning purposes, examples of architectural styles, landscaping, streetscaping, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and signage are a few of the many possibilities. This process involves showing participants a number of images within each built environment category and asking them to select their preferred image. VPS assists communities in determining which components of a policy, plan, or project contribute positively to a community's desired image, sense of place, historic character, and surrounding environment (Scott, 2013). A VPS can also be used as a community engagement tool that allows for citizen based land use planning, visualization in land use and transportation planning, as well as visioning and consensus building (Delaware). Participating in a VPS allows citizens and local leaders to actively partake and offer public input as a factor in the decision making process with regard to the built environment.

When designing a VPS, steps defined by the Institute of Public Administration at University of Delaware:

1. Determine the type of VPS
2. Collect images
3. Develop the survey tool
4. Administer the survey
5. Analyze the results
6. Apply findings to a planning process
   (Complete Communities, 2017)

There are three different types of VPS. The first one is the community specific, which are photographs of actual design options within a community; the second is conceptual, and uses rendered images that provide visual/graphic representations of conceptual design options. The third approach includes images of design options in another similar community, which could be applied to the subject location. The images used for a VPS can either be taken during field work, or chosen from web collections of stock photos. The images must be categorized in broad themes –e.g. homes, streets, sidewalks, etc.–. In addition to this, each category may have four to six image options for participants to pick from. The VPS can be presented in a number of ways including a written ballot, a structured set of self-administered questions, a facilitated discussion, a focus group format, an open semi-structured forum, or an online survey. A VPS can be administered either in person or through an electronic survey. When conducted in person, it is mostly used at public meetings. If conducted instead as an electronic survey, the municipality should first inform the public by creating and distributing fliers to community groups and providing a link to the survey on the municipal website. Analyzing the results from the VPS involves ranking the images chosen by the participants from most preferred to least preferred. After the results are calculated it can be used in planning contexts such as comprehensive or master plans, zoning and subdivision amendments, community design standards, and determining priorities for capital improvement projects and transportation investments.

2.3.1.1. Benefits

Visual preference surveys promote public understanding of the built environment. Participants can learn why their community is designed the way it is. It adds a layer of responsibility, for better or worse, among all, in the outcomes of their neighborhoods. A VPS is relatively cost effective depending on the number of visual options to be displayed, their quality, and the source. They can be administered using municipal personnel and resources or through a consulting firm. It flexible, user-friendly technique that enables participants to express their community design preferences through visual selection.

2.3.2. Historic – Current –Future Exercise

The historic – current – future exercise is meant for residents to develop a consensus on community ***values*** and goals. The residents and stakeholders were asked to identify historic, current, and future values for the community. After doing this simple activity, they can reach a consensus on

what the community means generally means to locals, and what steps are necessary for the collective, public and private alike, to meet their goals.

2.4. Public Outreach Meeting

In an attempt to gain community feedback for the purposes of shaping a new comprehensive plan, the City of Tonawanda conducted a public outreach meeting. The event took place on April 19, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in Tonawanda High School. Among those involved in orchestrating the event were the Geography and Planning department at Buffalo State College, Clark Patterson Lee, WWS Planning, and Landscape Architect Joy Kuebler.

2.4.1. Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the meeting was to gain an agreed-upon set of collective **values**, and desired vision from stakeholders to guide future development of the built environment within their community. The built environment includes all of the physical parts of where we live, work, and play, such as homes, buildings, streets, open spaces, and infrastructure. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the built environment influences a person's level of physical activity, and long term health. These aspects contribute to a person's overall quality of life. For example, inaccessible or nonexistent sidewalks and bicycle or walking paths contribute to sedentary habits. These habits lead to poor health outcomes such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer (National Center for Environmental Health, 2011).

In a community like the City of Tonawanda, whose vision statement evokes sustainability and lifelong residency, development of the built environment is critical to attaining such goals. The implementation of forward-thinking development in this regard is pivotal to the idea of being a **Sustainable City**, which is defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."(Brundtland, 1987). The focus of this public outreach meeting aligned with a number of key principles designed to guide municipalities interested in sustainable development, with the intent of creating more livable communities, lower costs, and a safe, healthy environment. VPS and a visioning exercise allowed community members to share their preferences for design of the built environment among a set of alternatives, which can be more honest and instinctual than answering survey questions

2.4.2. Overview

Citizen turnout was comprised of 22 local residents. Each registered by recording their name and email. They were given a clicker as a means of selecting their preferences during the VPS exercise. Before taking their seat in the auditorium, they were invited to place push pins to identify on a map where they live or work in the City. Notably, all participants identified they lived in the City of Tonawanda by mapping their location with a clear pin; the option to map their workplace or place of business with a green pin was not utilized at all. After mapping their location, but prior to the implementation of the VPS, participants were asked to raise their hands if they owned their homes. At this time, a large portion of participants did so. When asked to raise their hands if they either owned, or worked at a business within City limits, it was revealed that no one fit this demographic.

City of Tonawanda Mayor Rick Davis spoke about the City's ongoing planning efforts, including an explanation of the comprehensive plan. The visual preference survey, and the historic-current-future exercise were explain briefly as well. Mayor Davis also spoke about the importance of a distressed property task force and made some additional acknowledgements of the actors involved in making the meeting possible. Wendy Weber of WWS Planning elaborated upon the pre-comprehensive planning activities, planning process itself, and added a brief description of the findings from previous public outreach endeavors.

Brian Kulpa of Clark Patterson Lee conducted the Visual Preference Survey portion of the meeting. He first explained the purpose of the VPS and how it will help shape the future of Tonawanda. After the visual preference survey was done, participants were taken to the cafeteria to participate in a historic-current-future exercise. They were broken up into five different tables and told to write brief descriptions of assets they value from the past, current assets to maintain, and future desires for the City. To conclude the session, citizens anonymously submitted *one* thing that they would change, improve, implement, or create for the City of Tonawanda. *For the full VPS results, see Appendix H.*

2.4.3. Visual Preference Survey

While developing the VPS, research was conducted on other municipalities that have successfully utilized this technique when updating their comprehensive plan. The planning activities of Peachtree, Georgia and Casey Lake, Minnesota were two models the team used as a guide. In

addition to these materials, the University of Delaware step-by-step instructions of how to properly conduct a VPS was also referenced during creation.

2.4.3.1. Methods

Before images for the VPS options were chosen, the team identified which parts of the built environment should be included in the survey. Neighborhoods, housing, street trees, signage, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, lighting, building design, and parking lots were the subject of the survey. Most of the images used were from field research conducted within the City itself, and other contextually similar Western New York communities. However, the purpose of the survey was to not only provide choices for built aspects of the environment currently being used, but to also provide insight into what could potentially be implemented or built. Therefore, some imagery of outside locales was included. This was to avoid any bias, and offer the participants a diverse range of images to choose from.

The application software used to assemble the survey was Turning Technologies. This application allowed us to upload the images into a PowerPoint, and allowed participants to use clickers to pick their preferred designs.

2.4.3.2 Findings

Responses from the 22 participants were collected as they voted for their preference on a number of subtopics relevant to the development of the City's built environment. The first question of the VPS asked respondents the simple question: "Does your clicker work? The purpose of this was to crosscheck responses against the amount of clickers distributed, and hash out technical difficulties. Next, participants began the VPS exercise by choosing from four options regarding neighborhood design. When asked "Which of these street scenes best aligns with how you envision and value neighborhoods?" participants collectively voted for option A (Figure 2.1**)** at a rate of 73%.

The following question on focused on the topic of property maintenance, with the aim of determining what level of value participants placed on upkeep of private homes within their neighborhoods. While the New York State Legislature has enacted laws directing the development and implementation of an integrated building and fire code for the state, responsibility for administering and enforcing the Uniform Code and the Energy Code falls on the cities, towns, villages, and counties. Therefore, it is necessary for each municipal governing body to develop and implement a program for enforcement of the code within municipal boundaries. For this reason, it

was important to address the community's values in relation to such standards. Participants were asked: "When considering these houses, which of these images best represents your expectations of housing quality in your neighborhood?" Responses revealed an inclination towards option D, which was preferred by half participants, followed by option A, which gained 27% of votes. Least preferable maintenance standard was represented by option C, which received only a 5% vote.

Figure 2.1: Neighborhoods Design Option A

With regard to street trees and urban forestry, participants were asked to vote their preference in a survey question that asked "Thinking about street trees, which of these would you prefer as your street?" Participants responded at 63% in favor of option C, shown in Figure 2.2. A close second favorite for Streets and Urban Forest was Option B, receiving 32% of votes; the least preferred was option A, which showed a street with no trees whatsoever, and received no votes.

Participants were then asked to select their ideal pedestrian crosswalks with regard to safety and comfort. Participants were asked the question: "Travelling as a pedestrian, which option would you most value in your neighborhood and community?" Respondents revealed their preference for option A, which captured 36% of the votes. Responses esponses were somewhat equally distributed in this survey question, with options C and D tying for second at 32% each. They were least fond of option B, which received no votes in its favor.

The group was next asked "If you were riding your bicycle through your neighborhood or community, which one of these would make you most comfortable as a cyclist?" Participants preferred option A, which shown in Figure 2.3 and received a 40% share. This option provides a painted on buffer to separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic, as well as a painted bicycle lane. Preference decreased for the other options on a similar scale to the level of bicycle accommodations in each photo. Voter preference therefore decreased for options D, C, and B, with respondents voting at 25%, 20%, and 15%, respectively. Two participants declined to vote on this portion of the survey.

Figure 2.2: Streets and Urban Forest Option C

After a brief description of the most preferred bicycle routes options, participants were asked to give a show of hands for those who consistently use bicycling as a means of transportation, to which many affirmed. Although not a part of the VPS, this question allowed the facilitator to point out that this segment of participants could potentially provide especially valuable input on bicycle infrastructure improvements, as it is a part of the built environment they engage with often.

A selection of bicycle rack styles was considered next. In order to determine what style of bicycle rack was ideal, participants were asked: "Which style bicycle rack do you find most appropriate for your community or neighborhood?" All responded, and voting results revealed a 41% preference for option B, followed by option A at 32%. Least appealing to the group was option D, which received a 9% vote.

Citizens were then given a choice between a few freestanding signs. In this instance, responses indicated a strong preference for a neat, modern, human-scale signage, with 80% selecting option D. The least supported were options A and C, depicting an oversized choice, and an alphabet sign, respectively. Two participants were in support of LED signage, while two others declined to vote.

Figure 2.3: Bicycle Lanes Option A

Similar to the results for the previous survey question, participants showed a strong preference at 62% in favor of option D for multi-use freestanding signage. The question posed was "Which is an appropriate sign for multiple-use plazas and shopping centers in your neighborhood and community?" The results further reinforces an appreciation for human scale fixtures. One participant did not respond, but of those who chose to, none showed preference for option B, which was mid-size sign with back lighting. While options A and C were respectively second and third in line, both were similar in their style of commercial business display. However, the preferred options for this survey question were clearly those that displayed information in a way such that it could be seen from the street, and provided an aesthetically pleasing visual.

Participants were then asked to think of the entry points into the City of Tonawanda. With regard to Gateway signs, voters were asked "Which of these sign styles best reflects your community?" Although one participant declined to select a preference for this survey question, remaining votes were in favor for option C (62%). This option showed gateway signage consisting of a wooden painted sign grounded by two stone pillars. Options B and D were tied at 14%, while the least appealing was option C, which received only two votes.

Figure 2.4: Multi-Use Signs Option D

Next, attention was called to **_street furniture_**. When asked, "Which of the bench designs would you most like to see within your community and neighborhood?" 68% selected option A. This option depicted a sleek black wrought iron style bench with arm rests and backing to support the spine of those using the benches. The group was somewhat open to option D (23%), which was wooden bench with backing support and wrought iron arm rests and legs. Of the options provided, no participant showed preference for option B, a simple wooden bench with no back or arm rest supports.

Thinking about the downtown area, participants were encouraged to think about the lighting currently used there. Given the City's efforts to revitalize the historic area, the question "What style light pole best reflects your preference on your Main Street?" was posed. Respondents voted for option B at 43%. This lighting had a retro design, but also utilized a solar panel as its power source, reflecting participants' values of a sustainable community. Residents also leaned toward option D, which included the human-scale lighting over sidewalks, commercial-scale lighting facing street traffic, a style that is reflective of a historic community. While this option addressed the lighting needs of the walking pedestrians and drivers alike, it lacked solar panels. Notably, out of twenty one respondents for this survey question, only one showed a preference for option C, the lighting style currently being utilized on Main Street

Figure 2.5: Pedestrian-Parking Buffers, Options A (left) and D(right)

Next citizens were asked to vote on the manner in which parking lots are separated from pedestrian sidewalks. In a question that focused solely on pedestrian-parking buffers, participants were asked "Thinking about buffers between sidewalks and commercial uses and parking lots, which do you prefer in your community and neighborhood?" In a vote where all participants responded, option A, pictured to above in Figure 2.5, received no support, while the other option was clearly desired.

Figure 2.6: Building and Storefront Signage, option C

As the focus of the survey shifted to the needs of the downtown and commercial areas, participants were asked to choose Building and Storefront signs. The survey question stated "Thinking about building signs in walkable downtown shopping areas, which type of sign do you prefer?" Option C, depicted in figure 2.6, lead the way at 42%, followed by 26% for option B. While the preferred style of signage utilized wrought iron lighting fixtures above the actual signage, the second most preferred

option was that of a wrought iron sign protruding at a ninety degree angle from the commercial building itself, suggesting that participants may prefer signage that complements the historic feel of the area.

Figure 2.7: Parking Lot Style, options A(left) and B (right)

The issue of over-parked lots has been a cause for complaint among City residents for some time. Therefore, a survey question dedicated solely to parking lot design was included. When asked "Which of the following parking lot designs would you prefer in your community?" a clear preference was revealed for parking lots to contain some trees and foliage, with option B gaining a 55% approval rate; this was followed by option A, which received a 27% vote. This result indicates the community may support efforts that will not only make the lots more aesthetically pleasing, but would have a positive impact on the environment as well, even if it is at the expense of some parking capacity. According to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), built up areas that are hotter than nearby rural areas because surface temperatures have an indirect but significant influence on air temperatures. For example, parks and vegetated areas, which typically have cooler surface temperatures, tend to have cooler air temperatures. Heat islands can affect communities by increasing summertime peak energy demand, air conditioning costs, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, heat-related illness, and decreasing water quality. Lot vegetation serves to reduce the amount of runoff they create. As expected, option D, which showed an asphalt-only lot, received no votes for preference.

While on the topic of parking lots, the survey also addressed lot lighting levels at night, in a question that asked "What is an appropriate level of parking lot lighting in your community, neighborhood, or near your home?". Twenty one participants responded in favor of option C, the well-lit option of the four choices provided.

Figure 2.8: Building Design, option B

Lastly, the survey addressed the concern of actual building design standards, with a comparison of four different façade styles. The question was "When considering these images, which type of building and design would you prefer in your community?" Again, one participant declined to submit a vote, and the remaining responses showed a preference for option B by 48%, followed by option D at 33%.

It is clear through the responses from this sample of Tonawanda residents, that there is overall support for sustainable development in the City's built environment. Survey responses concerning residential neighborhoods favored a reasonable level of property maintenance for homes, and an inclination towards a high level of urban forestry, a sentiment that was echoed in other areas as well. With regard to parking lots and their buffers to pedestrian walkways, residents preferred to see more trees and foliage, as opposed to less or none at all. Whether these results are due to resident's environmental consciousness, or simply representative of what is most aesthetically pleasing is uncertain.

In the areas of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, options that promoted safe pedestrian crossing, bicycling, and a high level of walkability were strongly supported. Functional bike racks, easily

definable crosswalks and bike lanes with buffers creating a physical separation from traffic were perceived as the most safe and comfortable options, and therefore received preference. Street furniture such as benches were preferred to have a backrest for spinal support, with wrought-iron material complimentary to the historic feel.

Responses for appropriate signage revealed a propensity for human-scale, bold and uniform design aesthetics, with respect to both freestanding single-use and freestanding multi-use signage. Signage with light-emitting diodes (LED), did not receive an overwhelming amount of support in either case. Responses concerning building and storefront signage gave forth the perception that lighted signs would be acceptable in a context where they serve only to illuminate the sign at night without causing light spillage. Values surrounding gateway signage reflected the community's fondness of a simple design with historic detailing.

Similarly, consensus regarding lighting for the downtown area reinforced the idea of historic features and detailing. However, the selected option also included solar panels utilized as a renewable energy source to power the lights themselves. Parking lot lighting seemed to receive preference based on the perceived level of safety at night. As such, participants chose the well-lit option, a decision that perhaps failed to take into account the effect on residential properties located near commercial lots. As for the design standard for commercial buildings, residents expressed interest in architectural designs with a sophisticated feel, accentuated by historic detailing. Overall, it would appear that the current draft of the comprehensive plans vision statement is an accurate depiction of what Tonawanda resident's value, as they would like to see more sustainable development practices in future development efforts to create a lifelong community.

2.4.4. Historic-Current-Future Exercise

The version of exercise used at the meeting was designed with three concentric circles with the largest circle containing historic values, the middle circle containing the current values, and the smallest circle containing the future values for the community. Participants were split into small groups of four to five per table at this time. For the historic circles, residents and stakeholders were asked what historic characteristics and elements of your community and neighborhood do you value? What cannot or should not change? The current circle asked residents what about their community or neighborhood was most valued. Next, the future circle asked residents and stakeholders to think ahead, and deliberate on what the core values, priorities, and goals for their

community and neighborhoods should be. Lastly, the final portion of the exercise asked residents to write down *one* thing that they could change, improve, implement, in City if only given a single choice. *For full results of the Historic-Current-Future exercise, see Appendix I*

2.4.4.1. Historic

Responses indicated the waterfront holds significant value to City of Tonawanda residents, and this should not change. They clearly appreciate the access to the water and the activities that take place there. Another historic value to the residents is the sense of community and its close-knit feel. Consensus was that the City is a good place to raise family.

2.4.4.2. Current

Similar to the values expressed in the Main Street program's business survey, many of the residents indicated that they enjoy the concerts, festivals, and shows that the City periodically provides. In addition to this, participants said that they like the diverse housing stock in the City. What they do not like currently is the limited transit options, the lack of water themed restaurants, the lack of investment along Young Street, and that downtown that has a dated streetscape and limited commercial activity.

2.4.4.3. Future

Overall, the future values for the City were based around the built environment, economy, and neighborhood improvements. Many of the participants want the downtown area of the City to be updated with new building styles, better crosswalks, bike paths, and better designed parking lots. They indicated a belief that measures should be taken to capture North Tonawanda foot traffic, attract tourism, explore alternative enterprises like food trucks, and incentivize more businesses. For neighborhoods, participants would like to see improved parking, incentives for property improvements, and an absentee landlord registry.

2.4.4.4. One Change

The participants were asked, if they had to choose, what *one* thing they would like to see change in the city. Among the pressing concerns were better communication between residents and government officials, infrastructure improvements, walkability and foot traffic, and decommissioning Young Street. One of the significant changes participants would like to see is City

to beautify what they already have. In more descriptive terms, they would be open to more artwork, murals, flowers, and trees.

2.5. Recommendations

Based off the results from the public meeting, some recommendations were formulated. The majority of the input received from the participants was related on the built environment, neighborhood, economy, and quality of life. Based upon their desires, The City of Tonawanda may want to consider the following:

2.5.1. Downtown Tonawanda

- Explore form-based zoning regulation
- Implement solar powered facilities where feasible
- Consider road diet, primarily on Young Street
- Utilize incentives to attract business to Main Street and Niagara Street
- Encourage artistic creativity to foster a sense of place
- Encourage non-vehicular transportation by constructing applicable facilities

2.5.2. Neighborhoods

- Extensive tree and vegetation planting
- Intracity bike paths and facilities
- Incentivize investment in housing stock
- Develop and frequently update absentee landlord registry.

2.5.3. Built Environment

- Fix sidewalks
- Rework crosswalks with contemporary design (e.g. bumpouts)
- Encourage form continuity through zoning
- Identify City entrances and stylize accordingly

2.5.4. Quality of Life

- Build kayak launches on Riverwalk

- Improve openness and communication between government and citizen
- Strictly enforce smoking ban in parks

2.5.5. Community Outreach

- Conduct walking-meetings and tours to get a field response from residents
- Incorporate introductory planning into secondary civics education

Aside from the aforementioned recommendations, some observations were made regarding the effectiveness of the public meetings outreach efforts, as measurable by the number of residents who were informed about the meeting and chose to participate. Ideally, the higher the level of public participation, the more representative the general consensus reached will be. During the public meeting, several residents remarked on the topic of outreach visibility. For this reason, it was deemed necessary and appropriate to also compile recommendations for future public outreach and engagement (POE) methods, aimed at achieving a higher level of resident and stakeholder engagement.

An **effectiveness initiative** concerning various POE methods, conducted by the San Francisco Planning Department examined outreach strategies and their effectiveness. The variables measured included the types of outreach strategies as well as the venues used for engaging the community. Additionally, the American Planning Association has developed comprehensive plan standards for sustaining places. Through the Sustaining Places Initiative, the comprehensive plan was recognized as the ideal vehicle for addressing the sustainability challenge (American Planning Association, 2017).

These findings, as well as input from Tonawanda residents, would suggest options for POE that City officials may want to consider. Outreach efforts would likely produce more effective results should the City of Tonawanda formally acknowledge a POE program. By adopting goals to develop a long-term communications plan, inclusive of public outreach and engagement, employee communications, media relations, marketing, and website management, the City would set a foundation for success in their ongoing POE efforts. Once this is established, it is important to monitor and evaluate communications initiatives regularly. In addition to securing additional staff for communications report, it would be advantageous should the City explore options that seek diverse participation in the plan development process. This could manifest through the investigation

of opportunities to improve youth engagement. Research on developing effective engagement suggests that the youth can offer new viewpoints, and have valuable skills and abilities (Bassler, 2008). Engagement could potentially take place in schools by incorporating introductory planning into secondary civics education, or by simply incentivizing participation in planning efforts by offering in exchange, a number of community service hours, which are often a graduation requirement for high school seniors. Also, the research report identifies the City's website as a potential means to youth outreach, by advertising to them and developing a section specially designed for their input and interaction. If youth feel that there has been genuine space created for them and their ideas and issues, they are likely to stay engaged (Bassler, 2008).

Another beneficial choice is the promotion of leadership development in disadvantaged communities during the planning process. When communities feel as though their input is valuable and impactful, they are more likely to participate in engagement efforts. While these options would require some additional resources, the City could also conduct walking neighborhood tours to gain in-field responses and feedback from residents on an ongoing basis, extending beyond the update of the comprehensive plan. With minimal costs, the City faces much to gain with the creative expansion of POE efforts.

3. Distressed Properties Program

3.1. Introduction

Property code enforcement often brings with it a negative connotation, especially if the municipality has previously been lax in its enforcement. In order to understand the importance of code enforcement and its benefits to a community, a proper definition of code enforcement is needed. Code enforcement is the strategy, procedure, and legal tool that local government code enforcement departments deploy to gain compliance with applicable state and local housing, building, zoning and land use codes and to abate the public nuisance conditions caused by blighted, abandoned buildings, and vacant properties (City of Youngstown, 2015). Code enforcement is important to a local governments for a number of reasons including it stabilizes the housing market, keeps property taxes stable, promotes investment, and fosters an environment here people do not view property improvement expenditures as sunk costs. It is also important for the residents to understand that code enforcement's main goal preserving community character. However, if voluntary compliance does not occur, or the issue is not corrected within a reasonable amount of time, punitive measures must be taken for the greater good.

In layman's terms, code enforcement acts like a dress code for the community by setting standards as to how the community should look and feel. Irresponsible property owners who neglect to keep their end of the bargain are analogous to an ill dressed guest at formal invent. This could precipitate a slippery slope where everyone, having observed this seemingly acceptable behavior, dress down as well. For housing purposes, the postponing of regular upkeep –informal clothing– becomes a neighborhood trend. An issue arises when the level of disrepair rises to an unmanageable level, and those who actually uphold their end of the unspoken neighborly bargain move someplace where their pride in their home is not only appreciated, but par for the course.

However, what should occur if the residents of the initial the community refuses to accept the apathetic behavior of the minority, and come together to demand standards are adhered to. Furthermore, a proactive measure of enforcement can be accomplished with a proactive approach by the **Code Enforcement Officer** (CEO). This entails a CEO is actively looking for violations instead of relying on complaints from neighbors. An effective code enforcement program will ensure that property owners are held accountable for violations found on their properties. *More on CEOs in the 'key actors' section.*
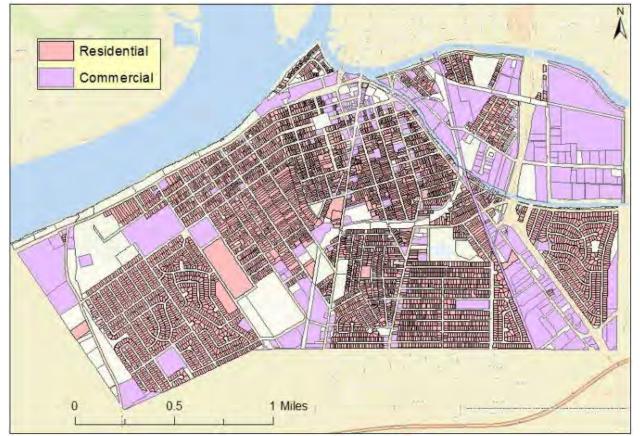
While the standards of code enforcement do not need to be at the level of dress code at a 'black tie gala,' a community should realize the importance of code compliance and its enforcement. Committing to proactive in enforcement of codes will help to create a better-looking community, which will keep residents content, and encourage outsiders to visit or live in the area. Basic Categories of Code Violations include:

- Vacant and Unsecured Buildings
- Permit Violations
- Housing
- Property Maintenance
- Landscaping/Tall Grass
- Snow Removal from Sidewalks
- Junk Storage
- Abandoned/ Vehicles that aren't allowed (RVS, camping trailers, semis)
- Garbage and Refuse Animal waste
- Graffiti

In order to assess which types of code enforcement practices might prove most effective, a number of articles regarding best practices were researched. Each community is unique, and there is no panacea, so techniques which seemed most applicable to City of Tonawanda were examined in depth. Some of these practices included an incremental approach towards a fully implemented plan, others involved community events, a more efficient use of resources, using technology to streamline the process, and the creation of different types of databases and registries. A discussion of vacant property and landlord registries is offered later in this chapter. Benefits of code enforcement include:

- Maintains the appearance and functioning of a neighborhood.
- Stabilize and increase property values.
- Attract new residents and demand for an area / maintain current residents.
- Attract new businesses to an area and help current businesses.
- Keep neighborhoods healthy and safe.
- Turn vacant spaces into vibrant places.
- Protect against physical, visual, and economic deterioration.

- Mitigate and resolve negative impacts
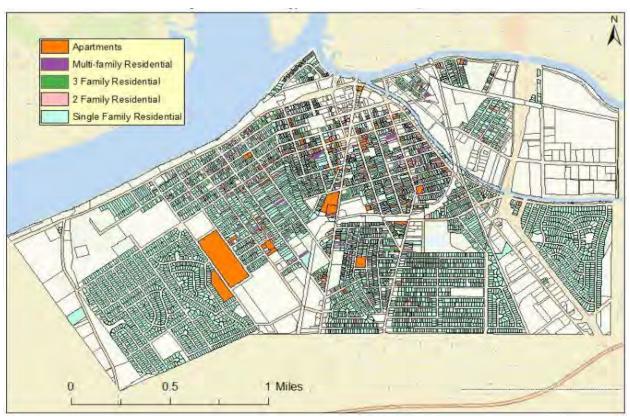
3.1.1. Data

Map 3.1: City of Tonawanda Residential

The City of Tonawanda has 6,404 parcels located within its borders, as seen in Map 3.1. Residential parcels, which include single-family, two-family, three-family, multi-family, and apartments, make up 5,531 (86%) of all city parcels. Maintaining the values of the City's homes will help stabilize the housing market, encourage investments in the housing market, and allow for minimal tax hikes in the future. On the surface, this does not appear be in the best interest of current residents, but it will also be useful in attracting new residents to the City. Further, it shall be noted that as noncompliance increases in a neighborhood, the health, safety, and security of people in the houses decreases (Lind, 2017). Therefore, it can be presumed that a fully compliant neighborhood is in the best interest of all residents.

The use of computerized technology aids in the efficiency of many jobs, and code enforcement is no different. A database containing the parcel file and attributes –different sets of variables– of each parcel allows for efficient, simpler, and quicker searching of parcel characteristics. The current parcel

file contains data which details the size of the property, type of property, the year it was built, its current owner, and other useful information. Prior to the digital age, analyzing the data of several properties was far more tedious and time consuming.

Map 3.2: City of Tonawanda Residential Property Types

 The data from the City of Tonawanda parcel file suggests that single family homes may not be the source of problem. As seen in map 3.2, single-Family Residential (SFR) homes, homes zoned as 210, make up 4877 of the 6404 (76.1%) parcels within the City and 88.1% of all the residential parcels. However, only 295 (6%) of these SFR parcels are owned by someone who does not live in the 14150 Zip Code. While zip code 14150, is not exclusive to the City of Tonawanda, selecting by this attribute gives a rough estimate of absentee ownership. The issue of disinvestment and code violations often presents itself through income properties. These rental properties are often owned by someone who has no ties to the community or minimal access to the properties. When examining all other residential properties within the City, the proportion of local ownership declines, which implies that more income properties are owned outside of 14150 and its boundaries. These may be

more likely to receive less investment then their owner occupied counterparts, which will lead to disrepair, decline in value, and potentially violation of multiple codes.
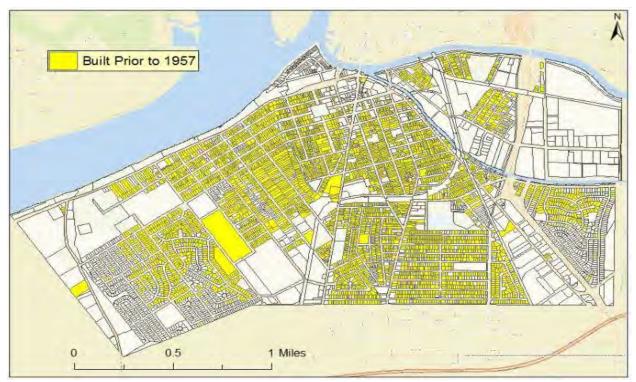
Type of Residence	Residential Parcels	Owner in 14150	%	Owner outside 14150	(%)
Single Family Residential	4877	4582	94%	295	6%
2- Family Residential	475	342	72%	133	28%
3-Family Residential	61	33	54%	28	46%
Multi-family Residential	45	19	42%	26	58%
Apartments	73	20	27%	53	73%

Table 3.1: Two and Three Family Residential Properties whose owner lives outside of 14150

The homes described as 2-Family Residential (2FR) provide an even clearer picture. Two-family residential structures make up 475 parcels, of which 342 (72%) have owners whom reside in the City of Tonawanda. Conversely, 133 (28%) are owned by people living outside of the City limits. This lack of local ownership continues to grow as one examines the entire parcel file. The 3-Family Residential (3FR) group only make up 61 (less than 1%) of the parcels within the City, however, only 342 (54%) are owned locally and 28 (46%) are owned from someone who does not live in 14150. Parcels containing an apartment building (73) make up only 1.1% of the total parcels, yet only 20 (27%) of them are owned locally and 53 (73%) are owned by an entity outside of 14150. Multi-family residential (MFR) parcels (45) represent less than 1% of total, 19 (42%) of which are owned locally and 26 (58%) of which have owners not living in 14150. The total number of residential parcels not owned by someone within the City limits is 535 or approximately 8.3% of the 6404 parcels.

Further examination shows that 1580 of the 5531 or roughly 29% of residential homes were constructed prior to 1917. This means that nearly 3 out of 10 residential parcels are 100 years old or older. Additionally, 4,194 of the 5531, or around 76% of residential stuctures were constructed before 1957; 5,376 (97%) were predate 1979. This is important because older structures tend to be contaminated with lead paint, asbestos, or other hazardous materials. Conversely, the parcel file also shows a Citywide decline in new construction, as only 3% of these parcels were built in the past 38 years.

Map 3.3: City of Tonawanda Residential Properties built prior to 1957

3.2. The Code Enforcement System

Code enforcement is a tool that a municipality uses to protect the health, safety, and well-being of its residents. Enforcement of these local by-laws also has many benefits to the municipality itself. One of the most important results is happier residents, or people who believe that maintenance and investment in their property is worthwhile, and parties who fail to abide by the rules will be penalized. This will also promote investment of neighbors and attract new development and businesses to the area. Another benefit is stabilizing the housing market/values in the community.

3.2.1. Why Code Enforcement Matters

A property that is neglected and falls into disrepair can have impacts beyond the eyesore that it creates. Consider a home that is assessed at $100 thousand, and for reasons unknown, the owner starts to neglect it. Easily observable fixtures –windows, roof siding, etc. – become increasingly degraded. Neighbors will observe the change, and the maintenance needs of their own homes may fall below perception level because they have become accustomed to the lower standards. Those who remain bothered by the situation may move seek refuge elsewhere. A neglected house on the street stifles the market for all surrounding homes. This can lead to a downward spiral of

disinvestment in the neighborhood. This process is often referred to as the **broken window theory**. It is a concept that social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling described in their 1982 article in *The Atlantic*. They argued the significance of the link between disorder and crime. The *broken window* is a symbol of unaccountability (Kirchner, 2014). A neighborhood with one broken window is likely to see an increase of disinvestment if the issue is not corrected in a timely manner. This is because people will change their behavior to suite the conditions around them. If a home has one broken window, it appears not to be a priority for the property owner or the municipality, as a result people believe that others do not care about the properties in a neighborhood. Additionally, this can become a sign to criminals that no one is paying attention to this area, and that it is a preferable place to conduct illegal activities such as squatting, burglaries, arsons or drug use. These too become deterrents for disinvestment and are also a strain on community resources. Now, aforementioned six figure home, after years of neglect may become assessed at $60k. The $100k home which previously brought in $5,000 in tax revenue now commands $3,000. If this devaluation occurs on a large scale, a municipality will usually take one of two measures: raise taxes or reduce services. Neither option makes good on the investments of responsible owners. A perception that a community fails to hold code violators accountable is a toxic one.

If there is any foolproof way for a government to fall out of the favor of their constituency, its volatile housing values. Therefore, code enforcement should be of grave importance to the community, and the municipality alike. The broken window and any other code violations indicate of a lack of accountability. However, the onus is not on property owners alone to address these issues. It is on the government create a fair, comprehensive, enforceable code, with teeth and dedicated resources.

3.2.2. Key actors in Code Enforcement

There are a number of key actors involved in the code enforcement process, each of whom plays an important and distinct roll in maximizing the efficiency, effectiveness, and equitableness of a municipality's code enforcement program. In order to accomplish these **three Es**, each department needs to have the proper tools and resources to complete their job.

Chief elected officials play a vital role in code enforcement. They establish the framework for the code enforcement program. This framework includes developing statutes –the code–, that set the minimum standards residents will be held to. These standards become the by-laws which are unique

to the municipality. For example, the community may decide that it does not want pylon signs in the community, or within a specific district within the community. The community may also wish to limit the size of such signs, or the hours they are permitted to be illuminated. It then becomes the elected official's duty to understand community desires, and prescribe guidelines accordingly. Each one of these specific laws contributes to creating the unique character which makes one community different from another.

"Pylon signs are big tall signs meant to be seen from a distance. Hotels, gas stations, and restaurants along a highway or freeway frequently use these. These signs can advertise a single business or several businesses. Pylon signs like this one are common in shopping centers to prominently advertise the businesses."

Figure 3.1: Pylon Signs

Periodic review of the code will help address loopholes, which maintains or raises the standard under which the community resides. For example, a town may have a code which has not been updated in decades and does not mention cell phone towers. If a home-owner in said town chose to install a cell phone tower in their backyard, the town would have a difficult time preventing its construction.

In order to be as efficient as possible a community should make updating its code a priority. This can be done by reviewing the actual code which is currently in place and, updating it to suit the new conditions which now face the community. It is quite a different world since the City of Tonawanda code was last updated. A new code which addresses any new ideas, such as LED signs or audio advertisements at gasoline stations will help set a standard under which the community is proud to live.

The elected officials of a community also must provide sufficient funding for the code enforcement program (CEP). Efficient code enforcement entails providing all the tools needed to

address, monitor, enforce, and maintain the code enforcement process. The CEP requires funding to employ the manpower necessary to cite the code violators. A judge who will enforce the citations of the code violators is an expense as well. Additionally, the CEP will need adequate funding to acquire and develop the proper tools to carry out an effective program. Further, these tools; such as websites, databases, and GIS software, will require maintenance and periodic updating. If a community decides to develop and utilize these important tools, it is of utmost importance that these necessary resources are accounted for in the annual budget. Further, these tools will require routine maintenance and upgrading. These actions must also be budgeted for. *More on these tools in section 3.3.2.*

The Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) also plays a pivotal role in the CEP. Although the job title includes the term *enforcement,* their job is to only cite those who are in violation of the code. It is the CEO's duty to cite property owners in an efficient, equitable, and effective manner. However, the widely adhered to purely reactive approach is anything but effective. A full time CEO, with proper tools and resources is the best chance toward that end. These tools will allow for the job to be completed with much less effort than if one is not provided tools, limited in access to these tools, or is improperly trained in completing the job.

Another component of code enforcement is the enforcement process. This process consists of a judicial hearing which requires a judge to rule on citations. In order for this to work as efficiently as possible, the judge needs to have adequate resources and conduct hearings that will result in increased compliance of code enforcement violators. These resources include adequate knowledge of these code violation issues and the importance of them in relationship to the municipality, its residents, and property values. The judge must be able to effectively hear all of the cases brought before them. The best chance for success is likely a scenario where courts hold all violators accountable, as leniency will not effectively deter the causal behavior.

A crucial part of code enforcement process involves receiving a complaint for a code violation. For many communities, such as the City of Tonawanda, this is only accomplished when a concerned neighbor calls in a complaint. This type of reactive enforcement carries with it many flaws.

3.2.3. Why the System Fails

Code enforcement programs may not perform as intended to for a variety of reasons. Some examples include a lack of funding or capacity to conduct proactive enforcement efforts or carry out

judicial hearings, inside connections with employees of the municipality, or a lack of proper tools. Code enforcement is by no means a free service, however, and underfunding the program limits its effectiveness.

In order for a code enforcement plan to be effective it needs teeth and tools to enforce the codes. If there is a violation, it needs to be addressed, reported, cited, and upheld in court. Consistent is crucial as well. The City needs to hold all residents, homeowners, businesses, and property owners accountable for maintaining their structures. The CEO must also feel he has the power to make cite anyone, and, if necessary, will be supported by the City's police department. The system fails when all residents are not held to the same standard or enforcement.

Applying fair yet even enforcement will allow for the community to realize that these initiatives are in their best interest. No residents of the community should feel targeted or singled out. Further, those who are in compliance should also feel that their efforts and actions are respected by the neighborhood and the City.

3.3. Towards a Strategic Code Enforcement Model

Research indicates an aggressive yet sensible approach may be the best strategy to reverse a course set by years of reactive enforcement.

3.3.1. Reactive Enforcement

Historically, the approach to code enforcement appears to be predominantly reactive, responding to complaints from nearby property owners. While a reactive plan does have its benefits, particularly allowing concerned neighbors or residents to report code violations, it does not suffice in communities where residents are not as involved in their community, or where housing conditions and the housing markets are not strong. Aside from the free service provided from concerned residents who report locations of violations, a number of issues arise from an approach which is reactive. This would include violations that go unaddressed from lack of a complaint, perception that violations are tolerated or acceptable, exponential deterioration of continually neglected properties, and uneven enforcement of different violations. As time passes, disrepair becomes more expensive to correct. Imagine if all the police officers remained at the station awaiting calls. A wait and see approach is not effective in deterring or preventing crime. This is the way code enforcement currently works for many of communities in the United States, but it is severely lacking.

3.3.2. A Proactive Approach

A proactive approach is one in which the CEO is actively monitoring conditions of properties is necessary. The benefits of this method include not being reliant on a complaint to take action, fostering a safe environment for anonymous complaints, and addressing violations before they become extreme. It establishes a hierarchy of major versus minor violations, and it typically addresses similar violations equally, and unilaterally. Strategic code enforcement operates proactively when and where it can leverage its limited resources to maximize community improvement while still being responsive to everyday demands and needs (Schilling et al, 2015). This **boots on the ground** approach is often seen to be the most effective, as it allows for the CEO to become familiar with the residents, and foster a mutually beneficial relationship with the community. If citizens have the expectation that violations will be addressed, they are more likely to be vigilant in their reporting. Violations will be remedied far earlier in the process, before they become exacerbated. This will make enforcement efforts less costly and time intensive.

According to a report titled *Emerging Practices in Property Maintenance Code Enforcement* published by the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service in 2013, proactive code enforcement has been very helpful in bringing buildings and structures into compliance. The report looked at a number of ways in which different size communities in Tennessee addressed code enforcement. One of the communities, Goodlettsville, with a population of 15,921 is a middle-income suburb of Nashville, and is similar in size to the City of Tonawanda, which has 15,130 residents (US Census Bureau, 2010). The report covers the top three municipalities in Collierville, Goodlettsville, and Knoxville, and includes the average rankings regarding code compliance per 1,000 residents. Goodlettsville finished in second place, bringing 70 cases into compliance, compared to 25 for the State's average. "Goodlettsville and Collierville indicate that step one of their notice procedures involve hand delivery of the citation by the officer, and, when possible, a verbal explanation of compliance options to the property owner. Many cases are handled immediately due to this face-to-face contact (Crawford & O'Brien). Handling the cases this way will help reduce burdens on the judicial system.

Proactive code enforcement can be done through prioritizing and categorizing specific codes and their enforcement. The City may look at prioritizing specific code violations in order to be as efficient as possible, yet residents must also understand that all complaints are important and will all be addressed. Informing the residents of how the process operates from the beginning sets the

precedent that, per the new enforcement policy, the most severe and dangerous code violations will be targeted. Further, prioritizing code violations is an effective way to manage entering the complaints for actions, making schedules, and managing the code enforcement cases. Houses in need of a roof supersede those with unkempt vegetation. The City could focus on offenses will have the greatest negative impact on property values, and deprioritize nuisance code violations, as this may result in the largest return on enforcement resources invested. CEOs could first look to identify issues which could lead to disinvestment, decline in value, or impacts on neighbors' quality of life. If violations are *first come first serve*, enforcement is less effective at meeting its goals. All key actors play a role. For the process to work, the Building Inspector must work in concert with the Department of Public Works (DPW), Sanitation Department, and other Departments of the City. For example, the City may want to take an inventory of its sidewalks, note which areas are in need of the most attention, and act accordingly. This is a more effective than piecemeal infrastructure repair. It would avoid the pitfall of the *squeakiest wheel gets the oil*, which can be a side effect of relying on citizen reporting as the end all be all; the most pressing needs would be addressed first.

3.3.3. Tools and Resources

The tools that a municipality and its CEO have at their disposal are often limited. Therefore, it is best to be creative in order to get the most out of what the community has. The conventional tools most commonly used by CEO shall be discussed, while also exploring a more progressive and technological approach towards addressing, monitoring, and enforcement of code violations. These tools may include ordinances which create registries, technology based tools such as apps, websites, databases, and GIS software. Options for increasing manpower and funding for correcting code violations will be discussed as well.

Compliance is the goal for all municipal Code Enforcement departments. In those cases where voluntary compliance is not realized, or forthcoming, the enforcement agency can use a host of regulatory, administrative, and judicial remedies (Schilling et al, 2015). The most common ways in which code enforcement is accomplished is through citations, daily fines, tax liens, judgements, sales, foreclosures, court hearings, and eminent domain. A description of some of the tools are follows:

Citations: address the problem, note that a complaint was filed, and allow for code violation to be corrected in specified amount of time

<u>Daily Fines:</u> help deter non-compliance behavior; can increase depending on untimely compliance, repeat offenses, or multiple offenses at different properties

<u>Abatements:</u> removal or correction of any code violations

Another tool of the code enforcement program is the implementation of specific ordinances which create registries that classify property types into categories. These registries may include Vacant Property (VPR), Historic Property (HPR), Rental Property (RR), and Repeat Offender Registries (ROR) for property owners who are repeatedly cited for non-compliance.

3.3.3.1. Repeat Offender Registry

A Repeat Offender Registry serves to create another incentive to guide property owners towards compliance. In cases where a property owner consistently fails to comply, is frequently cited, or is apathetic, an additional action may be needed in order to correct their behavior. The creation of an ROR ordinance allows key actors to distinguish between first time offenders, and those who own multiple properties, or have been cited multiple (5+) times. This ordinance is solely based off of the 2-5-2 Austin Texas ordinance. Creation of a similar ordinance for the City of Tonawanda will help identify and target properties with recurring code violations. The quantity or degree of any violations may be changed in order to create a ROR that is tailored specifically for the City of Tonawanda and its residents.

A repeat offender is defined as a multifamily or single family rental property that meets any of the following criteria:

- Two or more separate notices of violation within a consecutive 24-month time period, AND the owner fails to correct the violation(s) within the time frame required by the City official; or

- Five or more notices of violation are issued on separate days for the same property within a consecutive 24-month period, regardless of whether the owner of the property corrects the violations within the time frame required by the CEO; or

- Two or more citations for conditions that are dangerous or impair habitability are issued for the same property within a consecutive 24-month period.

The ROR process is designed to provide resolution through an expedited enforcement/compliance mechanism for responsible parties who repeatedly violate City ordinances and who have

demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to responsibly maintain their property. Each property that qualifies as a repeat offender under the ordinance must register as such with the City –and pay any fees set forth in the ROR ordinance–, and remain registered as such until two years pass without any violations. A violation of the provisions of the City of Tonawanda Municipal Code could also include an administrative fine in the amount of $100.00 for each violation. Second and third repeat violations occurring within twelve months of the first violation could be punishable by fines of $200.00 and $500.00, respectively. These tiered fines for multiple or frequent offenses could apply to the ROR registry, general citations, or both.

Failure to register could result in a separate offense that incurs a daily fine of $100 per family at each property, until rectified. For example if a repeat offender's violation is located in a single family home at 123 Peach Street, and the offender does not register for 5 business days, then one can expect to have an additional 5 violations added to their list of violations and $500 in fines. Additionally, any property which was removed from the ROR and subsequently re-added could be mandated to register for an additional 3-5 years. Landlords who fail to register could be prevented from renting out any properties if they are supposed to register on the ROR and be subject to daily fines, not to exceed $100.

The collection of fines, inspection costs, and abatement costs imposed against property owners may prove to be an issue. The City should explore ways which these judgments can be obtained. Typically fines have been placed as liens against the owner and rolled into the property taxes. It may be more equitable to be excluded for the taxes, and rather consist of a judgement issued against the homeowner themselves. This will prevent the City or County from having to cover any unnecessary costs in the cases of tax delinquency. In extreme cases, sufficient enough accumulation of fines can be shown as cause to repossess the subject property. The issuance of fines or abatement costs may also necessitate being kept separate, so that interest may accrue, discouraging untimely reconciliation. These fines and debts may be issued to a collection agency which will place the financial burden/judgement upon the property owner. The lien approach has some benefit as well; the City can recoup losses if the property is sold, as the title will be encumbered with the outstanding taxes.

3.3.3.2. Inspections

The Repeat Offender Registry is a tool created for the purpose of combatting disinvestment, substandard or unsafe living conditions, and non-compliance of landowners who fall within the guidelines of the ROR. In order to be effective, the ROR must rely on inspections from a CEO. This will allow tenants to file complaints when appropriate, but also not fear their landlord's repercussions. Additionally, these inspections will allow the CEO permission to enter and document interior conditions of the property. Inspections may take place at any period, given 24 hours' notice in provided. However, inspections should typically take place between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., and be will be conducted by the proper authorities, displaying proper City identification.

Investigations where Repeat Offenders (RO) are identified will proceed through a procedural fast track. The discovery of a repeat offense is cause to:

- Issue a repeat/recurring violation warning notice

The Repeat Offender Registry Warning Notice will be a final notice of violation that will be mailed directly to the responsible party(s), to the address that is listed on the parcel file as the property's owner. This written notice will advise the responsible party that repeat violations may be present on their property. Educational materials describing other common code violations may be included with the warning notice. As specified in the final notice of violation, a compliance inspection will be made.

At the time of this compliance inspection, any unresolved repeat/recurring violations are cause to:

- Issue a citation; and
- Initiate an abatement process

Ideally, the City would respond in a timely manner to Repeat Offenders (RO) and their violations. The City will take aggressive actions towards those who are on the ROR, as well as those who have failed to register; they would also recover all enforcements costs associated with ROR, including, if needed any police, court, or abatement costs. An extension for ROR ordinance or one's period of registry may be reviewed and approved by the City.

3.3.3.3. Database

The digital age has revolutionized almost every aspect of our daily lives and the same is true for code enforcement. As the City moves forward into the 21st century, it can advance its code enforcement efforts with new technology. Performing strategic code enforcement demands access to information and data about current events, trends, and potential issues (Schilling et al, 2015). A number of advances have been made which will make code enforcement work more efficient for everyone in the community.

The first step that will allow for the greatest return in terms of time and money invested is the need to create a Real Property database. Creating a database of properties, offenders, and their past offenses shall be monumental in the power of code enforcement compliance. According to Kermit J. Lind of the Center for Community Progress (CCP), reliable information about real property records –conditions, use, past permits and citations, owner identification and addresses, title taxes, liens, foreclosure, bankruptcy, probate, etc.– are essential to a code compliance system. Access to as much of the public record as possible from a single Internet source is a powerful time and cost-saving tool (Lind, 2012). The City may even wish to include data on emergency services dispatches. This information can provide the CEO and other city officials with a comprehensive portrait of the property.

Additionally, Joe Schilling, who is regarded as being one of the most informed people on code enforcement, states that most cities do not have real property information systems that integrate the data from a host of public entities, and provide easy access to policymakers, practitioners, and the community. Critical pieces of parcel level data would include the number of foreclosure filings, assessment and judgment liens, ownership history, probate, sheriffs' sales, tax delinquency, code enforcement violations, water utility shut offs, loans, etc. Current contact information is needed for all holders with a recorded legal interest in the property. Such a data system or network would serve as an early warning system to identify negligent property owners, neighborhoods on the verge of a foreclosure/vacancy crisis. It could help target code enforcement resources to contain blight, and prevent vacant properties from becoming abandoned (Schilling, 2009). He explains that the key issue is that most cities maintain different databases for each department, and that data is not shared enough between the departments. However, in recent years this has begun to change, as a number of pioneering cities have collaborated with nearby universities to create these databases.

One example was a partnership between the Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania and its creation of the Neighborhood Information System (NIS). This database allows current and comprehensive real property data to be shared with the City and community groups. This data can also be used to create maps using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which allows for easier identification of progress, or areas in distress. Case Western University has also recently partnered with Cleveland and Cuyahoga County to accomplish similar goals (Shilling, 2009).

The property database should also share important information between as many of the City's departments as possible. Kermit Lind states that within a system, routine information sharing should replace information hoarding, and that this will result in better use of resources (Lind, 2012). Strategic code enforcement demands close inter-agency/inter-departmental coordination, relies on integrated data/real property information systems, and facilitates strong partnerships with community groups and neighborhood residents (Vacant Property Research Network). This may include the sanitation department, as they would be the first to notice excessive trash and debris accumulation. The Assessor's office may also wish to share information, as this department knows the previous and current values of homes. Any home that has decreased in value significantly, or those in which the owner requests a lower assessment, should be subject to review. In the case of the latter, it may be helpful for the CEO to make a visit and see why the property is now supposedly to be valued at a lower amount. Poor siding, peeling paint, or an ill-maintained roof –i.e. violations– may be the rationale.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is the technical term for various mapping software, applications, and databases. Mapping can greatly assist code enforcement efforts. A GIS is a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present spatial or geographic data. GIS allows for layers of maps to be placed over one another in order to show different types of data. Often times, it is easier to understand and see changes if the data is visualized, as opposed to read. GIS not only accomplishes this, but can also be used to display changes over time, helping users determine if progress on a type of violation is occurring, or if a specific area require more focus.

GIS data can come from the parcel file, a real property database, and other sources. Layers displaying different data variables can be activated, deactivated, and overlapped as needed. The concepts of layers can be observed in a familiar GPS program, displayed in Map 3.4. Both images show the City of Tonawanda, but in a different way. The top –earth view– shows the physical characteristics of the City, while the lower image –map view– displays man-made features, including

roads and parks. For code enforcement purposes, layers can be used to show characteristics such as the year certain homes were built, types of permits previously issued at an address, parcel boundaries, and other important details.

Map 3.4: City of Tonawanda, Google

Having access to detailed property information and the ability to display it visually can be useful. Data variables from different municipal departments can be layered to paint a picture of a particular property's history. A map can be constructed that incorporates multiple data sets from various departments within the City of Tonawanda. Map 3.6 illustrates the various types of residential parcels, 2016 code violations, and (fictitious) calls for emergency services in 2016. Mobile GIS technology can also provide the CEO with additional details such as contact information of properties that border the subject parcel. This technology greatly improves the efficiency of code enforcement and also provides visual data which can be examined.

Another practice which has been successful in code enforcement compliance is providing citizens with a "resource guide" when they are cited. This method offers individuals that are not intentionally violating codes the information they need to rectify the violation (CITATION). This type of resource guide would provide contact information for local businesses that may be able to assist them. This could include companies that remove inoperable vehicles, handymen, contractors, and landscapers. Government programs that offer funding or loans for improvements like new windows and roofs can be included.

Map 3.5: Multiple Code Violations & Emergency Service Calls for 2016

3.4. Recommendations

After thoroughly researching best practices in code enforcement, a number of changes are likely in order to develop a code enforcement program which performs efficiently, effectively, and equitably for the City of Tonawanda. These recommendations will look to maximize positive results with as few resources as possible.

3.4.1. Developing a Plan

3.4.1.1. Strategy

In a time of reduced budgets, increased workloads, and understaffed municipalities, code enforcement capacity tends to be limited. Unfortunately, code enforcement is the first line of defense in a battle that successful communities cannot afford to lose. As with any battle, strategy determines its success. In order for City of Tonawanda to move in a new direction, a strategic plan must be developed to implement code enforcement policy. Strategic code enforcement refers to the

assemblage of critical assets and resources into a system of actions with clearly identified goals, principles, and procedures. All involved –personnel, agencies, institutions, policies, procedures, planners, decision makers, and administrators– have a common purpose, where contributions from all will determine success (Schilling, 2015). Developing a plan which encompasses all available resources will create the most efficient use of said resources, and therefore be the most effective at addressing code enforcement issues. Additionally, all agencies, departments, and programs need to interact constructively to reduce redundancy or duplication of effort. Performance failure in one part impedes the effectiveness of all (Lind 2012).

The strategy for this plan also needs to reflect the desires of residents, and define a measurement of success. Benchmarks can include demolitions of dangerous vacant structures, rehabilitation efforts, compliance before public auctions, collection of nuisance abatements, prosecution that results in compliance, and sentencing that changes the practices of frequent offenders (Lind, 2012). In the case of Tonawanda, it may be wise to address the most severe cases first, and move on the less pressing issues after. In order to be as effective as possible, the City and its residents need to identify the housing needs in a long-range strategic timeline.

Good code enforcement is be based on a good code, and a good code is based on a good general plan (Rural Planning Group, 2016). The plan must also accomplish these goals without looking heavy-handed or targeting a specific person; this may prove a challenge, as the City of Tonawanda like many other municipalities has had a relaxed and reactive approach to code enforcement in recent years. Accomplishing code enforcement's goal of compliance may achieved through educating local citizens accordingly.

The first step in developing a strategic plan is community involvement. A plan that is not seen important or beneficial to the residents is doomed to fail. This step will inform the residents, homeowner associations, and neighborhood block groups of the importance of code enforcement. By involving and educating the City's property owners on the importance of code enforcement, it should no longer be seen as a punitive action of the City, but as a protector of their largest investment: their home. Code enforcement not only protects a homeowners own fiscal investments, but also those of their neighbors. Health and safety, the reason that property related codes were initially created, are as good a reason as any to comply.

3.4.1.2. Education

The second step towards a solution is understanding what code violations are. Expressing the differences between what is acceptable and what is a violation will go a long way. While ignorance is not an excuse, many violations could be prevented if residents were simply more familiar with code enforcement. Some options for educating citizens are distributing pamphlets and posters in public places, and an informational website. Establishing a 'Meet the CEO of Tonawanda Day' will allow residents to ask questions and receive clarification on any topics that are vague or ambiguous. This meeting with the CEO, Building Inspector (BI), or other authority could be conducted in various ways, such as having the CEO/BI walk door to door, or having them meet at different neighborhood places such as City Hall, or a public library. The Building Inspector and the Code Enforcement Officer could also be made available to attend neighborhood meetings to explain code compliance. Many residents may not understand the benefits involved, and these outreach methods would allow them to be enlightened. The City may also look to recruit code enforcement resident-advocates to assist professionals in community education on codes, compliance assistance programs, and enforcement procedures (Lind, 2012). Neighborhood groups are a great way to get to know neighbors, and encourage a participatory role in organizing ones neighborhood.

Another way to shed light to the situation could be to ask an elected official, such as a mayor or council member, to perform code enforcement inspections in the field. If the media were to cover it, otherwise disinterested parties could have their interest peaked by the novelty such actions. Proactive approaches like this will portray Tonawanda as a City that leads by example to regional neighbors.

In 1999, the City of Rockville, Maryland took a number of actions to increase awareness of its revamped code enforcement policy. The City held what is referred to as a '**walking town meeting'**. This involves the mayor, councilmembers, and department heads walking through city neighborhoods to talk with its residents, identify areas of improvement, and foster community involvement. Rockville held meet-and-greets at libraries, homes, and recreation centers where residents met with city officials to discuss code compliance issues. The City also used tracking software which allows code enforcement staff to record reported violations, as well as related inspections, fines, fees, staff notice, and more. City staff reported that since implementation of these measures, code violations have dropped and voluntary compliance has risen.

The development of a Code Enforcement Outreach Program (CEOP) could provide support to tenants, owners, and community organizations, so that the City and community can work together to bring rental housing into code compliance. This type of unique program is designed to improve living conditions for all tenants, and improve communication between tenants and landlords.

The City of Tonawanda needs to work in cooperation with non-profit organizations that represent rental property owners and tenants throughout Tonawanda. Currently there are no ties between the City and non-profit organizations, therefore those types of relationships would need to be developed. The purpose of this partnership program is to expedite the code enforcement process by tasking non-profits with teaching citizens their rights and responsibilities, mediating, and improving communication between the government and the citizen. This will establish a means of regular communication with residents at the neighborhood level on code compliance, and help them realize how they stand to benefit (Lind, 2012). The goal of this program is to hopefully prevent violations, or, at a minimum, encourage the abatement of violations prior to a judicial hearing or referral of any issues to a judge.

3.4.1.3. Partnerships

In order to be as successful as possible, code enforcement needs private and public partnerships to gain compliance under the code enforcement plan. The unification of the community's residents and stakeholders, City government officials, schools, parents, children, neighborhood groups, unions, block groups, and local police and firemen is needed in order to generate as much awareness and involvement from the community as possible. Code enforcement has been shown to work best when there is an education and partnerships component attached to the plan.

Creating partnerships between the City and its residents, block groups, or other neighborhood organizations can also help educate residents. Public officials and community partners managing publicly assisted code compliance institutions and programs benefit greatly from regular meetings to collaborate with one another (Lind, 2012). There currently does not seem to be much in terms of neighborhood block groups or unified community concern in Tonawanda. Active block and neighborhood associations keep members informed, and encourage each other in voluntary compliance, especially with the small stuff, or ***controllables***. Additionally, members of these organized groups can help monitor their neighborhoods, and often know who the serial offenders well.

Creating community groups will also position residents benefit from federal CDBG funding. Often times, the only way to receive grants from the government is by establishing block groups. After these groups are established, they should be encourage to expand their range, so that problems can be addressed collectively instead of individually. It will be easier for a large number of like-minded individuals to take turns monitoring and addressing problems if they are organized and on the same page. *More on block groups in the 'funding and resources' section.*

Groups identified as potential partners include online groups such as:

- Facebook groups such as Tonawanda City Community (4551 members)
- City of Tonawanda Community (4004 members),
- Tonawanda City Community NOT RUN BY JIM WEBER (290 members)
- The Real City of Tonawanda Community Page (669 members)
- City of Tonawanda- Volunteer Fire Division (246 members)
- City of Tonawanda Youth Board (114 members)

Other possible partner groups include

- The Historical Society of Tonawanda's, City of Tonawanda Visual Performing Arts
- Northtowns' Boys and Girls Club
- Kiwanis Club of the Tonawanda's
- Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawanda
- United Way
- YMCA
- Salvation Army
- Canal Fest of Tonawandas
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Tonawanda Soccer Club
- Kenton Moms
- People Incorporated
- Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks #860
- American Legion Post 264

- Knights of Columbus Twin City Council #413

- Garden Club of the Tonawandas.

Contacting local community churches will play a vital role in moving forward with code enforcement (City of Tonawanda Resource Guide, 2008). Involving groups such as AmeriCorps, Boy Scouts, fraternities and sororities or other civic-minded organizations could also prove to be beneficial the city. These groups, along with those mentioned in the resources portion of this paper, will prove to be a great tool in awareness and manpower needed to bring the City into compliance. The strength of these groups is that they are already organized. By contacting the head of each group, one can reach far more people than they could if they were to proposition individuals. These groups can lend a hand to a diverse range of initiatives, including City sponsored –which address problem properties on a large scale– and provide additional help to those who are ill, elderly, or disabled and unable to maintain homes. This will also reduce the workload for the code enforcement department**.**

3.4.1.4. Timeline and policy

The second step of a comprehensive code enforcement plan outlines a timeline describing the direction and severity of actions to be taken against those who violate CEP. The VCEP may contain specific deadlines, such as when voluntary compliance becomes mandatory compliance. The plan may state that in one to two years cited code violations will carry their maximum penalties, and while current codes must be complied with, no penalties will be issued. An incremental approach to levying fines will minimize immediate hardships, allow an education component to be implemented, and add to the effectiveness of future regulations.

As previously mentioned, code enforcement is typically thought of as what a community looks like to its residents and visitors. As one thinks about what a community looks like, the word vision comes to mind. Nothing is more synonymous with clear vision than the phrase 20/20; it also will be the year in which we live shortly. Therefore, it would appropriate to have that be the year when the codes violations become fully enforceable. Pushing the start date to April 1 may be wise, as it gives homeowners a chance to obtain funds for major repairs through grants, loans, tax returns. The majority of significant snow cover will also be cleared by April, making infractions more visible. The 2020 start will provide ample notice for residents to address any concerns, correct smaller code violations, and begin to budget for any larger issues that have already presented themselves, or will

in the near future. However, the City may wish to have the new plan begin on January 1, 2020 because it makes for easier implementation, is a natural starting point, and allows for clearer year over year (YOY) comparisons. Whichever is decided upon, between now and then, the level of enforcement should increase in waves, rather than be rolled out all at once. In this scenario, the tentative important dates for VCEP are:

- January 1st 2018 – Concerted Education Campaign
- January 1st 2019 – Light Enforcement and Continued Education
- January/April 1st 2010 – Full Zero Tolerance Enforcement

Violations occurring in April of 2018 would not carry the same penalty as violations issued in 2019. The penalties could increase gradually over two years; no penalties the first year –Jan. 2018-2019–, fines at 50% of their regular amount the second year –Jan. 2019-2020–, and after the third year – January 1st /April 1st 2020–, the penalties will be the full amount. This will allow a transitional phase to be built into the plan. There is adequate time to voluntarily address infractions without fines. Violators may be presented with a warning, and it will them to comply. Should fail to, or if a new property issue arises, the courtesy should be rescinded. This will depend on the type of code violation, and good-faith efforts should be taken into consideration. Lack of enforcement in the past set a precedent, and citizens cannot expected to instantly make the transition.

Despite the past, similar to not wearing seatbelts or using your phone while driving, what was once acceptable behavior is no longer tolerated. Compliance with code enforcement works the same way, and violators should be met with zero tolerance after the full rollout. Worth noting is that it is important to understand that owners are typically responsible for code violations, not renters. Serial offenders should be assessed fines that increase accordingly. A tiered system of fines that penalizes repeat offenders to greater degree is tough, but it effectively discourages their undesirable behavior. This would need to be developed in accordance with the needs and wants of residents, thus the importance of community outreach.

A delayed roll out –30-33 months as of June 1 2017– will allow for the greatest amount of issues to be addressed and corrected without the issuance of many fines or penalties. A plan that rolls out in waves will not only benefit the residents directly, but it also allows the CEO to familiarize themselves with the policy, so that they may effectively communicate with inquiring minds. Processing time is decreased because they will not be following up with any court proceedings, save

for immediate health and safety concerns. During this period, the City may also look to upgrade its code, so that the new code is contextually relevant, and utilizes contemporary techniques. This will allow for less confusion, as a complete overhaul will receive more careful attention than a single amendment or change.

Beginning January 1, 2019, the penalties could be levied at 50% of their totals. This will allow to continue addressing violations, while not being overly punitive in enforcement. However, after the second year, fines and other penalties will be at their maximum for all parties, including first time offenders.

All code violations will be documented during the VCEP's first two years of roll out. Although these citations will carry no consequence, information collected can be used create a database that documents and maps the severity of violations, 'hot spots,' mailing addresses, and property owners' willingness to comply.

Establishing a timeline will allow for a discussion to take place, as many residents will need to adapt to the changes. The City may look to schedule Code Enforcement classes for the public to attend. Monthly or quarterly meetings where key actors explain the nuances of the code can be helpful. Brochures, pamphlets, and a website devoted to explaining the differences may also need to be implemented. This transitional period will also allow any unforeseen issues to be addressed, and portray the City as aggressive, but sensible.

After the two-year roll out of the 2020 Vision Code Enforcement Plan, residents and business owners should be fully aware of what a code violation is, how to address it; reporting options, and applicable penalties. Resources for residents, including educational material, and the aforementioned groups and partnerships, should be firmly in place. The City may also mandate business owners to sign an affirmation of compliance, elimination the ability to feign ignorance in the future. The City of Redmond, Washington found this to be an effective measure towards gaining code enforcement compliance.

3.4.2. Methods

Proactive code enforcement can be done through prioritizing and categorizing specific codes and their enforcement. The City should look at prioritizing code violations in order to be as efficient as possible. Residents must be made to understand that all complaints are important and all will be

addressed eventually. Informing the residents of how the process will function ensures them that initially, only the most severe and dangerous code violations will be targeted. Further, prioritizing code violations is an effective way to manage complaints, create schedules, and manage cases. Houses that are in need of a roof must be looked at as a higher priority than a home with visible garbage totes. The City should focus on violations that will have the most adverse effect on property values, and deprioritize nuisances. Key actors should identify issues that may lead to disinvestment, and eventually negatively impact neighbors' quality of life. Priority of Code Violation Classifications should be as follows:

1. Immediate risk to health and safety

2. High risk to health and safety through potential environmental impacts

3. Work begun or actions taken without the necessary permits.

4. Aesthetic and nuisance violations.

As the CEO creates a list of offenses, they should categorize them into appropriate classifications. A house in need of new windows and roof repair is objectively of greater importance than a house with an unregistered car in the driveway. The unregistered car can always be removed, but a home is a permanent fixture, and its condition presents an **externality**. The value of the home may decrease at such a rapid rate that as time passes, fixing it may not be worthwhile. This will lead to disinvestment and possibly abandonment of that home, negatively impacting homes around it. Therefore, any citation that could degrade or compound other structural deficiencies of a home must be categorized in one of the first two categories. All high priority issues should command expedited enforcement. The CEO must be proactive and address any violations that are visible by passerby.

The priority may first be on dangerous code violations, and as the program rolls out, and these time-sensitive concerns are mitigated, the CEO can look to process less severe infractions, like overgrown lawns. There may be a number of homes with low priority code violations, like graffiti or tall grass. The CEO should note where they are located before any citations are given. This will quantify hypothetical violations, and potentially give a head start on future proactive efforts. In the early phases, the City should look into property improvement grants.
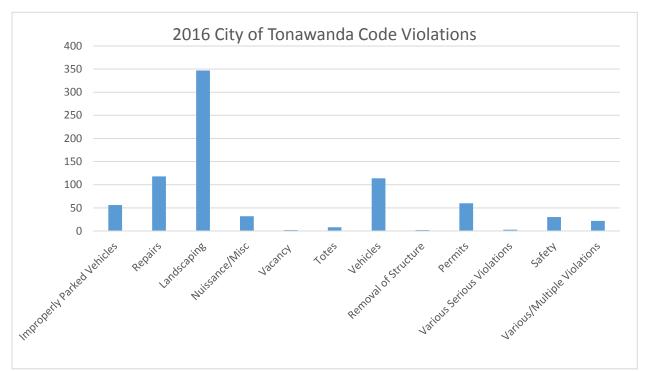
Figure 3.2: Code Violations, C of T Building

In recent years, the majority of citations have not pertained to the physical structure itself. These include unlicensed or improperly parked vehicles, tall grass, weeds, and overgrown bushes. In 2016, the City of Tonawanda had 835 violations, or 840 if you include multiple offenders. This can be observed in Figure 3.2. Of the 840 violations, 347 (41%) dealt with landscaping, 114 (14%) were for unlicensed vehicles, 56 (7%) improperly parked vehicles; these 3 classifications of offenses accounted for 517 (62%) of the 840 violations. Establishing harsher penalties for these easily preventable infractions deter adverse behavior, and add to the efficiency of the program. The City's limited resources can be devoted to more critical matters.

The City of Troutdale, Oregon has dealt with similar behavior in the past. In 1999, Troutdale had 893 code violation complaints. For FY 2016, the City of Tonawanda had 840 complaints. The City of Troutdale is also similar in size and population, consisting of 5 square miles and just over 14,000 residents. To remedy the problem, Troutdale took several measures.

In about half of Troutdale's code violation cases, the property owner has direct contact with the code enforcement officer, either by phone or in person. City staff noted that this has proved invaluable in cases where the property owner needs advice, assistance, or further understanding of the violation, or their options to remedy it. For example, an elderly resident may be interested in

mitigating a problem of overgrown weeds, but not have the necessary landscaping equipment or know of a contractor who can do the work. Troutdale also takes advantage of its city newsletter to make residents aware of common code enforcement issues and what they can do to maintain their properties. Articles in the newsletter highlight such conditions as weeds and grass, as well as vehicles or RVs parked in front yards. In the late 1990s, the city council transferred responsibility for dealing with code enforcement appeals from their own agenda to the courts. Aside from clearing the council's docket, this change also created an incentive for property owners to resolve their violations with staff because most did not wish to elevate their cases to a judicial level. According to city staff, this change has led to roughly a 5 percent decrease in the number of cases that are appealed.

Another possible approach is to address specific types of code violations on certain days or weeks. One day the code officer may be looking for any violations regarding lawn care or yard maintenance. Another day he could be looking for inoperable vehicles, or poor fencing. Allowing the CEO to focus on specific problems will prove that the officer is not targeting a specific person, but a specific problem. For example, it should not be looked at that a citizen has an abandoned car in his yard without tags, but rather that there is a car without license plate at a certain address, and rectification of this violation is mandatory. This organized process will make the CEOs job easier, and therefore make enforcement more effective.

It is important for the CEO to enforce compliance for a neighborhood and not just on one specific house. This is an efficient use of resources, and could encourage people to make necessary repairs if nearby houses are being cited. Another benefit of the neighborhood approach is that it allows performance measures to have meaning. As previously mentioned, in 2016, Tonawanda had 840 code violation complaints. The City may have the same number this year, but it would be useful to identify if a certain neighborhood is improving. There may only be 20 violations overall in Delawanda, compared to triple that number from the year before. If complaints are noted, or better yet, mapped in each neighborhood, it will be easier to follow trends and measure impacts.

In order to become proactive towards citing unsafe conditions and lack of investment in properties, City of Tonawanda could explore the aforementioned Rental Registry (RR), Repeat Offender Registry (ROR), Historic Property Registry (HPR), and Vacant Property Registry (VPR) programs. It is important to note that an ordinance can only be as effective as the capacity to use it as its authors intend; the City should measure capacity first, then legislate (Lind, 2012). These tools

are another important piece of the puzzle, as code enforcement is just one tool communities have to stabilize housing. *More on VPRs in section 3.5; HPRs in section 4*

Tonawanda code violation complaints in 2016 had a number of factors in common. For one, 119 properties accounted for 304 violations (36%) of all violations. As previously noted, the parcel file states that there is 6404 parcels within in the City limits. These 119 problem-properties account for only 1.7% of the total, yet comprise over 1/3 of the citations. Holding these properties accountable for their non-compliance will demonstrate to the rest of community that their efforts to maintain their properties are not done in vain. Additionally, with the aid of a database, the BI or CEO would be able to see that a number of these violations are occurring on specific streets. For example, in 2016 there were 58 violations on Fletcher Street, 36 of which were at 12 different properties. Adam Street also had a similar year, with 51 total violations, and 20 stemming from 8 properties. The database could make it easier to see that two properties on East Avenue accounted for 11 violations. Therefore, the creation of a Repeat Offender Registry (ROR) should be considered to deter those who consistently fail to comply.

3.4.3. Tools

The term 'information age' refers to the amount, availability, accessibility, and computation of data. Implementing technologies that serve to store, transmit, and compute data will increase the efficiency at which the enforcement program performs. A number of tools have been developed the can help the CEO and a municipality.

3.4.3.1. Database

One technology based recommendation includes developing and maintaining a database which contains parcel-specific information for the City of Tonawanda. This database needs to include the parcel file, permits, issued variances, previous citations, and any other relevant data.

The database should be updated frequently (e.g. every 30-60 days) for a number of reasons. For one, rental properties frequently change hands, and City officials need the information on file to be as current as possible. Applicable data should be easy to update, and difficult to delete. This can be ensured by limiting some users to "Read- Only" access, while allowing only the BI or CEO to make changes. This also prevents City employees from doing friends 'favors' by removing charges or

notes from files. The Real Property database should have the ability to cross-reference addresses, names, violation types, and other relevant information from enforcement hearings.

Incorporating a variety of public records into this database can add to its efficiency and effectiveness. A database that shares data between various departments of the City will allow for a more systematic approach to code enforcement. For example, the CEO may notice a fences height exceeds allowable limits. In order for the CEO to confirm this, they may have to drive back to City Hall to note verify whether a variance for this was approved. Shared databases can streamline the activities of all departments.

The database must also show the types and amount of offenses per property, as well as their timeframe (e.g. within a 24 month period). Data regarding fines, punishment, and payment of fines is also needed. The database should have a search function to query previous complaints (legal and code), licenses, and permits issued. Keeping track of previously issued permits will also enable properties to be efficiently monitored. For example, if one has access to all of the permits issued for roofs in the City, they can confirm whether or not a property owner has not had his roof replaced in the last 35 years, or perhaps neglected the permit process performing the improvement.

Connecting the CEO and this database will also allow for the CEO to make a more informed decision when prescribing corrective actions. For example, if it is the CEO's first time out to this property, and the owner has not been cited in the past 2 years, it shall be handled more compassionately than a home that has been cited multiple times. The database can also be designed to show if a property is on a specific registry, such as the ROR. Furthermore, the creation and access of such a database will allow for new trainees or other City officials to quickly identify problem properties. The ability to use parcel-based property data for analysis, planning, implementing and evaluating is critical for operating strategically. Without it, everyone – public officials, program administrators, budget analysts, public and private developers, etc– are in the dark (Lind 2009). A good database would have an option to manipulate data, similar to an Excel file. This gives the CEO another tool to proactively monitor code issues.

This database could also list the property owners who live outside of the city limits, as they are less likely to maintain their income properties. The database could be created in such a way that it displays the parcel owner's location (attribute) as local (within 14150), nearby (Erie County), in New

York (NY), or Out of State/Out of Country (OOS/OOC). These classifications help dictate response time and appropriate actions of the CEO.

Identifying rental property owners, their current mailing address, email and emergency phone contact is important to the success of the rental registry. The database may also wish to include a status of the residents or property owners notifying the CEO if they are seniors, veterans or disabled; while everyone will be held accountable for code violations, these groups of people merit special consideration. Additionally, these people qualify for different aide from specific government programs, and can be easily informed of the resources available to them.

3.4.3.2. GIS

The database will work to its fullest potential if it is linked to a GIS platform. These tools – database and GIS– working in concert will play a significant role in reducing redundancy, monitoring change, and adding to the effectiveness and efficiency of the code enforcement program. These tools can be used to create a ***dirty dozen*** list of frequent offenders or *hotspots*. It is highly recommended that the City look into obtaining, using, and maintaining these two valuable tools in order to have a complete overhaul of its code enforcement program. Visualized data can illustrate change, specific violations, or even nuisance property types in need of continual monitoring.

3.4.3.3. Website

Another recommendation includes developing a website for code enforcement. The City can look to create a website or Facebook page with examples of good and bad examples of code violations. It should also have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page in order to clarify common inquiries. The Facebook page could also be used to bring awareness to cleanup efforts, educational information classes, or to shame negligent property. Questions could be answered through email, which would allow citizens to voice their concern during off-hours. This would provide a means of responsibly reporting violations and abandonment by residents (Lind, 2012). In this generation of short attention spans, waiting for business hours could mean forgetting, or losing interest. Furthermore, questions that the CEO receives should be documented, quantified, and when necessary, updates to the FAQ page should be made. This type of approach also necessitates supplemental materials, such as brochures, in order to inform those who do not have access to the internet, or are challenged by their age or disabilities. The benefits of a website include providing a

way for complaints to be reported 24 hours a day, easily reaching a large percentage of your residents to provide code enforcement education and information, with relatively low overhead.

3.4.3.4. APP

A code enforcement application (APP) for the residents of City of Tonawanda could be a very cost effective tool to combat code enforcement violators. It would allow for code violations to be processed, documented, cited, and even mapped much quicker than the current system provides.

The City of San Francisco has an app called Up2code, and a website Up2code.org which allows for violations to be filtered into the Code Enforcement division for the city. These types of code enforcement apps perform a number of tasks, including uploading pictures of the violations, mapping its location, and allowing for it to be placed into a database. While the price of such an application may be of concern to those in the community, the benefits to taxpayers can offset the cost. Civilian versions can work in concert with the app a CEO uses. Much like a public computer, the CEO or Building Inspector would use the App as an Admin, and residents would be restricted users. The benefits of code enforcement software and apps include

- Saving time and trouble when taking complaints
- Efficiently processing applications and complaints
- Quickly and easily prepare notices related to variances and rezoning
- Easily document violations
- Streamline scheduling
- Generate reports with hearing and review data/notices
- Protect against errors and omissions from council members and employees
- Simplify planning, zoning and permitting
- Generate departmental reports for governing boards
- Easy to access information
- Simplified reporting to meet federal government requirements
- Tracking fees in municipal accounting system

Additionally, these apps can calculate performance measures regarding compliance percentages. Furthermore, a large number of people have smart phones and tablets, and could use them for reporting code enforcement issues. According to a Pew Research Center survey from 2015, 68% of

U.S. adults have a smartphone –up from 35% in 2011–, and tablet computer ownership has grown to 45% among adults. Smartphone ownership is nearing the saturation point in some groups; 86% of those ages 18-29 have a smartphone, as do 83% of those ages 30-49 (Anderson, 2009). As the market becomes further saturated, nearly every adult resident would have a smartphone and be able to report code violations in a more efficient and effective manner. Considering the benefits, a CEO providing a CEO with a tablet to take pictures, videos, and to document code violations may be a good approach.

3.4.4. Increasing Capacity/Manpower

Solutions for code enforcement violations come from a number of different fields and resources. These solutions can come in the form of community involvement, manpower, and funding for those in need. This chapter shall discuss a variety of sources regarding community involvement, different sources of manpower, and the availability of funding through available government programs.

3.4.4.1 City Capacity

A city the size of Tonawanda may be limited in its resources for deploying additional manpower to code enforcement. One solution could involve using the City's police officers or firefighters to report high-risk or health code violations. Officers can log violations they observe in the line of duty. Ideally, such reports would be limited major safety and health, as not to distract them from their important work.

Solutions to low priority code violations can be achieved through community involvement. A person's home is not just the physical structure in which they reside, but their neighborhood and community. When one is asked "where do you live?" the answer is not often an address, but rather a town or street. The residents of the community need to be united in correcting the problems that plague their neighborhood. The adage "a rising tide lifts all boats" is appropriate; people should look beyond their own investment, and realize that giving back not only feels good, but that it can have great financial benefits to the community.

Another solution involves the youth who attend the local high school. At one time, high school seniors were required to complete 10 hours of community service in the City of Tonawanda in order to graduate. Reinstituting this mandate as a condition of graduation would help create a new opportunity for those who wish to help the City with part of its beautification movement. Allowing

students to work under supervision of teachers and City officials, key actors of code enforcement could prove to be mutually beneficial to students, and the community. Students could be called upon to plant trees in the spring, rake leaves in the fall, or landscape and clean up yards that are in need during summer months. An educational/civic benefit could also be tied in with this volunteer work; going forward students may be less likely to litter and more likely to comply with codes when they are homeowners. Some students may actually develop skills or interest in community-based efforts or professions.

Another initiative to explore is '**award back to the community days**' or simply the 'ABC' Days. These days could be quarterly, semi-annual, or just specific weekends. They could address issues specific to each corresponding season. Involving residents and uniting them will foster appreciation something that is larger than themselves, and create a sense of pride in their community. Yard work and clean-up could be done in the spring and summer months, and interior matters can be addressed in the fall and winter.

Creating an event that connects the community's involvement with perks that reward those who participated is another option. The structure of such an event could be defined later. For example, the City could create an event such as a mini-marathon, or multimodal race which would incorporate the new Intermodal Hub, the historic canal, and the future as it ties itself into WNY via the rails to trails bike path. The race could involve biking, kayaking, running and swimming (although for liability reasons, the last option may be unfeasible). Free promotional t-shirts–otherwise known as free advertising– could be provided. This will affirm actions by neighborhood volunteers and activists that enhance levels of compliance and reduce the need for enforcement actions. Those who participated in clearing up an issue prior to the event could have the sign-up/entrance fees waived, or perhaps they could be given access to VIP area for only those who participated. This could also be tied into a corporate challenge that rewards a certain employer or department of the City with a trophy and bragging rights, until next year…

Stakeholders in the community and City employees could also become involved in a similar way. Companies or various departments of the City could organize a number of groups that would supply volunteers which can help with tasks the teenagers may not be comfortable or capable of completing. These local businesses or City departments could possibly have their names mentioned in flyers or any other advertisements for the race; this is a way to show their support and civic efforts do not go unnoticed. Neighbors could also join City employees to do volunteer clean-ups,

devoting special attention to those in need such as seniors, the disabled, and those with limited income.

A number of municipalities have moved towards a "full cost" model. Under this model, the full cost of the code violation is placed upon the owner of the property. This allows for less strain on the resources of a community, and also add to the collection of additional revenue. Though, if the violation is corrected prior to the re-inspection the fees are typically waived. Some communities do not waive the fees, and invoke an additional "re-inspection fee" which in Tonawanda's housing market could range from $50-100. When one tries to compute the appropriate amount for a fine, that which is fair, it cannot be so affordable that people are not inconvenienced enough to curse correct, yet it cannot be so expensive as to create a hardship.

3.4.5. Funding and Resources

Providing citizens with a "resource guide" when they are cited could provide those individuals that are not intentionally violating codes with the information they need to rectify the violation. This type of resource guide would provide contact information for various business that may be able to assist them. This could include a business that removes junk vehicles, a local handyman, a landscape company, or programs that provide funding or loans for other upgrades, such as new windows and roofs. The City may want to provide residents with contact information for a few different companies that can complete the work, as not to promote one company over another. They could also have a disclaimer stating that the work is not endorsed by or warranted by the City. The City could also suggest the property owner do their own research too, checking websites like Angie's List that rate and review contractors and businesses. This way, the City is in no way responsible for the resident choosing of one company over another, thus avoiding legal or safety consequences.

As previously mentioned, the City, like many municipalities, has limited resources to address code enforcement and upgrades to its housing stock. The City could consider working with residents to organize neighborhood block groups and/or non-profit community development organizations that would qualify for various local, state, federal, and foundation grants. For example, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs (HUD). These funds must be administered by an agency working for the people and the City. Eligible projects include

those acquired from a not-for-profit owner or those acquired from another not-for-profit organization (New York State Homes and Community Renewal).

A number of resources are provided directly to residents or homeowners from various agencies of local, State, and the Federal government. Many of these programs do have income requirements, types of properties, and restrictions on what funds may be used for. However, there is a significant amount of programs available and many homeowners or residents will qualify for a number of these programs. Therefore, it is important to check the requirements of each program and make sure one is in fact qualified to receive any monies or loans from these programs. Additionally, some programs have important deadlines and waitlists so one shall not count on any funds until they are awarded to them. Other programs are also available which need the City's approval regarding tax-breaks for certain types of properties or residents who live therein.

Erie County currently has a few programs designed to help communities thast are dealing with code enforcement issues. Residents of the City of Tonawanda are qualified to receive grants from the 'Housing Rehabilitation Program', and the 'Rental Rehabilitation Program.'

Single and two-family houses are eligible for funds from the 'Housing Rehabilitation Program,' which look to eliminate substandard living conditions and extend the lives of housing stock. This program provides loans up to $15,000, with a fixed rate of 0% interest for necessary repairs for low and moderate-income households. This program can also be used for lead paint removal, which is present in many homes constructed prior to 1978. According to American Community Survey (ACS) 5- year estimates from 2011-2015, 93.5% of the housing in the City of Tonawanda was built in 1979 or prior. Currently there is a waiting list for this program. However, the sooner one gets on this list, the sooner the funds will be provided. This may be quite beneficial for homeowners who currently do not have the funds for home repairs, yet want to be compliant or at least be in the process of doing so by 2020. Therefore, it is important to inform the community of this program and its waitlist as soon as possible in order to secure much funding in the short term.

The 'Rental Rehabilitation Program' is available to owners whose rental units fail to meet local, state, and federal housing codes. The program may provide up to 90% of rehab costs, given the owner rents the units to low to moderate income tenants for 7 years from the date of assistance. Additionally, the owner must charge fair market rates (e.g. fair market for two and three bedroom

units is $755 and $955, respectively). More information is available on the Rental Rehabilitation Program Brochure.

There also exists state programs for retaining current residents, attracting new residents and homeowners, and rehabilitating or upgrading older housing. Most of these programs are through the New York State Homes and Community Renewal (NYSHCR) agency. These programs assist with down payments, provide low interest loans, and allow for homeowners to replace windows, roofs, doors, remove lead paint or other dangerous hazards.

New York State has a program for sustainably rehabilitating dwellings that makes them exempt from local taxes. Under the Real Estate Property Law (RPTL) '421-M' program these properties may become exempt if the owner of the property rents out 20% or more of the dwellings for low to moderate-income residents. In order to qualify as such, the renter must make less than 99% of the area's median income and not spend more than 30% of their income on said rental unit. Further, the local municipality must enact local legislation that allows for this exemption (HCR). These tax breaks may help provide owners of multiple-dwelling units the funds and incentive to invest in their income properties.

Another type of program in New York State is the 'Community Investment Program' (CIP). CIP provides funding from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York for targeted housing activities in form of short-long term loans. One may use these funds towards purchase, construction, rehabilitation, or refinancing their homes. CIP funds may be used for single family, multifamily or special needs housing provided they meet the requirements. These requirements include owner occupied housing that must be occupied by someone making less than 115% of the median income. For rental housing, a majority (51%) of the units must be rented out to someone who makes less than 115% of the area's median income. Funding can also be provided for new projects, provided that they too will be rented out to a majority of tenants making less than 115% of the area's median income (Federal Home Loan Bank of New York). According to 2015 ACS, 5-year estimates have the median household income for the City of Tonawanda at $44,805. Therefore, in order to be under the 115% threshold, a household would need to make less than $51,526. These amounts change yearly, and will need updating accordingly.

The Federal Home Loan Bank of New York also has a program called the 'Affordable Housing Program' (AHP). This program looks to support the creation and preservation of housing for lower

income families and individuals looking to purchase, rehabilitate, or construct new homes or apartments. This program is also available for single family or multifamily properties. It may be used for 1-to-4 unit houses, co-ops, condos, apartments, single-room occupancy facilities, group homes, and shelters. The qualifications for single family homes are that the household must make 80% or less than the area median income. The qualifications for rental units are that 20% of the households must make less than 50% of the median income. As previously mentioned, the 2015 ACS 5 year estimates show the median household income for City of Tonawanda residents' was $44,805, which means a single-family household would need to make less than $35,844 to qualify; rental properties would need to rent 20% of their units to someone making less than $22,403 in order to qualify.

Another program the Federal Home Loan Bank Program of New York has is the 'First Home Club' (FHC). This program looks to help first-time prospective buyers of homes with down payments and closing costs. In order to qualify, the applicant must reside in New York State, open a special savings account for 10-24 months, complete the approved homebuyers counseling program, execute the FHC Enrollment terms and conditions agreement, obtain a mortgage, and upon closing, execute a subordinate mortgage subsidy fund for a 5 year term. The financial restrictions for the applicant state that the borrower must make 80% of the area's median income (The Service Collabrative of Western New York). According to HUD, the median area income for FY 2016 in Erie County was $67,300, one would need to make less than $53,900 in order to qualify for this program.

Under the New York State Homes and Community Renewal Agency one may also receive assistance with purchasing a home. One way is exclusively for first-time homeowners through a program called the 'Achieving the Dream'. This program helps provide assistance of money for a down payment, of $3,000 or 3% of the home purchase price (not to exceed $15,000); it also finances the property for the homeowner. The terms have a fixed low interest rate, a low down payment requirement of 3%, and no prepayment penalties if you pay the home off in less than 30 years. All one needs to do is meet the requirements of the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) is be a first time homeowner, have a steady job, good credit history, sufficient income to make their mortgage and any other debt payments, enough cash for the down payment and closing costs, meet SONYMA household income limits for Erie County, and occupy the residence permanently (NYSHCR). SONYMA's current income requirements state that the potential homebuyer's income may not exceed $53,840, and that the value of the home must not exceed $ 255,570 for a single-

family, or $327,180 for a 2-family-home. Furthermore, the home must be financed through a qualified lending partner.

SONYMA also has a program which will assist a potential first-time homebuyer with a down payment and closing costs. The 'Down Payment Assistance Loan' (DPAL) program provides a $1000-15,000 loan with 0% interest for a period of 10 years to qualified applicants. If the homeowner resides in the home for the entire 10 year period, the loan is forgiven (60).

Veterans are one group that frequently fall on hard times, and as such, SONYMA has a similar program to DPAL, but exclusively for veterans. However, the veteran does not need to be a first-time home buyer. Veterans are allowed to use this program along with the Constructive Incentive Program (CIP), and the 'Low Interest Rate Program' (LIRP).

New York State's Home and Community Renewal Agency has a program through SONYMA that provides low-interest loans to purchase or renovate structure for first-time home buyers. Funds from 'RemodelNY' can be used for Single and 2-family homes, planned urban developments (PUD's) and condominiums. The loan can be used for a variety of upgrades including aesthetic repairs, modernization, lead paint removal, roofs, gutters, windows doors, fences, driveways, or sidewalks if they pose a safety issue. This program may work well in City Tonawanda, which has an aging housing stock, and is competing against newer homes with better amenities throughout the region. Further, this program can also be used in conjunction with the 'Homes for Veterans Enhancement program.'

New York State also has the 'Access to Home' Program. This program provides funds to homeowners and renters through a not-for-profit or the municipality itself for retrofitting properties so they accommodate the physically disabled. Homeowners may receive up to $25,000 to cover the cost of the adaptations. Loans are interest-free, with payments deferred on the condition the customer resides in the modified residence. The entire loan will be forgiven at the end of a regulatory period of up to five years. The applicant or resident must meet certain income requirements in order to qualify, such as a household income that does not exceed 80% of the area median income, or 120% if a household member is in need of modifications or a disabled veteran. This and aforementioned programs may allow the City to attract disabled veterans as new residents in its housing market.

The Homes and Community Renewal Agency also helps homeowners with weatherization of single and multi-family residences. This is the largest weatherization program in the country. In order to qualify the homeowner must make less than 60% of the median household income for New York State. If the homeowner already receives SSI, food stamps, or HEAP; they are automatically eligible. The first step of the 'Weatherization Assistance Program' (WAP), which consists of an energy audit. Afterwards, the homeowner will find out what corrective measures need to take place. Based on the results of the energy audit, services may include, but are not limited to

- sealing cracks and holes to reduce air infiltration
- insulation of attics and walls
- heating system repairs or replacement
- hot water tank and pipe insulation; installation of energy-efficient lighting and refrigerators
- window and outside door repair or replacement
- minor repairs to ensure that the installed weatherization materials will perform correctly
- mitigation of energy-related health and safety issues, including indoor air quality improvements
- correction of ventilation problems that can lead to mold growth
- identification of lead paint hazards

In order to qualify the homeowner must make less than 60% of the median household income for New York State. The program notes the income requirements are as follows:

- 2-person household - $35,217
- 3-person household $43,504
- 4-person household $51,790
- 5-person household as $60,076.

A company which one may want to contact regarding WAP is Supportive Services Corporation in Lancaster, which was awarded nearly $2M in 2016.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also has a variety of resources available for purchasing and updating homes for code violations or rehabilitation. One of these is the Limited 203(k) mortgage. This is HUD's primary program for the rehabilitation and repair of single family homes, and as such, it is an important tool for the community and

neighborhood revitalization. FHA's Limited 203(k) program permits homebuyers and homeowners to finance up to $35,000 into their mortgage to repair, improve, or upgrade their home. These funds can not only be used to invest into the home but also to pay for up to 6 months of the mortgage if one is not living there during the renovation.

HUD also offers a 203(K) mortgage for structural alterations and reconstruction. The extent of the rehabilitation covered by Section 203(k) insurance may range from relatively minor (though exceeding $5000 in cost) to a virtual reconstruction. A home that has been demolished or will be razed as part of rehabilitation is eligible, for example, provided that the existing foundation system remains in place. Section 203(k) insured loans can finance the rehabilitation of the residential portion of a property that also has non-residential uses; they can also cover the conversion of a property of any size to a one- to four- unit structure. The types of improvements that borrowers may make using Section 203(k) financing include:

- Modernization and improvements to the home's function
- Elimination of health and safety hazards
- Changes that improve appearance and eliminate obsolescence
- Reconditioning or replacing plumbing; installing a well and/or septic system
- Adding or replacing roofing, gutters, and downspouts
- Adding or replacing floors and/or floor treatments
- Major landscape work and site improvements
- Enhancing accessibility for a disabled person
- Making energy conservation improvements

The application for either mortgage must be submitted through an approved FHA lender and also each property meet certain basic energy efficiency and structural standards.

According to 2015 ACS 5-year, data the City of Tonawanda has 33 Native American residents in census tract 33, and 66 in census tract 78. Some of these residents may be able to qualify for the another program through HUD called Section 184 'Indian Home Loan Guarantee' Program, which is specifically designed for American Indian and Alaska Natives families. The importance of this program is that it can be used, both on and off native lands, for new construction, rehabilitation, purchase or refinancing of an existing home. This loan can only be used for 1-4 family residential

units, and is not available for commercial properties. The maximum funds available vary by unit type; a single-family loan may not exceed $271,050 and a 4 unit residence's loan may not exceed $521,245. Funds are also available for use within Erie County. The Office of Loan Guarantee within HUD's Office of Native American Programs ensures the Section 184 home mortgage loans are made to Native borrowers. The loan guarantee assures the lender that their investment will be repaid in full in the event of foreclosure. This guarantee is backed by the federal government, and therefore, id one of the best programs for homeownership. As with many HUD programs, the borrower must do so from an approved lender.

Senior citizens often have limited physical abilities, limited income or savings, and may also wish to stay in their current community. As a result they may need additional resources for code violations. A number of programs are available to provide financial help to senior citizens, including a 'Home Equity Conversion Mortgage' for seniors (HECM), which is provided through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).This is a reverse mortgage which uses equity from one's home towards providing a loan for the owner to use for whatever they wish, including repairs on their home. To qualify, the property must be owned free and clear, or at least nearly so. The qualifications are straightforward and as such, the borrower must be 62 years of age or older, own the property or paid-down a significant amount, occupy the residence as their primary residence, not be delinquent on any federal debt, have the ability to make future payments on the property such taxes, insurance, or homeowner association fees, and participate in a consumer information session where they will explain the details of the program. The type of residence is not restricted to only single-family homes, the property can also have 2-4 units, provided that the owner or borrower lives in one of the units. However, all property must meet all FHA housing standards and flood requirements.

Evidence suggests that code enforcement is important, and the only way to carry it out successfully is by making it a priority. This can be done by reviewing the actual code which is currently in place, and updating it to suit the new conditions which now face the community. For example, a town may have a code which has not been updated in decades and does not mention cell phone towers. Therefore, if a home-owner chose to install a cell phone tower in their backyard, the town would have a difficult time preventing its construction. A new code that examines pressing needs and sets standards will ultimately create the framework to push the **community towards a collective vision.**

3.5. Vacant Property and Rental Registries

3.5.1. Introduction

Communities across the country have conducted trial runs and have begun enacting policies and programs to combat the high rates of vacant and abandoned structures in neighborhoods. One way to address this is targeting the 'bad actors' in charge of these properties. Vacant Property Registration Ordinances (VPRO) and Landlord Registries (LLR) have been programs to do so. VPROs are used to create a mechanism to identify responsible parties of unoccupied housing units or buildings. The ordinance requires parties to register vacant property(s) with the local government, and imposes appropriate fees on the parties for each home registered (Martin). LLR is a tool purely considering rental properties. LLRs are used primarily in order to protect tenants, and target absentee landlords or property owners who are often hard to contact.

The main objective of both VPROs and LLRs is to entice the community to comply with housing codes. As vacant and abandoned properties increase in communities, so does the risk of becoming places of violation and illegal activity. The purpose for such policies is to mitigate damages to neighborhood dynamics of health, safety, and general welfare. VPROs and LLRs hold landlords, property owners, and communities accountable. Addressing landlords or property owners who do not care about deteriorating buildings, or parties who do not have the resources to properly maintain properties (Carr).

In order to enact such programs, proper and diligent code enforcement needs to be built. As discussed previously in the code enforcement r*ecommendations* section, having a structured strategic plan of goals, principles, and procedures clearly identifying a system's actions is a necessity. The development of a plan needs to encompass the resources the City of Tonawanda already has, while also considering the wants of its residents. A strategic plan that is not beneficial to residents or take their concerns into consideration will result in inefficient code enforcement. Consequently, producing an unstable platform for VPROs and LLRs that will lead to being enforced inadequately.

3.5.2. Best Practices: Developing & Administering Successful VPRO

In large, what drove many communities to enact VPROs was the growth in vacant properties after the U.S. foreclosure crisis in 2008 and 2009. Neighborhoods began to suffer from the social and economic issues that followed vacancy and abandonment. Housing stocks became deteriorated,

values fell, and crime activity rose. VPROs were a way localities (municipalities, counties, towns) could gain some control over the issue.

VPROs are laws where the general requirement is to have a standard registration of properties that are vacant, abandoned, foreclosed upon, or in a similar situation. With the registration of a property, a registration fee is usually involved. This is a fee that localities could increase if the property continues to remain vacant after a specific or extended period of time. VPROs requires owners of registered properties to maintain and keep properties secure both internally and externally, which will be discussed further in the *Duties of Responsible Parties* section. As VPROs vary with jurisdictions, some require property owners to carry a minimum amount of insurance, or provide a bond or deposit. Costs associated with VPROs represent a portion of the true costs of owning and maintaining a vacant property. VPROs should encourage responsible investment and lending, while discouraging irresponsible, risky investment, and speculation (Immergluck, 2012). If the requirements of VPRO are not met, many localities will specify in their VPRO to levy maximum fine amounts, and even as serious as potential criminal penalties.

An often overlooked consequence of maintaining distressed vacant properties are the high cost burdens placed on local governments. This mechanism aids to help lower and eliminate those costs. In addition, local governments should create an "acceptable community standard", in which unoccupied buildings and vacant housing units have to maintain or reach. However, community compliance is the main objective. In order to achieve compliance, suitable practices for a community should be developed. A local government should begin with recognizing the importance of the following 3 key components*:*

1. The goal of the VPRO
2. Any specifics of the Registration Process
3. The Affirmative Duties of Responsible Parties

3.5.2.1. Goals

Local governments typically use VPROs to target "Properties with buildings without legal occupants that are at risk of degenerating if not properly maintained" (Martin). Ordinances vary by jurisdictions, but usually the owner of vacant property in a city with a registry must repeatedly – semi-annually, annually, etc.– complete required registration paperwork and pay registration fees

(Fitzpatrick et al, 2015). In addition to preventing properties from becoming distressed, VPRO assists to maintain neighboring homes value, and in turn entire community's value.

3.5.2.2. Registration Process: The Classic Model VS. The Chula Vista Model

Crucial to creating a VPRO is how to properly administer and manage one. The City's local government could develop a specific department to conduct the process. such as a Planning Department or the Department of Permit and Inspection Services; they could also utilize a department that is already in existence. The chosen department would oversee and manage the necessary protocols and responsibilities involved with the registration process, in addition to working with a Housing Authority or CEO who works directly at the ground level. A specific department in charge will not only assist with efficiency and effectiveness, but will result in better implementation, and strengthen VPRO. There are two primary models to take into consideration for registration processes involved in developing a VPRO: The Classic Model and the Chula Vista Model. These serve as useful guides for the development of an ordinance's registration process.

3.5.2.3. Classic Model

In this model, property owners are required by local governments to list their vacancies after a certain period of time. The registration process states that even if the property is compliant with maintenance and security provisions, the local government will still collect annual fees for as long as the property remains vacant. The classic model contains two variations of ordinances- escalating fees and flat fees.

Amounts for fees will vary for each jurisdiction. Flat fees are a linear pricing structure with a fixed rate, while escalating fees enact stiff fee schedules that state clear amounts for property owners to expect to pay annually. However, this fee will increase yearly if the property continues to remain vacant. This type of ordinance gives incentive for a property owner to resolve vacancy by selling, leasing, or demolishing the property at their own cost. This reduces the burden of the local government, as they do not have to address a deteriorating property down the line. Escalating fee provisions have proven to only work in certain jurisdictions. Wilmington, Delaware was able to decrease vacant properties by 6.4%, and generated a substantial amount of revenue with a fee collection increase of 82.5% (Martin). An issue that arises with this type of VPRO is that local governments still find vacant property owners who let their annual fees grow, and choose to pay the higher fees rather than rehabilitating the property.

3.5.2.4. Chula Vista Model

The Chula Vista model works as a response to foreclosure. It seeks to involve mortgage lenders and other servicers foreclosing on residential properties to be in charge of the maintenance once the former owner vacates the building. Chula Vista targets residential buildings when they become most at risk of deteriorating. This is between when the lender records the notice of foreclosure and when the foreclosure sale occurs, varying between states and the judicial processes used.

Chula Vista expects and requires the lender to inspect the vacant property for occupancy within ten days of filing a notice of foreclosure. If the vacant property is vacant, the lender must register the property with the local government and maintain the property to the given Community Standard. As stated above, a Community Standard should be a goal developed by the local government, with the purpose of maintaining properties. Lenders or servicers are charged with fines for non-compliance, these fees are collected and liens are recorded for non-compliant properties. This results in compliance and revenue.

The Chula Model differs from the Classic Model in two ways. For one, its trigger is the initiation of the foreclosure process, which requires registration of the vacant property, not the local government discovering the vacant property. Secondly, the obligation is not solely on the owners, as in the Classic Model, but on lenders or other servicers who have filed the foreclosure notice (Martin). However, it is important to note that not all foreclosure initiated VPROs will obligate lenders. Some VPROs will give the freedom to the foreclosure entity to identify individuals or other entities responsible for maintenance (Martin).

The Classic Model and Chula Vista Model have both seen success. This has led to local governments combining specific aspects of both models into one VPRO. For example, Fresno, CA enacted the Chula Vista Model simultaneously with the Classic Model. The rationale was to have a section of the VPRO addressing existing vacancies, whether or not they are involved in the foreclosure process *(Martin, Pg. 22)*. Both model ordinances are used to develop best practices for registration processes used by local governments in their communities.

Once goals have been established and a structured model is developed that forms within the community, local governments can begin to look at emerging tools used for alternative registration. Mortgage Electronic Registration System (MERS) is a database system used nationally that assists with the management of the registration process. The system is set up by the mortgage industry in

order to track mortgage ownership and servicing rights. In addition, MERS began to track contact information for responsible entities maintaining the property at a given address. MERS serves as a catch 22 by lowering costs for VPR lenders, due to decreasing the local government's administrative costs associated with secretarial duties. While at the same time, MERS provides local government's access to an electronic filing system.

3.5.2.5. Duties of Responsible Parties:

Property owners are responsible for the basic requirements that tailor VPROs. Depending on the jurisdiction, the registration process will determine the mandatory and necessary steps for the property owner's registration. Their duty is to register all vacant properties in a given time frame established by the local government's registration process, in addition to paying any fees/fines that are involved. Fee structures having the ability to be either flat or escalating fees depends on the particular circumstances of the community. In some cases flat fee structures have been developed by local governments, with creativity in how they're imposed. This serves as a way to meet a community's local needs. A provision could be to charge higher fees for property owners who have a property with only locked doors and windows, opposed to buildings with windows and doors boarded up. Another fee structure property owners may have to abide by is being charged certain fees based on square footage of the vacant property. Aside from fees, local governments impose increasingly higher maintenance and security precautions particularized to local needs. Some VPROs require responsible party to schedule inspections of the property; how often these inspections occur vary by jurisdiction. Typically, if the following common requirements fail to be addressed by the responsible part, local governments impose fines within a given range for each non-compliance issue, such as:

- Closing and securing both windows and doors
- Postage of contact information on the property
- Upkeep of landscaping
- Upkeep of any outdoor amenities (pools, spas, etc.)

Besides these basic requirements, an emerging and unique trend local governments have begun to use is the requirement and submission of an action plan. This is an alternative tool that requires the property owner to develop a plan detailing how a vacant property will be secured and maintained, and any possible future developments. This tool requires the responsible entity to submit a plan

when the party registers their property. Additionally, the plan needs to be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer approving such plans. This approach is helpful for VRPO officials in monitoring the security and the rehabilitation of the vacant buildings from the onset *(Martin, Pg. 25)*. An important aspect of this approach is that the requirements offer officials the information needed for determining which properties should, or could be qualified for waivers of VPRO fees. This offers a creative opportunity for fee structures to be contextually relevant.

3.5.2.6. Case Study - Wilmington, DE

The Center for Community Progress (CCP) is a national nonprofit organization working with communities across the country in developing solutions to blight, vacancy, and abandonment. CCP worked with the City of Wilmington to provide observations and recommendations to better prevent, acquire, maintain, and transfer vacant and abandoned properties to responsible ownership (Center for Community Progress, 2014). The City of Wilmington focused efforts on code enforcement, vacant property registration, delinquent tax enforcement, and land banking. For the purpose of this report, we will focus much of our attention on code enforcement tactics and recommendations aimed to enhance the strength of Wilmington's VPRO. The City asserts that there are at least 1,500 vacant or abandoned properties, nearly 200 vacant properties that owe $5,000 or re in VPR liens, and approximately 500 properties that currently have $2,000 or more in delinquent VPR liens.

Wilmington began considering a reversal of the growing vacancy problem because of negative impacts these properties have on residents. CCP decided that Wilmington needed to establish a strong and consistent message about why the problem exists, and needs to be stymied. This will provide a more stable platform to reach the future vision of a safe, healthy and vibrant City. CCP proposed a strategic campaign to outline negative impacts of vacant and abandoned properties and align stakeholders with government officials around a consensus approach and vision to address this issue. Having this additional support can increase awareness, and incorporate diverse viewpoints into the solution.

The City's VPRO was enacted in 2005 in order to address commonly expressed concerns regarding the link between vacancy and crime. Vacant and abandoned properties face higher risks of criminal activity and undermine a neighborhood's sense of security. When criminal activity acts as the primary variable in identifying vacant and abandoned properties, CCP explains that there is "an

undercounting of the scale of the problem and an underestimation of the true and full costs of the problem" (Center for Community Progress, 2014). CCP observed that the City did not appear to have "a true calculation of the external costs of vacant and abandoned properties", which makes it difficult to justify any costs of new interventions opposed to the costs of maintaining a property. CCP recommended a quantification of the true and full financial costs of vacant and abandoned properties.

One suggested method identify the name and address of the property owner or entity, and to impose escalating fines for vacancy. This was to force property owners to internalize some of the holding costs that would otherwise be carried by the City. Owners of highly fractured title interests, disinvested, and abandoned a property are less susceptible to this fee structure. These types of owners are often indifferent to growing fines and penalties, and each year the property further deteriorates will increase the costs to the neighborhood, and ultimately to the City,

CCP saw that a key factor for success will be that the City brings together existing resources, tools, and data that are currently 'siloed' within city departments. Accordingly, a more collaborative approach with a unified strategy on vacancy and abandonment will be necessary. They observed that each department tended to address vacancy and abandonment as it relateed to their own specific work. This could occur because there is no clear individual or department with head responsibility for developing and implementing a strategy for addressing vacant and abandoned properties. The lack of clarity and the inconsistent process for departments to suggest, discuss, and reach an agreement on identifying the most pressing properties to target results in ineffective action and enforcement.

CCP also expressed the need for a single unified strategy to articulate a goal in addressing vacant and abandoned properties. The focus should be put on properties that are unoccupied or not lawfully permitted to be occupied, avoiding strategy on properties that are lawfully occupied since this requires a different set of systemic solutions. Another recommendation was to consider consolidating all existing blight work groups into a single 'Blight and Crime Action Team.' This would encompass representation from the following departments and stakeholders: (a) License and Inspections and the Vacant Property Registration Program, (b) Real Estate and Housing, (c) Finance, (d) Law, (e) Planning, (f) Economic Development, (g) Fire, (h) Police, (i) IT and GIS, (j) Assessor, (k) Delaware DOJ Crime Strategies, and (l) Water. The Team should hold weekly meetings led by a representative from the Mayor's Office.

CCP discusses in its recommendations that VPROs are not an adequate substitute for housing and building code enforcement. However, the City's concept of Fix it Up, Pay it Up, or Give it Up' can be effective as a tool in dealing with vacant and abandoned properties within the VPR liens. This overarching theme implements efficient and strategic code enforcement. It sets a goal of vacant and abandoned property owners to bring their properties into compliance with housing and building codes. For owners who refuse or neglect to fix violations or reduce nuisances, CCP recommends a reformation of enforcement strategies, with primary objective to either recover full payment of all outstanding taxes and code liens, or to use the "super priority status of code liens to open up the monitions proceeding as a pathway to transfer ownership to a responsible party, including but not limited to the proposed land bank."

CCP recommends that the administration's prioritization and structure can improve by delegating a specific team to lead the process of addressing vacancy and abandonment. Additionally, the City needs to prioritize enforcement actions by first addressing properties most recently classified as vacant, and then the properties creating the greatest neighborhood harms. This will be as determined by the Blight and Crime Action Team. The City's practice of attaching unpaid VPRO fees as liens should continue- or even expand. This is because it helps to effectively implement the "Fix it Up, Pay it Up, or Give it Up" approach, acting as part of a unified strategy for vacant and abandoned properties *(16)*. Wilmington's VPRO is still a widely recognized model registration program. Municipalities continue to use this model as a way of trying to gain a better understanding of its vacant inventory, and generate some revenue. However, with this strength and reputation still comes some room for improvement, the overall key recommendations are as stated:

- Reforms to operations and policies that aim to prioritize and improve collaboration, data-sharing, efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness within City Hall.

- Improvements to the code enforcement system, vacant property registration program, and tax enforcement system to result in a more effective, efficient and equitable system to enforce building and housing codes, recover costs associated with enforcement and abatement, and where necessary, force a change in ownership to a more responsible party.

- Creation of a new public entity, a land bank, whose focus will be the acquisition, management and disposition of vacant and abandoned properties as well as to work in partnership with the other systems integral to addressing these properties .

3.5.2.7 Relationship to the NYS Zombie Foreclosure Law (ZFL)

Specific points align between a VPROs development and the new ZFL. Both are in effort to combat blight by addressing vacant and abandoned housing units. In the continued fight of restoring NYS neighborhoods, Governor Cuomo developed the ZFL to lift communities statewide by combating vacant and abandoned properties. In order to conduct such business, ZFL requires banks and other servicers to hold the duty of pre-foreclosure due diligence, maintain the ***zombie*** home, establish electronic registry of vacant and abandoned homes, and to expedite the process of foreclosure in vacant and abandoned properties so they're able to get back onto the market (Cuomo 2016). This legislation has two key aims:

1. Strengthening Home Foreclosure Prevention Services
2. Combating Blight Created by Vacant and Abandoned Properties

The Home Foreclosure Services Program establishes a Consumer Bill of Rights. This is to help families remain in their homes, as well as creating a 'Community Restoration Fund' (CRF). A CRF is a new tool from SONYMA that assists homeowners in foreclosure by purchasing defaulted mortgages from other lenders. This results in offering a more favorable mortgage modification to keep residents in their homes, and the ability to forgive a portion of loans. The connection this plays in establishing VPROs is because many localities were finding that some properties –where foreclosures had been initiated– were being vacated well before the foreclosure sale was complete. This means that the property became owned by the mortgagee, or another new owner. Once the "trigger" of foreclosure has occurred, some VPROs require the lender to inspect and secure a property accordingly, while other VPROs merely require a registration and potential fees. However, VPROs that have required lenders to take the necessary steps in securing properties before they assume title has led to lenders resisting these VPROs. This is due to the costs they expect to incur should they comply.

The new legislation is able to better combat blight created by vacant and abandoned properties. Prior, a bank or mortgagee had the responsibility of maintaining vacant properties once judgement of foreclosure and sale was obtained. This was a major cause of zombie properties. Whereas the new ZFL declares maintenance obligation on a mortgagee as soon as they're aware, or should be aware, of a home becoming vacant. This helps assign responsibility more quickly by promptly determining who is in charge of securing and maintaining the property. If the mortgagee fails to do so they face

civil penalties up to $500.00 per violation, per day, and per property. The legislation also offers an option of a plaintiff for expedited foreclosure processes on clear-cut vacant or abandoned properties that the homeowner no longer wants. The ZFL requires the foreclosure party to move to auction within 90 days of obtaining a foreclosure judgment, and to take on action of ensuring the property is reoccupied within 180 days of taking title.

In order to benefit the economic health and public safety for the community and homeowners, ZFL acts ahead on issues of foreclosure and vacancy. Governor Cuomo states, "for each zombie home we cure, and for each that we prevent with this legislation- we are saving entire neighborhoods" (*Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, 6/23/16*). ZFL is a way the legislation can promote community between local governments and mortgagees responsible for property maintenance. Additionally, the legislation offers mechanisms through the CRF to integrate communities by working with land banks, community development organizations, financial institutions, and local non- profits to rehabilitate properties and resell to new homebuyers (*governor.ny.gov, June 23, 2016*). All things to consider for your advantage when developing a VPRO that integrates within your community.

3.5.3. Best Practices: Developing & Administering Successful LLR

LLRs began to be implemented into communities by local governments to assist with identifying "problem properties" and absentee landlords throughout the community. Local governments viewed LLRs as a way to better ensure the protection of public health, safety, and general welfare. In addition to protecting resident and neighborhood values, LLRs would serve to assist code enforcement efforts, improve the quality of life for tenants, as well as the neighboring properties of rental dwellings.

As previously stated, both VPROs and LLRs main objective is to have the community comply with housing codes. However, LLRs are a tool purely considering rental properties, whereas VPRO considers all of vacancy. A LLR is defined by CCP as a "local regulation that requires landlords to register with the city and provide the city with essential information." LLRs also encompass rental licensing within its structure, requiring an inspection, or other substantive steps as a condition of renting a property. A LLR is used by local governments to protect tenants and target absentee landlords or property owners who are often hard to contact.

Establishing a LLR model is the first step toward achieving rental housing property maintenance goals for your community. How a LLR is built into a community is similar to a VPRO, the local government should begin with recognizing the importance of the same following 3 key components:

1. The goal of the VPRO
2. Any specifics of the Registration Process
3. The Affirmative Duties of Responsible Parties

3.5.3.1 Goals:

As with many communities, the overarching goal of an LLR program is to provide public health and safety, as well as protect the general welfare of citizens in the community. In order to achieve this, understanding an important aspect of the community's housing stock is to find and identify property owners, and then be able to gain compliance. Local governments set the goal of LLRs to assist with this, as well as to target irresponsible investors and absentee landlords. Some landlords are successful in maintaining rental properties, while others fail to do so because of various reasons such as limited resources, lack of knowledge, or the effects of social and economic conditions within the neighborhood where the owned property is located. The following goals are also to be considered when establishing a LLR:

- Protecting the character of and stability of residential areas
- To correct and prevent housing conditions of deteriorating, which adversely affect or are likely to affect neighboring housing values
- Enforcement of minimum standards for heating, plumbing, or any other necessary sanitary equipment for health, safety, and wellbeing of citizens
- Enforcement of minimum standards for light and ventilation
- Enforcement of minimum standards of maintenance in residential existing buildings to prevent slum and blight
- Preserve the value of land and buildings within the community

(City of Buffalo Rental Registration)

The CCP notes in a sample report conducted in the City of Flint that local governments set the goals in a way as not to 'crack down' on violators, but instead "create a mix of strategies designed to

encourage good landlords and discourage bad landlord." (Center for Community Progress). Knowing these goals of identifying property owners, gaining compliance, and creating equitable strategies of encouragement or discouragement, supports local governments in building a better registration process and stable LLR.

3.5.3.2. Registration Process for LLR

The overall purpose of an LLR is to identify property owners in cases of emergency and code violation, protect tenants, and to put owners under notice about their obligation under a municipality's ordinance. How to enact a LLR begins with properly administering one, similar to how a local government would enact a VPRO. LLRs are usually managed through a City department, for example the City of Buffalo LLRs are handled in the Department of Permit and Inspection Services. The City of Buffalo Permit and Inspection Services manages registering all single, 2-family, as well as some 3-family, and mixed-use dwellings with or without tenants, that are not owner occupied (City of Buffalo, Permit and Inspection Services).

Besides carrying out the necessary protocols and responsibilities involved with the registration process, the department should work with a Housing Authority or Code Enforcement Officer who works on the ground level. Having a specific department in charge will not only assist with efficiency of the registration process, but will result in better implementation and strengthen the effectiveness of the LLR. CCP illustrates a registration process should involve getting landlords into the system through registration and licensing programs. This can be done through a rental registry database, containing relevant information regarding non-owner occupied one to two family rental dwellings within the community. The database contains the landlord's name, address, and a telephone number where they can be contacted at.

The local government should enforce a reasonable property standard for properties to be held to. Similar to a VPRO having a 'community standard,' a '***property standard***' sets expectations for your community, and more specifically for landlords to abide by. With this comes the importance of not punishing good actors, but to provide incentive to reward responsible landlords' behavior. Much of this concern can be addressed with an equitable fee structure. CCP suggested for the City of Flint, Michigan's LLR Sample Report, that LLRs should contain a legal requirement for landlords. This requires landlords to provide a receipt of written acknowledgement understanding what the LLR requests (Center for Community Progress).

The fee structure should be no more than the cost of sending out notice and maintaining a rental property database. However, it is important to impose a substantial penalty on owners who fail to register, and a significant penalty for noncompliance. This provides an incentive for timely registration. An equitable fee structure used in a similar community, Troy, NY, sets an equitable example for fee structure: Troy requires landlords to submit a Landlord Registration Statement within 90 days of ownership transfer. This includes a registration fee of $150.00 (City of Troy). However, the fee will be waived if the statement is received within the 90 days. This provides a way to not punish all landlords who hold up their end of the bargain, but will punish bad actors who do not register promptly, or at all.

As mentioned earlier, tailoring LLRs with rental licensing only strengthens the overall LLR. Licensing is to promote compliance with housing maintenance standard and combines rental registry with inspection. While rental registration is purely informational, under rental licensing a property is not eligible to be registered until passing inspection, ensuring proper health and safety compliance. Landlords can be given a reasonable period to come into compliance if violations are identified. Having rental licensing in conjunction with your LLR will improve your community's housing stock; landlords will need their properties up to par with the communities Property Standard before they're allowed to register. In turn, this will save the time, money, and energy of the municipal department in charge of handling LLR.

3.5.3.3. Duties of Responsible Parties

The duty is set in LLRs for landlords to register all rental property within a given time frame established by the local government's registration process. This involves providing their name, where they live –local address–, and a phone number they can be reached at easily. In addition, landlords are to pay any fees that are involved with registering their properties within the given period provided by the municipal registration process. Landlords should meet the required inspection standards and comply with the community's property standard. If inspection suggests violations, the landlord will be responsible for addressing the violation within an appropriate timeframe determined by the local government's rental licensing before they can register the property. It should be clearly understood by landlords, local government, and the community what is expected from the LLR. This is reasoning for CCP recommending Flint add a legal requirement of a receipt stating written acknowledgment by the landlord understanding any requirements and/or repercussions.

3.5.3.4. Case Study - Town of Cheektowaga, NY

Looking at an already implemented LLR will help form best practices to consider when building one from scratch. Town of Cheektowaga, an inner ring suburb of Buffalo, recently created and enacted a LLR. For communities that are seeking to strengthen, revitalize, and preserve their neighborhoods and downtowns require effective strategies. These strategies should encourage responsible owners, crackdown on bad actors, and effectively deal with the owners of privately-owned problem properties. To establish best practices, we will consider the same 3 key components stated prior when analyzing Cheektowaga's LLR:

1. The goal of the VPRO
2. Any specifics of the Registration Process
3. The Affirmative Duties of Responsible Parties

Goal

In the Town of Cheektowaga rental and vacant units have become "havens" for possible criminal activity and/or nuisances. These kinds of properties are beginning to encourage unwanted activity begins to cause disruption and impact the community's health, safety, and the general well-being of residents. The goal of the LLR is to control and mitigate these effects. Because the renting of a dwelling unit constitutes a business, the LLRs purpose is to distribute a license and require landlords of rental units or businesses to hold this license. No dwelling units are to be occupied or rented for another occupancy unless the owner or property manager has first obtained a Rental Housing Business License (Town of Cheektowaga).

Registration Process

The application process it through the Town Council Office, in which a written rental application form is to be completed by either a landlord or property owner Additionally, any further information that is deemed necessary by the Town in order to properly "administer, enforce, and ensure compliance with provisions of this law" needs to be addressed by the owner or property manager. There is no fee to file the application, however If the owner or property manager fail to provide such information, this will result in denial of the license. If the application is complete, then the owner will receive the license within 30 days. They will be contacted by the Town and have 30 days to supply whatever requirements needed by the Council Office; if owner does not comply then the application will be denied.

Duties of Responsible Parties:

The following information is to be completed and submitted by either a landlord or property owner to the Town Council Office:

i. The name, address(s) of rental or business unit, and telephone number of owner/property manager(s).

iv. If owner is designated agent or management company to assist owner with the management of the property- Name, principal address, and business address must be included in application.

v. It is the responsibility of the owner of property to contact and register any changes of address, agent, or pertinent information to the Town.

vi. A post office box will not be accepted in this law as owners business or residential address. Additionally, it is unacceptable to use the address of the dwelling intended to be licensed as the owner's address- unless it is the principal address or residence of the owner.

vii. If the owner does not hold a principal address located in Erie County, the owner must have a property manager located in Erie County.

viii. The owner must specify the addresses to which all notices and invoices for fees are to be forwarded too.

The fee for the license application is $10.00 bi-annually, unless the license is revoked. The license is non-transferable to any other person who has acquired ownership of the dwelling. If a property has a new owner, they must file an application within 30 days of acquisition. Failure of the owner to submit an application, or supply all required information for a Rental Housing Business License will result in the owner being subject to a $500.00 fine for each owner, per 30 day period, until the application is submitted. If the fine remains unpaid, neglected, or owner refuses to pay fines within 30 days after notification, the Town will add any such fees to the owner's tax bill and become a lien on the property dwelling.

3.5.3.5. Retrospective Q&A with Cheektowaga

Kimberly Burst, Assistant to the Cheektowaga Town Supervisor, answered the following questions on how the LLR is working within the community, what they have learned, and what they may have done different.

Q: What is something the City of Tonawanda could learn from how Cheektowaga developed/ designed its rental registry?

A: Developing a plan to track the registry is very difficult. Although we created a program specifically for this item it is constantly evolving and growing. Implementing within a current platform or finding a cheap canned program may have worked. Updating owner information is the biggest challenge to the process

Q: How has the implementation of the registry been going?

A: 85% compliance, many phone calls and continuous input and output of mail to be processed daily. The program is constantly changing as we see flaws in the system or as changes to the local law are approved

Q: How is it received by the community?

A: For the most part it is accepted. Currently we are in discussion to amend the local law to include owner occupied, multi-family residences. Our police department has asked for this change in hopes of helping residents remove troublesome tenants from their homes. Unfortunately there is no standard lease agreement or people don't enter into a lease agreement with tenants. Some residents are afraid of backlash from the tenant so they don't do anything about the unwanted activity. We have had more resistance to this change by a board member then the public. From a clerical perspective, implementing will create thousands of more applications to be mailed and processed

Q: Is compliance an issue?

A: When it was first implemented it was very difficult because people didn't know or understand why all of a sudden they were being asked to register

Q: What would you do different or recommend if you were to do it again?

A: would incorporate a vacancy registry as well as the two items go hand in hand

3.5.4 Enforcement tips

Another key component in developing either a VPRO or LLR is Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement is a tool to further prevent neighborhood decline, and preserve housing market conditions by encouraging private owners to maintain and use properties responsibly. Local

governments exercise the authority of VPROs through a Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), a local housing authority, or building departments. A CEO can only do their job as well as it is described in an ordinance. An ordinance without diligent and proper authority in place through strategies and protocols will result in noncompliance, ordinances/registries destabilizing, and continued vacant and deteriorating homes in the community.

Having the combination of an effective registry, proper enforcement, recovery costs, and policies into a comprehensive strategy will prevent and address vacancy and abandonment. Most commonly, communities use a reactive and complaint driven model of enforcement. This however involves a higher expense and more hours spent addressing violators ineffectively. CCP emphasizes the importance for a community to build a more strategic Code Enforcement System, and integrate this prevention work with a more comprehensive strategy. For a VPRO to be most effective, how it is developed and administered is vital to successful outcomes. CCP proposes 3 mechanisms for a sustainable enforcement model:

- Understand Local Conditions: Without a clear understanding of data, there is no basis of decision making in where and how to best implement any strategy. A neighborhood market analysis using data driven and typology of neighbors serve as a basis for all blight reduction efforts. This will provide the best and lasting impact on blight, abandonment, and disinvestment.
- Identifying Bight before it becomes contagious: Communities should begin Code Enforcement in relatively stable housing markets. This prevents blight from spreading more rapidly. As a result, this strategy can provide a better chance of ensuring continuous stability
- Maximum Impact of any Current Registry and Licensing Programs: It is important to have incentives for landlords who comply with housing markets standards, while also deterring irresponsible property owners.

Code Enforcement is a tool primarily envisioned to enforce compliance with housing codes. However, some communities see it as an opportunity to generate revenue for the local government. Although this may be a concern for some communities, full engagement and understanding of what is being enforced, how, and why provides a clearer picture of the purpose. To establish trust in your community and gain insight of what residents' concerns are and what they value entails establishing a consensus among stakeholders about goals of strategies. The report on the City of Flint's Code

Enforcement Model by CCP, discusses building a diverse group of stakeholders involved within the community. By doing this, Flint is first able to identify the community's definition of blight: "Vacant, abandoned, non-code compliant housing, commercial property and vacant lots which pose a risk to the health, safety and welfare of the community." This standard definition of blight provides a stronger platform to move toward developing a code structure as a tool to combat it. Aside from defining blight, the community discussed their current code enforcement efforts and structure, developed preliminary goals or strategies for a reorganization of the code enforcement program, and was able to identify the available resources to achieve those goals *(5)*.

The structure of Code Enforcement mechanisms are usually similar in that there will be municipal fees, or sometimes criminal action taken depending on the type and severity of a nuisance. In regards to the fee structure, if or when fees remain unpaid or neglected, the local government can place a lien against a property. Fees are usually annual, and vary with jurisdictions; fees should be reasonable and fair to that specific community. However, fees need to have enough financial impact for landlords to feel the obligation and responsibility to comply with the ordinance. When developing a fee structure, it is important to consider that VPROs affect everyone involved- not just 'bad actors'. Code Enforcement shouldn't be to 'punish' landlords who do their job well, take responsibility of compliance, upkeep, maintenance, security, and who are easily contacted. Many ordinances inadvertently punish many for the crimes of just a few bad actors (Carr).

Jurisdictions are a reality, and communities will have different approaches to frame and tailor a registration and application process. Assigning appropriate and affirmative, yet reasonable fees and fines is key to making VPRO doable for all actors involved. The majority of these issues arise from vague language and muddled objectives. Seemingly simple terms such as 'owner' or 'vacant' are in actuality are terms with broad definitions that become the root of confusion. This can leave too much up to interpretation, which could lead to arbitrary or unequal appointment of the ordinance. A forward-thinking approach can avoid complications in the future.

3.5.5. Recommendations

A home is the most significant investment an individual can make. Unfortunately, it is also an investment that can quickly become undermined by blight, neglect, and abandonment. Tonawanda is a 'bedroom community,' and an **ecosystem** residents, not just a sea of containers for residents. This is why housing matters, especially in communities like Tonawanda.

The condition of a home determines who lives in these households. Thereby the changing social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the entire city need to be taken into consideration when any kind of development or program is being created. The strength of the local government is also important because they are who enact these programs. In both cases of developing a VPRO and LLR, the main objective is to comply with a housing code. This effort assists in mitigating neighborhood destabilization, addressing deteriorating buildings, and protecting the neighborhoods value, safety, and the wellbeing of residents. Communities will need to operate and apply the needed actions by creating a position and or department to do so. The following recommendations will assist local governments in developing VPRO and LLR:

- Look at population characteristics. This is critical in that it helps to understand the current needs of a community, but also where the potential is, or is going.

- The local government needs to set a goal to accomplish with an ordinance, registry, or both in regards to highest and most severe needs. The goal should be clearly stated in the ordinances scope of work, with clear language and definitions.

- To develop a City of Tonawanda "Community Standard" that properties should be held to.

- To enact the most effective and efficient program, having a department or position to lead the process and implementation is essential. This could mean creating a position or department, such as a Planning Department to do so. The individual, team, or department would also need to work diligently with the Code Enforcement Officer in order to achieve compliance.

- It is important to consider models of both VPRO and LLR used in other communities. However, jurisdictions vary greatly as do VPROs/LLRs. What a local government chooses to enact, geography and demographics matter and should be taken into consideration.

In regards to a fee structure communities need to penalize bad actors- but not all actors, as some landlords are responsible owners. A community to be built of responsible landlords entails going beyond regulations that create a landlord incentive system. Incentives and regulations are interactive strategies. Some of the most effective incentives tie into the regulatory system by offering regulatory relief as a product of responsible behavior.

4. Historic Preservation

4.1. Introduction

The City of Tonawanda was established in 1904, but settlement in the area predates that by over a century. As such, Tonawanda has a long and vibrant history, partially evidenced in its architecture and housing. As places age, the need sometimes occurs for notable and important buildings to be preserved. Through historic preservation, many communities across the United States have been able to protect their assets, and Tonawanda can do the same.
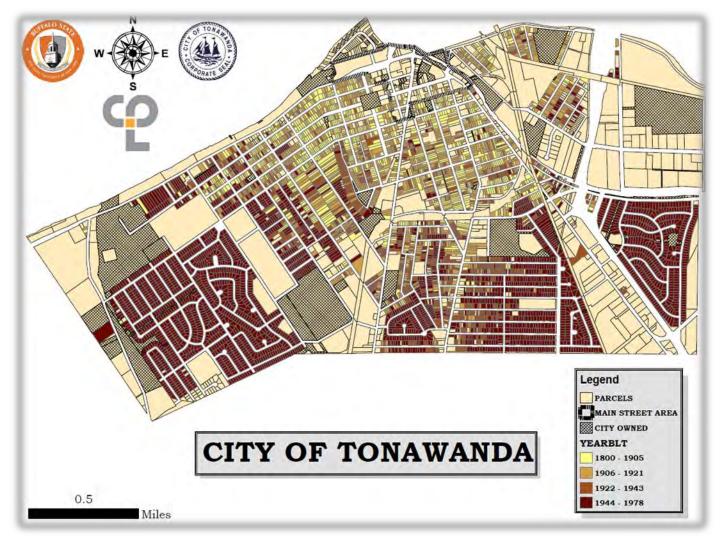
The City of Tonawanda has a housing stock where 94 percent of structures were built almost 60 years ago; with such an old housing stock a historic preservation program is a necessity. If a community does not have a preservation program nor a review commission; residential repairs and remodeling can take away from the historical significance of a home. Since Tonawanda never had a review commission it is difficult to know if materials and architecture were kept to the structures time period but with a local program historical significance can be restored.

In the 1980s a list of historically significant buildings that could potentially be preserved was compiled. The list was a mixture of homes as well as significant sites that exhibited characteristics deemed architecturally or historically significant. Even though this list never turned into anything important; it is a great starting point in finding historically significant home within the City's limits.

4.2. Benefits

Historic preservation is considered beneficial for many communities, as historic structures are irreplaceable community resources; there is also value in conserving the elements of a community's past. Preservation saves historic structures for the future and allows residents and non-residents the opportunity to share the very spaces and environments generations before us utilized. Many municipalities choose to preserve their more distinct and historically significant buildings, and such buildings make the community more attractive and appealing.

As architecture changes and transforms over the years, preserving buildings from a certain era preserves history itself. As many places take pride in where they came from, it is important to preserve a community's cultural history, and historic preservation is a sure way to accomplish that.

Historically preserved buildings and landmarks stand as a solidified and insured asset to benefit a given place.

Map 4.1: Housing Age

Economically, preservation has benefits. Preservation helps sustain and support the local economy, creates and supports jobs, and generates revenue. In a study of National Register districts in Philadelphia, homes in historic districts received a sale price premium of 131% over properties of similar conditions in non-historic neighborhoods. Many historically preserved buildings are opened up for commercial purposes, such as museums, offices or even storefronts, and the uniqueness of a preserved structure may benefit the community by drawing outside money in.

Overall, it is shown that people like when their community's history is preserved and restored, and take pride in aesthetically pleasing structures that benefit the municipality both culturally and economically. Preserving older homes demonstrates long term vision by conserving environmental resources, and recovers the worth of past energy investments. Tonawanda would greatly benefit from historic preservation by conserving their resources, generating revenue, and sustain and support the local economy.

4.3. Historic Preservation Districts

Historic districts are a geographically defined grouping of properties, largely contiguous, that have significant historic or architectural value. Historic districts can be a mix a contributing and non-contributing structures as well as sites and even a canal. They are submitted and approved through a nomination process, and can vary wildly in number, from just a few properties to a few hundred.

There are a number of advantages to historic districts that may incentivize a municipality to consider forming one. Historic districts are shown to have a positive impact on the local municipality's economy, complementing place based economic development, as well as encouraging economic growth. In addition it can have a positive effect on tourism in the municipality.

Beyond the economic benefit for the community, a historic district benefits the homeowners that reside within as well. Housing values appreciate greater when in a historic district, and the historic district acts as a quality guarantee for neighborhood conditions. Properties within a historic district are held to certain standards, which assures the properties within the district must look a certain way.

Historic districts are praised for being environmentally responsible, and the preservation of properties –as opposed to the demolition and reconstruction of–, conserves natural resources, and incentivizes communities to reuse and retain their existing assets, instead of replacing them with new developments. Districts allow for real property tax incentives to be given to residents within those districts. These tax incentives are only given for projects that keep the historical significance of the home, and make it more possible for residents to financially afford their projects.

Finally, a historic district can create or maintain a sense of community and place within a given municipality. The uniqueness and aesthetic of a historic district instills a sense pride within a community, and makes a point in highlighting the architectural and historic assets of a given place.

4.4. Federal and State Eligibility

4.4.1. Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for historic preservation on the state or federal level, a historic preservation district or landmark must first meet specific requirements. This mostly involves being listed on the National Registry, which catalogs historically or architecturally significant structures. A property's historic significance can be no less than 50 years old in most considerations.

The Survey and Evaluation Unit, part of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), oversees the evaluation and identification of historic districts, buildings or objects in New York State. It is preferable to conduct a survey in order to:

- Establish priorities with preservation projects
- Potentially identify landmarks that could be part of the national registry
- Gather important information and data for future endeavors
- Ensure environmental requirements are met

According to the National Parks Service, a property can be considered for historic preservation and a place on the National registry so long as it meets at least one of four specific criteria. The property must usually be:

- Associated with events significant to history
- Associated with specific person significant to history
- Embody distinctive characteristics of a place (building type, period, method of construction)
- Have directly or indirectly provided information important to history

It is possible for a property to be considered for the registry even if it does not meet the above requirements. Generally cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of significant historical figures, properties that are used for religious purposes or owned by religious entities, reconstructed structures or those removed from their original location are not considered. However, the aforementioned may be if they follow one of the following criteria:

- A religious property with architectural or artistic significance and distinction
- A structure moved from its original location but with a distinct architectural value, or a moved structure associated with a distinct historical event

- A birthplace of a historic figure with no other monument or site associated with their productive life

- A cemetery whose primary importance is either the grave of an outstanding historical figure, its age, its distinctive design features or an associated with important historic events

- A reconstructed building that has been constructed in a suitable environment, part of a restoration master plan, when no other relevant surviving building has survived

- A property that is commemorative in design, age, traditional or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance

- A property from the past 50 years if it has exceptional historical significance

Historic districts more often than not fall under the third requirement, in that they are representative of distinct characteristics, generally architectural. According to the National Parks Service, when concerning historic districts, areas that are most considered generally are:

- Contiguous in nature

- Distinct in their features (architecture, historical significance etc.)

- Clearly defined geographically

In consideration of those requirements, a large portion of historic districts are made up of residential areas, central business districts, rural villages, industrial complexes, or large estates. Many cities may have more than one historic district, as generally historic districts are contiguous, whereas areas that warrant to be historically preserved are not.

4.5. The Nomination Process

To be listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), a nomination must be submitted to the SHPO, usually from the property owner, historic societies, preservation groups, the local government, or other interested parties. SHPO will notify the property owner and allow for public comment. If the owner does not want historic preservation, the property cannot be listed. In the case of a historic district, the objection of a majority of the property owners will result in the district not being listed.

If the nomination goes through the public comment phase, it will be submitted to the SHPO for review, which takes a minimum of 90 days. If that is approved, it is sent to the National Parks

Service in Washington, D.C. for final review by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places, which makes a listing decision within 45 days.

4.6. Federal and State Assistance Programs

Financial assistance on the state or federal level for those owning properties that could be considered eligible for historic preservation is scarce. Tax credits (usually of 20% on any renovations) can be offered for those who currently own historically preserved properties, as well as those that are income producing. A structure must usually be on the National Registry for this consideration. Once a property is on the historic registry, it is eligible for tax credits. If a historic property or historic district is able to be listed on the NRHP, it is possible to receive Federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation, federal investment tax credits (generally 10% or 20%), preservation easements for nonprofit organizations, and international building code and fire safety alternatives.

At the State level, credits can be given to homeowners for rehabilitation, generally 20% for whatever the cost of the rehabilitation is, with a maximum credit value of $50,000. Properties must be registered with the NRHP, or be a contributing building in a historic district. Further requirements state that at least $5,000 must be spent on qualifying work, and that at least 5% of the entire project must be spent on the exterior of the building. Before rehabilitation is to begin, it must be approved by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. An application fee is required, its cost relative to the cost of the rehabilitation fees.

There are ways of receiving federal and state assistance that go beyond the financial. For New York State's, SHPO oversees and assists with a municipality's desire to historically preserve. Many municipalities in New York participate in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Those that participate can get legal advice, technical assistance, grants, and other benefits. The SHPO has a recommended checklist that covers physical aspects of a property to be counted for the survey. A survey is useful to ensure all requirements in identifying a possible historical structure are met.

4.7. Local Programs

4.7.1. Program Overview

Local historic preservation programs are used by communities that want to preserve historical buildings, structures, and places but do not meet the requirements for State and Federal programs. Local historic preservation works in three different ways:

- Residential Assistance
- Tax Exemption
- Certified Local Government

Local Programs have greater flexibility for the type of assistance the local government provides. Assistance programs are great for communities that want to help residents obtain resources to restore and preserve on their own while not cutting into the local tax base. An assistance program does not require filing with State or Federal; which makes an assistance program the cheapest and least involved way to assist historic preservation within a community.

Local Governments could set up resources to assist residents in restoring or rehabilitating historic structures. These resources could include a section of the City's website being set aside for historic preservation. This section could then be used to aid residents through program references, a historic inventory, and material listings for their specific home. Residential assistance is nice for communities that cannot afford a real property tax exemption or cannot meet the requirements to become a certified local government.

A local government that wants to go the extra step and allow residents tax exemption status; can do so through filing with the Secretary of State of New York. This process is done through code enforcement, variances, and design standards.. For a tax exempt status to be allowed at the local government level; the council must pass local laws that allow an exemption to occur under certain criteria and requirements. The code enforcement is held up by zoning ordinances, design standards, and usually a committee to oversee the program. Design standards are used to make sure that all materials that are used in rehabilitation projects suite the design and year of the structure. Tax exemption is a big step for historic preservation but it is not the final step for local governments. *Reference Appendix K for Saratoga Springs code enforcement.*

Tax incentive historical preservation is great for communities that have the tax base to allow an incentive to be put in place. Tax incentives give residents a reason to restore or preserve their home and helps those residents out financially. Another reason a community would choose a tax incentive is to attract outsiders. Some people look for communities with tax incentives; this could help them rebuild and restore a home for personal use or resale.

A CLG is one that has taken enough steps and has done a lot in the field of historic preservation for their community. After a community has demonstrated these abilities they can apply for certification through the State Historical Preservation Office. This program is through the Federal level but States oversee all local governments within their boundaries. *Reference Appendix L for the requirements and process to become a CLG.*

For local governments within New York State boundaries there are special requirements for becoming a certified local government. One of the biggest ones for New York municipalities is having a committee of at least five members. This can be an obstacle for some municipalities because those members also have to have a bachelor's degree in a related field or have done work in or show interest in the field of historic preservation. All though there are more requirements for New York municipalities; becoming a certified local government is not out of reach for the City of Tonawanda.

If a community wants to go the extra step and become a CLG; it will do great things for their local historic preservation. Becoming a CLG opens the door for many opportunities. These opportunities are:

- Funding
- Technical Assistance
- Sustainability

Funding is a crucial aspect in preserving a community's history. Each State receives annual funding from the Federal Historic Preservation Fund and States are required to give at least ten percent of those funds to CLGs as sub grants. These grants can be used for surveys, National Register nominations, education programs, and much more. CLG's also gain access to SHPO staff for assistance and training from State staff and NPS. Assistance for CLGs consist of building assessment, surveys, nominations, and general preservation assistance. Becoming a CLG gives a community greater preservation techniques which in turn creates sustainability within a community.

Studies show that historical districts maintain higher property values, less population decline, more walkability, and a greater sense of community.

After a community becomes a CLG they are able to recommend buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts to be registered on the Nation Register. According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, almost 40% of the City of Tonawanda's housing stock was built before 1940, meaning a large portion is over 75 years old. This can be an asset if historic preservation is implemented where applicable, and can help prevent any possible deterioration of these structures. Tonawanda has three historically preserved buildings as of 2017, and has the potential to preserve even more, especially when considering some of its housing; because of this Tonawanda would greatly benefit from becoming a CLG. *Reference Appendix M to differentiate between the aforementioned locations.*

4.8. Case Study
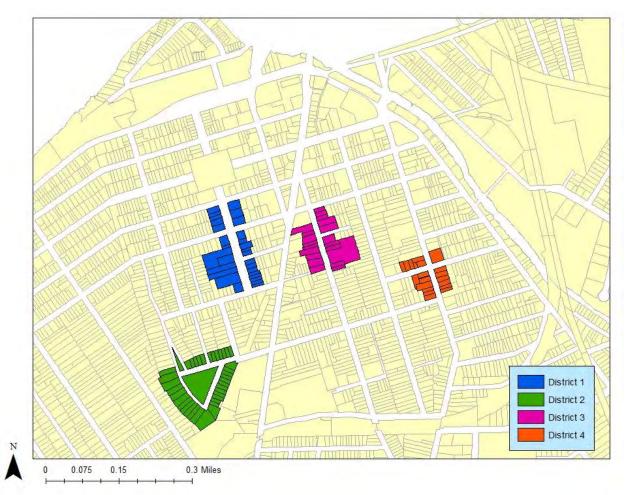
The City of Saratoga Springs is a shining example of why a community should adopt historical preservation. The City's historical preservation movement started in February 1968, when residents came together to halt the construction of a 150-room hotel in Congress Park. The company was taking advantage of legislation made by city fathers in 1957; Bea Sweeney and Evelyn Barrett Britten led the fight and quickly repealed the legislation that allowed the increase in the stock of hotel rooms. Mayor James Murphy Junior created the Aesthetic Zoning Board to oversee cityscape renovations and changes. An even earlier case of historic preservation came when a Columbia University graduate student, John G. Waite, pointed out the importance of landmarks such as the Batcheller Mansion and Franklin Square. Franklin Square was soon placed on the National Register of Historic Places and saved from a proposed arterial highway. During the 1970s, many more people joined the fight for historical preservation including Julie Stokes, Bernard Donovan, and John Roohan. These historical preservation activists stopped urban renewal and called for restoration to take place in the downtown area.

4.9. Recommendations

Our recommendation is for the City of Tonawanda to work towards becoming a CLG. Becoming a CLG takes a lot of time, effort, and staff. We recommend devoting a part of the City's website to historic preservation; with design guidelines and resources. After that is complete; variances and code enforcement should be drafted to allow for a historic preservation tax incentive. Variances are

needed to create historic preservation districts where the property tax incentive would be allowed. The director of Tonawanda's historical society suggested that historic districts should start with the main street area around where the historical society is located. This is a great idea that could be a start for Tonawanda's historic districts but we made recommendations for a few residential districts (map 5.2). No residents outside of the designated district would be allowed historical preservation tax incentives. After districts have been put in place; code enforcement must be filed with the Secretary of State under the home rule law. A historic review commission must be put in place to oversee all projects and tax incentives.

Map 5.2: Recommended Historic Districts

Members of the historical society of Tonawanda would make a great fit to be on the review commission. At least five members with areas of interest or degrees in history, architecture, history, archeology, planning, folklore, cultural anthropology, conservation, or museums must be on the

commission. All other requirements referenced in appendix L must be met before Tonawanda can become a CLG. Tonawanda is a great City with great history and we believe they should do everything in their power to preserve their history and the best way to do so is becoming a CLG.

In recommending specific areas of Tonawanda for the creation of a Historic Preservation District, there are a few notable locations that stand out given the makeup of other historical districts around the United States. For the most part they are in the neighborhoods close to downtown, as that contains many of Tonawanda's older, more distinct housing. Given the requirement that historic districts must be continuous, the recommendation calls for multiple, potentially numerous districts, though a larger, continuous district is certainly ideal when applicable. The list and accompanying map are by no means exclusive, but act as potential starting points when pursuing historic preservation in the way of historic districts. The map below displays spatially where the suggested districts are relative to the city itself.

District 1: Properties along Clinton Street south of Clinton Park, particularly those bound by Morgan Street to the north and Hill Street to the south. Many of these houses are large, architecturally distinct, and aesthetically appealing. Its location close to downtown adds the potential for visitors driving through to see the houses, and its proximity to Clinton Park allows for the area to look attractive and distinct.

District 2: Elmwood Park neighborhood, generally those properties directly surrounding Elmwood Park in the triangle of streets formed by Elmwood Park North, Elmwood Park South and Elmwood Park West. The proximity to a notable park would help create a very quaint historic district, especially given the proximity to the Kibler High School Building, which is already on the NRHP. One of the houses in the suggested district is the only stone mansion in Tonawanda.

District 3: A select few properties neighboring and across the street from the Grove Street Christian Church on Grove Street. These properties are large, very well maintained, and architecturally distinct and significant.

District 4: An area on Delaware Street south of the Tonawanda Castle, particularly those bound by Scott Street to the north and Minerva Street to the south. Some properties on Scott Street west of Delaware Street could also be included. The houses are old, and the area is aesthetically pleasing, especially with the tree lined streets.

Several of the properties in the suggested districts above were in the list of historic properties and sites developed in the 1980s, and would make ample additions to a historic district. Historic districts can be created from as little as a few properties, so Tonawanda has the potential to preserve its architectural history in many parts of the city.

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Appendix A: Market Potential

esri | Retail Market Potential

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150 5
6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 4 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Demographic Summary	2016	2021
Population	11,005	10,841
Population 18+	9,023	8,889
Households	5,261	5,220
Median Household Income	$41,359	$38,979

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Apparel (Adults)			
Bought any men's clothing in last 12 months	4,197	46.5%	98
Bought any women's clothing in last 12 months	4,020	44.6%	101
Bought clothing for child <13 years in last 6 months	2,408	26.7%	97
Bought any shoes in last 12 months	4,711	52.2%	97
Bought costume jewelry in last 12 months	1,817	20.1%	103
Bought any fine jewelry in last 12 months	1,621	18.0%	98
Bought a watch in last 12 months	896	9.9%	90
Automobiles (Households)			
HH owns/leases any vehicle	4,439	84.4%	99
HH bought/leased new vehicle last 12 mo.	455	8.6%	92
Automotive Aftermarket (Adults)			
Bought gasoline in last 6 months	7,779	86.2%	101
Bought/changed motor oil in last 12 months	4,644	51.5%	105
Had tune-up in last 12 months	2,676	29.7%	98
Beverages (Adults)			
Drank bottled water/seltzer in last 6 months	5,771	64.0%	98
Drank regular cola in last 6 months	4,404	48.8%	109
Drank beer/ale in last 6 months	3,906	43.3%	102
Cameras (Adults)			
Own digital point & shoot camera	2,498	27.7%	95
Own digital single-lens reflex (SLR) camera	650	7.2%	83
Bought any camera in last 12 months	527	5.8%	103
Printed digital photos in last 12 months	266	2.9%	101
Cell Phones (Adults/Households)			
Bought cell phone in last 12 months	3,184	35.3%	98
Have a smartphone	4,765	52.8%	90
Have a smartphone: Android phone (any brand)	2,526	28.0%	104
Have a smartphone: Apple iPhone	1,592	17.6%	68
Number of cell phones in household: 1	1,997	38.0%	118
Number of cell phones in household: 2	1,953	37.1%	99
Number of cell phones in household: 3+	1,004	19.1%	75
HH has cell phone only (no landline telephone)	2,583	49.1%	117
Computers (Households)			
HH owns a computer	3,759	71.5%	93
HH owns desktop computer	2,250	42.8%	94
HH owns laptop/notebook	2,590	49.2%	91
HH owns any Apple/Mac brand computer	469	8.9%	59
HH owns any PC/non-Apple brand computer	3,489	66.3%	98
HH purchased most recent computer in a store	1,976	37.6%	100
HH purchased most recent computer online	595	11.3%	86
Spent <$500 on most recent home computer	844	16.0%	110
Spent $500-$999 on most recent home computer	996	18.9%	99
Spent $1,000-$1,499 on most recent home computer	448	8.5%	90
Spent $1,500-$1,999 on most recent home computer	195	3.7%	81
Spent $2,000+ on most recent home computer	137	2.6%	66

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
Source: These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to local demographic composition. Usage data were collected by GfK MRI in a nationally representative survey of U.S. households. Esri forecasts for 2016 and 2021.

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Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Convenience Stores (Adults)			
Shopped at convenience store in last 6 mos	4,602	51.0%	101
Bought brewed coffee at convenience store in last 30 days	1,514	16.8%	107
Bought cigarettes at convenience store in last 30 days	1,503	16.7%	133
Bought gas at convenience store in last 30 days	3,398	37.7%	114
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: <$20	590	6.5%	81
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $20-$39	850	9.4%	104
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $40-$50	721	8.0%	105
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $51-$99	418	4.6%	105
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $100+	2,378	26.4%	115
Entertainment (Adults)			
Attended a movie in last 6 months	5,208	57.7%	97
Went to live theater in last 12 months	907	10.1%	77
Went to a bar/night club in last 12 months	1,598	17.7%	106
Dined out in last 12 months	3,927	43.5%	97
Gambled at a casino in last 12 months	1,208	13.4%	98
Visited a theme park in last 12 months	1,393	15.4%	88
Viewed movie (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	1,458	16.2%	95
Viewed TV show (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	963	10.7%	83
Watched any pay-per-view TV in last 12 months	1,149	12.7%	97
Downloaded a movie over the Internet in last 30 days	533	5.9%	82
Downloaded any individual song in last 6 months	1,634	18.1%	89
Watched a movie online in the last 30 days	1,147	12.7%	80
Watched a TV program online in last 30 days	1,030	11.4%	76
Played a video/electronic game (console) in last 12 months	987	10.9%	105
Played a video/electronic game (portable) in last 12 months	381	4.2%	93
Financial (Adults)			
Have home mortgage (1st)	2,608	28.9%	93
Used ATM/cash machine in last 12 months	4,134	45.8%	93
Own any stock	546	6.1%	79
Own U.S. savings bond	353	3.9%	74
Own shares in mutual fund (stock)	439	4.9%	67
Own shares in mutual fund (bonds)	248	2.7%	57
Have interest checking account	2,396	26.6%	94
Have non-interest checking account	2,606	28.9%	102
Have savings account	4,668	51.7%	96
Have 401K retirement savings plan	1,213	13.4%	93
Own/used any credit/debit card in last 12 months	6,342	70.3%	94
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: <$111	1,078	11.9%	103
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $111-$225	600	6.6%	97
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $226-$450	537	6.0%	94
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $451-$700	354	3.9%	74
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $701-$1,000	301	3.3%	77
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $1,001+	512	5.7%	63
Did banking online in last 12 months	2,887	32.0%	90
Did banking on mobile device in last 12 months	1,062	11.8%	84
Paid bills online in last 12 months	3,566	39.5%	92

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Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Grocery (Adults)			
Used beef (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	3,762	71.5%	103
Used bread in last 6 months	4,969	94.4%	101
Used chicken (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	3,550	67.5%	98
Used turkey (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	872	16.6%	105
Used fish/seafood (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	2,747	52.2%	96
Used fresh fruit/vegetables in last 6 months	4,481	85.2%	99
Used fresh milk in last 6 months	4,581	87.1%	99
Used organic food in last 6 months	906	17.2%	87
Health (Adults)			
Exercise at home 2+ times per week	2,257	25.0%	88
Exercise at club 2+ times per week	779	8.6%	66
Visited a doctor in last 12 months	6,796	75.3%	99
Used vitamin/dietary supplement in last 6 months	4,467	49.5%	94
Home (Households)			
Any home improvement in last 12 months	1,410	26.8%	100
Used housekeeper/maid/professional HH cleaning service in last 12	488	9.3%	70
Purchased low ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	834	15.9%	99
Purchased big ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	1,084	20.6%	99
Bought any small kitchen appliance in last 12 months	1,126	21.4%	96
Bought any large kitchen appliance in last 12 months	731	13.9%	109
Insurance (Adults/Households)			
Currently carry life insurance	4,092	45.4%	106
Carry medical/hospital/accident insurance	5,845	64.8%	99
Carry homeowner insurance	4,315	47.8%	102
Carry renter's insurance	607	6.7%	83
Have auto insurance: 1 vehicle in household covered	1,845	35.1%	114
Have auto insurance: 2 vehicles in household covered	1,505	28.6%	100
Have auto insurance: 3+ vehicles in household covered	972	18.5%	85
Pets (Households)			
Household owns any pet	2,903	55.2%	103
Household owns any cat	1,293	24.6%	110
Household owns any dog	2,161	41.1%	101
Psychographics (Adults)			
Buying American is important to me	4,298	47.6%	112
Usually buy items on credit rather than wait	1,045	11.6%	99
Usually buy based on quality - not price	1,743	19.3%	108
Price is usually more important than brand name	2,506	27.8%	106
Usually use coupons for brands I buy often	2,034	22.5%	119
Am interested in how to help the environment	1,282	14.2%	87
Usually pay more for environ safe product	1,174	13.0%	102
Usually value green products over convenience	945	10.5%	100
Likely to buy a brand that supports a charity	3,246	36.0%	103
Reading (Adults)			
Bought digital book in last 12 months	970	10.8%	81
Bought hardcover book in last 12 months	1,492	16.5%	79
Bought paperback book in last 12 month	2,565	28.4%	91
Read any daily newspaper (paper version)	2,745	30.4%	116
Read any digital newspaper in last 30 days	2,669	29.6%	89
Read any magazine (paper/electronic version) in last 6 months	8,185	90.7%	100

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Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Restaurants (Adults)			
Went to family restaurant/steak house in last 6 months	6,628	73.5%	98
Went to family restaurant/steak house: 4+ times a month	2,407	26.7%	97
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	8,203	90.9%	101
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant 9+ times/mo	3,713	41.2%	104
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: eat in	3,255	36.1%	99
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: home delivery	762	8.4%	110
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/drive-thru	4,390	48.7%	105
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/walk-in	1,657	18.4%	94
Television & Electronics (Adults/Households)			
Own any e-reader/tablet	2,420	26.8%	85
Own e-reader/tablet: iPad	878	9.7%	63
Own any portable MP3 player	2,298	25.5%	83
HH owns 1 TV	1,065	20.2%	99
HH owns 2 TVs	1,401	26.6%	103
HH owns 3 TVs	1,084	20.6%	96
HH owns 4+ TVs	1,005	19.1%	101
HH subscribes to cable TV	2,827	53.7%	108
HH subscribes to fiber optic	274	5.2%	68
HH has satellite dish	1,282	24.4%	96
HH owns DVD/Blu-ray player	3,096	58.8%	97
HH owns camcorder	569	10.8%	77
HH owns portable GPS navigation device	1,311	24.9%	91
HH purchased video game system in last 12 mos	313	5.9%	75
HH owns Internet video device for TV	256	4.9%	69
Travel (Adults)			
Domestic travel in last 12 months	3,952	43.8%	87
Took 3+ domestic non-business trips in last 12 months	785	8.7%	78
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	972	10.8%	100
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$1,499	462	5.1%	88
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,500-$1,999	294	3.3%	91
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $2,000-$2,999	248	2.7%	70
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	317	3.5%	64
Domestic travel in the 12 months: used general travel website	457	5.1%	75
Foreign travel in last 3 years	1,283	14.2%	59
Took 3+ foreign trips by plane in last 3 years	122	1.4%	30
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	207	2.3%	55
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$2,999	151	1.7%	51
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	233	2.6%	52
Foreign travel in last 3 years: used general travel website	320	3.5%	63
Nights spent in hotel/motel in last 12 months: any	3,302	36.6%	90
Took cruise of more than one day in last 3 years	517	5.7%	68
Member of any frequent flyer program	820	9.1%	56
Member of any hotel rewards program	980	10.9%	77

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6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150 5
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Drive Time: 6 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Demographic Summary	2016	2021
Population	29,261	28,834
Population 18+	24,153	23,864
Households	13,901	13,794
Median Household Income	$42,023	$39,599

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Apparel (Adults)			
Bought any men's clothing in last 12 months	11,220	46.5%	98
Bought any women's clothing in last 12 months	10,693	44.3%	101
Bought clothing for child <13 years in last 6 months	6,416	26.6%	96
Bought any shoes in last 12 months	12,576	52.1%	97
Bought costume jewelry in last 12 months	4,841	20.0%	103
Bought any fine jewelry in last 12 months	4,359	18.0%	98
Bought a watch in last 12 months	2,500	10.4%	94
Automobiles (Households)			
HH owns/leases any vehicle	11,936	85.9%	100
HH bought/leased new vehicle last 12 mo	1,153	8.3%	88
Automotive Aftermarket (Adults)			
Bought gasoline in last 6 months	21,000	86.9%	102
Bought/changed motor oil in last 12 months	12,576	52.1%	106
Had tune-up in last 12 months	7,240	30.0%	99
Beverages (Adults)			
Drank bottled water/seltzer in last 6 months	15,188	62.9%	96
Drank regular cola in last 6 months	11,602	48.0%	107
Drank beer/ale in last 6 months	10,105	41.8%	98
Cameras (Adults)			
Own digital point & shoot camera	6,680	27.7%	95
Own digital single-lens reflex (SLR) camera	1,634	6.8%	78
Bought any camera in last 12 months	1,398	5.8%	102
Printed digital photos in last 12 months	743	3.1%	105
Cell Phones (Adults/Households)			
Bought cell phone in last 12 months	8,733	36.2%	100
Have a smartphone	12,803	53.0%	90
Have a smartphone: Android phone (any brand)	6,684	27.7%	103
Have a smartphone: Apple iPhone	4,552	18.8%	73
Number of cell phones in household: 1	5,217	37.5%	117
Number of cell phones in household: 2	5,177	37.2%	100
Number of cell phones in household: 3+	2,675	19.2%	76
HH has cell phone only (no landline telephone)	6,595	47.4%	113
Computers (Households)			
HH owns a computer	10,058	72.4%	94
HH owns desktop computer	5,950	42.8%	95
HH owns laptop/notebook	6,980	50.2%	93
HH owns any Apple/Mac brand computer	1,295	9.3%	62
HH owns any PC/non-Apple brand computer	9,306	66.9%	98
HH purchased most recent computer in a store	5,148	37.0%	98
HH purchased most recent computer online	1,595	11.5%	88
Spent <$500 on most recent home computer	2,267	16.3%	112
Spent $500-$999 on most recent home computer	2,583	18.6%	97
Spent $1,000-$1,499 on most recent home computer	1,181	8.5%	90
Spent $1,500-$1,999 on most recent home computer	500	3.6%	79
Spent $2,000+ on most recent home computer	343	2.5%	63

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Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Convenience Stores (Adults)			
Shopped at convenience store in last 6 mos	12,339	51.1%	101
Bought brewed coffee at convenience store in last 30 days	4,067	16.8%	107
Bought cigarettes at convenience store in last 30 days	4,212	17.4%	139
Bought gas at convenience store in last 30 days	9,422	39.0%	118
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: <$20	1,645	6.8%	84
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $20-$39	2,329	9.6%	107
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $40-$50	1,854	7.7%	101
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $51-$99	1,132	4.7%	106
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $100+	6,486	26.9%	117
Entertainment (Adults)			
Attended a movie in last 6 months	13,561	56.1%	94
Went to live theater in last 12 months	2,520	10.4%	80
Went to a bar/night club in last 12 months	4,178	17.3%	104
Dined out in last 12 months	10,462	43.3%	97
Gambled at a casino in last 12 months	3,016	12.5%	91
Visited a theme park in last 12 months	3,639	15.1%	86
Viewed movie (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	3,867	16.0%	94
Viewed TV show (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	2,561	10.6%	82
Watched any pay-per-view TV in last 12 months	2,996	12.4%	94
Downloaded a movie over the Internet in last 30 days	1,393	5.8%	80
Downloaded any individual song in last 6 months	4,365	18.1%	89
Watched a movie online in the last 30 days	3,235	13.4%	84
Watched a TV program online in last 30 days	2,913	12.1%	81
Played a video/electronic game (console) in last 12 months	2,649	11.0%	105
Played a video/electronic game (portable) in last 12 months	1,088	4.5%	99
Financial (Adults)			
Have home mortgage (1st)	6,778	28.1%	90
Used ATM/cash machine in last 12 months	10,881	45.1%	92
Own any stock	1,598	6.6%	86
Own U.S. savings bond	1,014	4.2%	79
Own shares in mutual fund (stock)	1,250	5.2%	71
Own shares in mutual fund (bonds)	766	3.2%	65
Have interest checking account	6,586	27.3%	97
Have non-interest checking account	6,882	28.5%	101
Have savings account	12,412	51.4%	95
Have 401K retirement savings plan	3,243	13.4%	92
Own/used any credit/debit card in last 12 months	17,092	70.8%	95
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: <$111	2,937	12.2%	105
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $111-$225	1,554	6.4%	93
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $226-$450	1,406	5.8%	92
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $451-$700	1,034	4.3%	60
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $701-$1,000	780	3.2%	75
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $1,001+	1,387	5.7%	63
Did banking online in last 12 months	7,529	31.2%	87
Did banking on mobile device in last 12 months	2,786	11.5%	82
Paid bills online in last 12 months	9,433	39.1%	91

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
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6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 6 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Grocery (Adults)			
Used beef (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	10,028	72.1%	104
Used bread in last 6 months	13,161	94.7%	101
Used chicken (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	9,369	67.4%	98
Used turkey (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	2,174	15.6%	99
Used fish/seafood (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	7,225	52.0%	95
Used fresh fruit/vegetables in last 6 months	11,802	84.9%	99
Used fresh milk in last 6 months	12,217	87.9%	100
Used organic food in last 6 months	2,210	15.9%	81
Health (Adults)			
Exercise at home 2+ times per week	6,060	25.1%	88
Exercise at club 2+ times per week	2,302	9.5%	73
Visited a doctor in last 12 months	18,276	75.7%	100
Used vitamin/dietary supplement in last 6 months	12,179	50.4%	95
Home (Households)			
Any home improvement in last 12 months	3,590	25.8%	96
Used housekeeper/maid/professional HH cleaning service in last 12	1,420	10.2%	78
Purchased low ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	2,293	16.5%	103
Purchased big ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	2,884	20.7%	99
Bought any small kitchen appliance in last 12 months	3,025	21.8%	98
Bought any large kitchen appliance in last 12 months	1,823	13.1%	103
Insurance (Adults/Households)			
Currently carry life insurance	10,600	43.9%	103
Carry medical/hospital/accident insurance	15,677	64.9%	99
Carry homeowner insurance	11,452	47.4%	101
Carry renter's insurance	1,882	7.8%	96
Have auto insurance: 1 vehicle in household covered	5,060	36.4%	118
Have auto insurance: 2 vehicles in household covered	3,854	27.7%	97
Have auto insurance: 3+ vehicles in household covered	2,481	17.8%	82
Pets (Households)			
Household owns any pet	7,440	53.5%	100
Household owns any cat	3,382	24.3%	108
Household owns any dog	5,493	39.5%	97
Psychographics (Adults)			
Buying American is important to me	11,591	48.0%	113
Usually buy items on credit rather than wait	2,751	11.4%	97
Usually buy based on quality - not price	4,457	18.5%	103
Price is usually more important than brand name	6,694	27.7%	106
Usually use coupons for brands I buy often	5,208	21.6%	114
Am interested in how to help the environment	3,555	14.7%	90
Usually pay more for environ safe product	2,873	11.9%	93
Usually value green products over convenience	2,419	10.0%	95
Likely to buy a brand that supports a charity	8,616	35.7%	102
Reading (Adults)			
Bought digital book in last 12 months	2,687	11.1%	84
Bought hardcover book in last 12 months	4,288	17.8%	85
Bought paperback book in last 12 month	6,856	28.4%	90
Read any daily newspaper (paper version)	7,296	30.2%	115
Read any digital newspaper in last 30 days	7,245	30.0%	90
Read any magazine (paper/electronic version) in last 6 months	21,847	90.5%	100

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
Source: These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to local demographic composition. Usage data were collected by GfK MRI in a nationally representative survey of U.S. households. Esri forecasts for 2016 and 2021.

February 22, 2017

esri | Retail Market Potential

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150 5

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150

Drive Time: 6 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Restaurants (Adults)			
Went to family restaurant/steak house in last 6 months	17,935	74.3%	100
Went to family restaurant/steak house: 4+ times a month	6,850	28.4%	103
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	21,967	90.9%	101
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant 9+ times/mo	9,788	40.5%	103
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: eat in	8,798	36.4%	100
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: home delivery	2,033	8.4%	110
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/drive-thru	11,853	49.1%	106
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/walk-in	4,457	18.5%	95
Television & Electronics (Adults/Households)			
Own any e-reader/tablet	6,626	27.4%	86
Own e-reader/tablet: iPad	2,460	10.2%	66
Own any portable MP3 player	6,282	26.0%	84
HH owns 1 TV	2,799	20.1%	98
HH owns 2 TVs	3,764	27.1%	104
HH owns 3 TVs	2,907	20.9%	98
HH owns 4+ TVs	2,518	18.1%	96
HH subscribes to cable TV	7,683	55.3%	111
HH subscribes to fiber optic	640	4.6%	61
HH has satellite dish	3,265	23.5%	92
HH owns DVD/Blu-ray player	8,214	59.1%	98
HH owns camcorder	1,537	11.1%	79
HH owns portable GPS navigation device	3,489	25.1%	91
HH purchased video game system in last 12 mos	813	5.8%	74
HH owns Internet video device for TV	712	5.1%	73
Travel (Adults)			
Domestic travel in last 12 months	10,495	43.5%	87
Took 3+ domestic non-business trips in last 12 months	2,080	8.6%	78
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	2,401	9.9%	93
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$1,499	1,212	5.0%	86
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,500-$1,999	750	3.1%	87
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $2,000-$2,999	730	3.0%	77
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	830	3.4%	62
Domestic travel in the 12 months: used general travel website	1,218	5.0%	75
Foreign travel in last 3 years	3,676	15.2%	63
Took 3+ foreign trips by plane in last 3 years	420	1.7%	39
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	586	2.4%	58
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$2,999	544	2.3%	69
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	641	2.7%	53
Foreign travel in last 3 years: used general travel website	856	3.5%	63
Nights spent in hotel/motel in last 12 months: any	8,736	36.2%	89
Took cruise of more than one day in last 3 years	1,444	6.0%	71
Member of any frequent flyer program	2,301	9.5%	58
Member of any hotel rewards program	2,638	10.9%	77

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6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150 5
6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 8 minute radius

Prepared by Esri
Latitude: [illegible]
Longitude: [illegible]

Demographic Summary	2016	2021
Population	55,885	55,291
Population 18+	46,101	45,646
Households	25,879	25,784
Median Household Income	$44,862	$44,721

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Apparel (Adults)			
Bought any men's clothing in last 12 months	21,620	46.9%	99
Bought any women's clothing in last 12 months	20,657	44.8%	102
Bought clothing for child <13 years in last 6 months	12,148	26.4%	96
Bought any shoes in last 12 months	24,098	52.3%	97
Bought costume jewelry in last 12 months	9,444	20.5%	105
Bought any fine jewelry in last 12 months	8,402	18.2%	99
Bought a watch in last 12 months	4,913	10.7%	97
Automobiles (Households)			
HH owns/leases any vehicle	22,526	87.0%	102
HH bought/leased new vehicle last 12 mo	2,271	8.8%	93
Automotive Aftermarket (Adults)			
Bought gasoline in last 6 months	40,284	87.4%	103
Bought/changed motor oil in last 12 months	23,948	51.9%	106
Had tune-up in last 12 months	13,475	29.2%	97
Beverages (Adults)			
Drank bottled water/seltzer in last 6 months	28,719	62.3%	95
Drank regular cola in last 6 months	21,459	46.5%	104
Drank beer/ale in last 6 months	19,132	41.5%	97
Cameras (Adults)			
Own digital point & shoot camera	13,431	29.1%	100
Own digital single-lens reflex (SLR) camera	3,198	6.9%	80
Bought any camera in last 12 months	2,770	6.0%	105
Printed digital photos in last 12 months	1,471	3.2%	109
Cell Phones (Adults/Households)			
Bought cell phone in last 12 months	16,667	36.2%	100
Have a smartphone	24,246	52.6%	89
Have a smartphone: Android phone (any brand)	12,308	26.7%	99
Have a smartphone: Apple iPhone	8,927	19.4%	75
Number of cell phones in household: 1	9,483	36.6%	114
Number of cell phones in household: 2	9,604	37.1%	99
Number of cell phones in household: 3+	5,225	20.2%	79
HH has cell phone only (no landline telephone)	11,555	44.7%	107
Computers (Households)			
HH owns a computer	19,054	73.6%	96
HH owns desktop computer	11,465	44.3%	98
HH owns laptop/notebook	13,126	50.7%	93
HH owns any Apple/Mac brand computer	2,552	9.9%	66
HH owns any PC/non-Apple brand computer	17,553	67.8%	100
HH purchased most recent computer in a store	9,796	37.9%	101
HH purchased most recent computer online	3,054	11.8%	90
Spent <$500 on most recent home computer	4,287	16.6%	114
Spent $500-$999 on most recent home computer	4,898	18.9%	99
Spent $1,000-$1,499 on most recent home computer	2,262	8.7%	92
Spent $1,500-$1,999 on most recent home computer	938	3.6%	80
Spent $2,000+ on most recent home computer	688	2.7%	68

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
Source: These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to local demographic composition. Usage data were collected by GfK MRI in a nationally representative survey of U.S. households. Esri forecasts for 2016 and 2021.

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Drive Time: 8 minute radius

Prepared by Esri
Latitude:
Longitude:

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Convenience Stores (Adults)			
Shopped at convenience store in last 6 mos	23,374	50.7%	100
Bought brewed coffee at convenience store in last 30 days	7,600	16.5%	105
Bought cigarettes at convenience store in last 30 days	7,663	16.6%	133
Bought gas at convenience store in last 30 days	17,846	38.7%	117
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: <$20	3,219	7.0%	86
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $20-$39	4,368	9.5%	105
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $40-$50	3,641	7.9%	104
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $51-$99	2,131	4.6%	104
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: $100+	12,351	26.8%	117
Entertainment (Adults)			
Attended a movie in last 6 months	25,953	56.3%	95
Went to live theater in last 12 months	5,208	11.3%	87
Went to a bar/night club in last 12 months	7,858	17.0%	102
Dined out in last 12 months	20,514	44.5%	99
Gambled at a casino in last 12 months	5,834	12.7%	92
Visited a theme park in last 12 months	6,934	15.0%	85
Viewed movie (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	7,285	15.8%	93
Viewed TV show (video-on-demand) in last 30 days	4,830	10.5%	81
Watched any pay-per-view TV in last 12 months	5,738	12.4%	95
Downloaded a movie over the Internet in last 30 days	2,597	5.6%	78
Downloaded any individual song in last 6 months	8,420	18.3%	90
Watched a movie online in the last 30 days	5,870	12.7%	80
Watched a TV program online in last 30 days	5,527	12.0%	80
Played a video/electronic game (console) in last 12 months	4,741	10.3%	98
Played a video/electronic game (portable) in last 12 months	2,063	4.5%	98
Financial (Adults)			
Have home mortgage (1st)	13,560	29.4%	95
Used ATM/cash machine in last 12 months	21,184	46.0%	94
Own any stock	3,372	7.3%	96
Own U.S. savings bond	2,190	4.8%	90
Own shares in mutual fund (stock)	2,797	6.1%	84
Own shares in mutual fund (bonds)	1,759	3.8%	78
Have interest checking account	13,183	28.6%	101
Have non-interest checking account	13,373	29.0%	103
Have savings account	24,277	52.7%	97
Have 401K retirement savings plan	6,338	13.7%	95
Own/used any credit/debit card in last 12 months	33,141	71.9%	96
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: <$111	5,620	12.2%	105
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $111-$225	3,032	6.6%	96
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $226-$450	2,787	6.0%	95
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $451-$700	2,211	4.8%	90
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $701-$1,000	1,681	3.6%	85
Avg monthly credit card expenditures: $1,001+	3,010	6.5%	72
Did banking online in last 12 months	14,619	31.7%	89
Did banking on mobile device in last 12 months	5,273	11.4%	82
Paid bills online in last 12 months	18,295	39.7%	92

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
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Drive Time: 8 minute radius

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Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Grocery (Adults)			
Used beef (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	18,817	72.7%	105
Used bread in last 6 months	24,593	95.0%	101
Used chicken (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	17,570	67.9%	98
Used turkey (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	4,090	15.8%	100
Used fish/seafood (fresh or frozen) in last 6 months	13,704	53.0%	97
Used fresh fruit/vegetables in last 6 months	22,070	85.3%	99
Used fresh milk in last 6 months	22,869	88.4%	100
Used organic food in last 6 months	4,134	16.0%	81
Health (Adults)			
Exercise at home 2+ times per week	12,265	26.6%	94
Exercise at club 2+ times per week	4,634	10.1%	77
Visited a doctor in last 12 months	35,150	76.2%	101
Used vitamin/dietary supplement in last 6 months	23,968	52.0%	98
Home (Households)			
Any home improvement in last 12 months	6,991	27.0%	101
Used housekeeper/maid/professional HH cleaning service in last 12	2,865	11.1%	84
Purchased low ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	4,401	17.0%	106
Purchased big ticket HH furnishings in last 12 months	5,359	20.7%	99
Bought any small kitchen appliance in last 12 months	5,702	22.0%	99
Bought any large kitchen appliance in last 12 months	3,348	12.9%	102
Insurance (Adults/Households)			
Currently carry life insurance	21,028	45.6%	107
Carry medical/hospital/accident insurance	30,404	66.0%	101
Carry homeowner insurance	23,045	50.0%	106
Carry renter's insurance	3,524	7.6%	94
Have auto insurance: 1 vehicle in household covered	9,037	34.9%	113
Have auto insurance: 2 vehicles in household covered	7,233	27.9%	98
Have auto insurance: 3+ vehicles in household covered	5,075	19.6%	90
Pets (Households)			
Household owns any pet	13,982	54.0%	101
Household owns any cat	6,217	24.0%	107
Household owns any dog	10,422	40.3%	99
Psychographics (Adults)			
Buying American is important to me	22,195	48.1%	114
Usually buy items on credit rather than wait	5,108	11.1%	94
Usually buy based on quality - not price	8,285	18.0%	100
Price is usually more important than brand name	12,544	27.2%	104
Usually use coupons for brands I buy often	9,639	20.9%	111
Am interested in how to help the environment	6,692	14.5%	89
Usually pay more for environ safe product	5,349	11.6%	91
Usually value green products over convenience	4,351	9.4%	90
Likely to buy a brand that supports a charity	16,347	35.5%	102
Reading (Adults)			
Bought digital book in last 12 months	5,422	11.8%	89
Bought hardcover book in last 12 months	8,692	18.9%	90
Bought paperback book in last 12 month	13,521	29.3%	93
Read any daily newspaper (paper version)	14,376	31.2%	119
Read any digital newspaper in last 30 days	14,074	30.5%	92
Read any magazine (paper/electronic version) in last 6 months	41,583	90.2%	99

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.
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6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
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Prepared by Esri

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHs	Percent of Adults/HHs	MPI
Restaurants (Adults)			
Went to family restaurant/steak house in last 6 months	34,795	75.5%	101
Went to family restaurant/steak house: 4+ times a month	13,425	29.1%	106
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	42,036	91.2%	101
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant 9+ times/mo	18,652	40.5%	103
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: eat in	17,022	36.9%	102
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: home delivery	3,879	8.4%	110
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/drive-thru	22,905	49.7%	107
Fast food/drive-in last 6 months: take-out/walk-in	8,450	18.3%	94
Television & Electronics (Adults/Households)			
Own any e-reader/tablet	12,956	28.1%	89
Own e-reader/tablet: iPad	4,998	10.8%	71
Own any portable MP3 player	12,386	26.9%	87
HH owns 1 TV	4,962	19.2%	94
HH owns 2 TVs	7,008	27.1%	104
HH owns 3 TVs	5,455	21.1%	99
HH owns 4+ TVs	4,975	19.2%	102
HH subscribes to cable TV	14,344	55.4%	112
HH subscribes to fiber optic	1,229	4.7%	62
HH has satellite dish	6,205	24.0%	94
HH owns DVD/Blu-ray player	15,423	59.6%	98
HH owns camcorder	3,035	11.7%	84
HH owns portable GPS navigation device	6,825	26.4%	96
HH purchased video game system in last 12 mos	1,486	5.7%	72
HH owns Internet video device for TV	1,422	5.5%	78
Travel (Adults)			
Domestic travel in last 12 months	20,951	45.4%	91
Took 3+ domestic non-business trips in last 12 months	4,260	9.2%	83
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	4,657	10.1%	94
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$1,499	2,318	5.0%	86
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $1,500-$1,999	1,612	3.5%	98
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $2,000-$2,999	1,576	3.4%	88
Spent on domestic vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	1,753	3.8%	69
Domestic travel in the 12 months: used general travel website	2,501	5.4%	80
Foreign travel in last 3 years	7,556	16.4%	68
Took 3+ foreign trips by plane in last 3 years	949	2.1%	46
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: <$1,000	1,238	2.7%	64
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $1,000-$2,999	1,182	2.6%	79
Spent on foreign vacations in last 12 months: $3,000+	1,355	2.9%	59
Foreign travel in last 3 years: used general travel website	1,758	3.8%	68
Nights spent in hotel/motel in last 12 months: any	17,612	38.2%	94
Took cruise of more than one day in last 3 years	3,008	6.5%	78
Member of any frequent flyer program	4,795	10.4%	64
Member of any hotel rewards program	5,377	11.7%	83

Data Note: An MPI (Market Potential Index) measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average.

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Appendix B: Tapestry Reports

5D

LifeMode Group: GenXurban
Rustbelt Traditions

Households: 2,685,000

Average Household Size: 2.46

Median Age: 38.4

Median Household Income: $49,000

WHO ARE WE?

The backbone of older industrial cities in states surrounding the Great Lakes, *Rustbelt Traditions* residents are a mix of married-couple families and singles living in older developments of single-family homes. While varied, the work force is primarily white collar, with a higher concentration of skilled workers in manufacturing, retail trade, and health care. *Rustbelt Traditions* represents a large market of stable, hard-working consumers with modest incomes but above average net worth (Index 111). Family oriented, they value time spent at home. Most have lived, worked, and played in the same area for years.

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- Almost half (46%) of the households are married-couple families, similar to the US (48%), most without children (also similar to the US); the slightly higher proportion of singles (Index 105) reflects the aging of the population.
- Average household size is slightly lower at 2.46.
- They are movers, slightly more mobile than the US population (Index 109), but almost half of householders (46%) moved into their current homes before 2000.
- Most residents live in modest, single-family homes in older neighborhoods built in the 1950s (Index 218).
- Nearly three quarters own their homes; over half of households have mortgages.
- A large and growing market, *Rustbelt Traditions* residents are located in the dense urban fringe of metropolitan areas throughout the Midwest and South.
- Most households have two or more vehicles available

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

- Most have graduated from high school or spent some time at a college or university.
- Unemployment below the US at 8%; labor force participation slightly higher than the US at 67%.
- While most income derived from wages and salaries, nearly 30% of households collecting Social Security and nearly 20% drawing income from retirement accounts.
- Family-oriented consumers who value time spent at home.
- Most lived, worked, and played in the same area for years.
- Budget aware shoppers that favor American-made products.
- Read newspapers, especially the Sunday editions.

TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

5D

LifeMode Group: GenXurban
Rustbelt Traditions

TAPESTRY
SEGMENTATION
esri.com/tapestry

AGE BY SEX (Census)

Median Age: 38.4 US: 37.6
| indicates US

Male   Female

RACE AND ETHNICITY (Census)

The Diversity Index summarizes racial and ethnic diversity. The Index shows the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different race or ethnic groups. The index ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity).

Diversity Index: 44.2 US: 62.1

Hispanic* 10.7%
Multiple 2.8%
Other 3.6%
Asian and Pac. Island 1.8%
American Indian 0.8%
Black 8.4%
White 82.6%

US Average

*Hispanic can be of any race.

INCOME AND NET WORTH

Net worth measures total household assets (homes, vehicles, investments, etc.) less any debts, secured (e.g., mortgages) or unsecured (credit cards). Household income and net worth are estimated by Esri.

Median Household Income
$49,000
US Median $51,000

$0 $30k $60k $90k $90k+

Median Net Worth
$79,000
US Median $71,000

$0 $100k $200k $300k $400k+

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD BUDGET INDEX

The index compares the average amount spent in this market's household budgets for housing, food, apparel, etc., to the average amount spent by all US households. An index of 100 is average. An index of 120 shows that average spending by consumers in this market is 20 percent above the national average. Consumer expenditures are estimated by Esri.

Housing 80
Food 81
Apparel & Services 53
Transportation 83
Health Care 85
Entertainment & Recreation 84
Education 79
Pensions & Social Security 81
Other 80

0   50   100   150   200   250   300   350

OCCUPATION BY EARNINGS

The five occupations with the highest number of workers in the market are displayed by median earnings. Data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Median Earnings
$60,000
$40,000
$20,000

Management
Office and Administrative Support
Production
Transportation and Material Moving
Sales and Related

0   100,000   200,000   300,000   700,000

Workers (Age 16+)

TAPESTRY
SEGMENTATION
esri.com/tapestry

LifeMode Group: GenXurban

5D Rustbelt Traditions

MARKET PROFILE (Consumer preferences are estimated from data by GfK MRI)

- Residents take advantage of convenience stores for fueling up and picking up incidentals.
- Watching television is a common pastime; many households have more than four TVs.
- Favorite programming ranges from ESPN, Animal Planet, and AMC to children's shows on Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network.
- Residents are connected; entertainment activities like online gaming dominate their Internet usage.
- Favorite family restaurants include Applebee's, Outback Steakhouse, and Texas Roadhouse.
- Radio dials are typically tuned to classic rock stations.

HOUSING

Median home value is displayed for markets that are primarily owner occupied; average rent is shown for renter-occupied markets. Tenure and home value are estimated by Esri. Housing type and average rent are from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Home Ownership

Own 72.2%
Rent 27.8%

US Percentage:
63.9% Own
36.1% Rent

Typical Housing:
Single Family

Median Value:
$118,000
US Median: $177,000

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Total population, average annual population change since Census 2010, and average density (population per square mile) are displayed for the market relative to the size and change among all Tapestry markets. Data estimated by Esri.

Population
500,000 — 11,000,000
6,667,000

Population Growth (Annual %)
-0.9% — 3.0%
0.2%

Population Density (Persons per sq mile)
0 — 25,000
651

ESRI INDEXES

Esri developed three indexes to display average household wealth, socioeconomic status, and housing affordability for the market relative to US standards.

0 — 77 — 350
Wealth Index

0 — 101 — 350
Socioeconomic Status Index

0 — 208 — 350
Housing Affordability Index

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Traditional living: http://downloads.esri.com/esri_content_doc/dbl/us/tapestry/segment57.pdf

Midlife Constraints: http://downloads.esri.com/esri_content_doc/dbl/us/tapestry/segment20.pdf

Appendix C: Leakage/Surplus
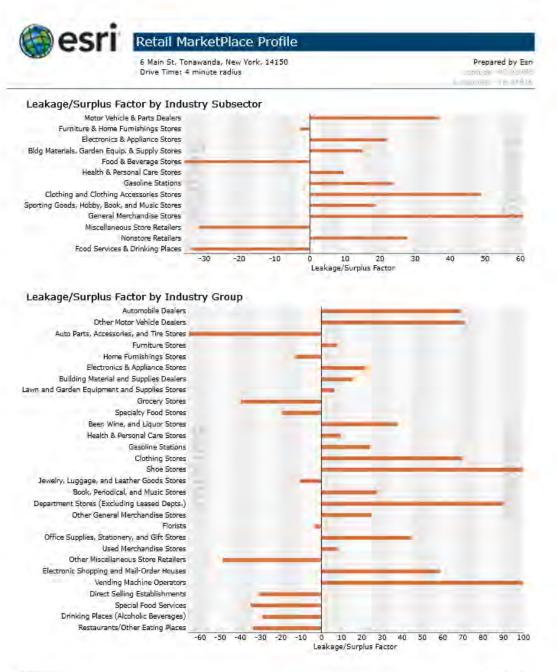
esri — Retail MarketPlace Profile

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 4 minute radius

Summary Demographics

2016 Population	11,005
2016 Households	5,261
2016 Median Disposable Income	$34,133
2016 Per Capita Income	$24,754

Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplu Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-	$148,645,707	$147,646,957	$998,750	0.3	133
Total Retail Trade	44-45	$134,945,909	$119,921,555	$15,024,354	5.9	87
Total Food & Drink	722	$13,699,799	$27,725,402	-$14,025,603	-33.9	46

Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplu Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	$30,558,790	$14,057,107	$16,501,683	37.0	15
Automobile Dealers	4411	$26,426,177	$4,782,583	$21,643,594	69.4	3
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	$2,311,518	$387,132	$1,924,386	71.3	1
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	$1,821,095	$8,887,392	-$7,066,297	-66.0	10
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	$4,332,997	$4,583,628	-$250,631	-2.8	3
Furniture Stores	4421	$2,332,061	$1,986,943	$345,118	8.0	1
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	$2,000,936	$2,596,684	-$595,748	-13.0	2
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	$7,680,928	$4,900,971	$2,779,957	22.1	6
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	$7,611,604	$5,622,077	$1,989,527	15.0	7
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	$6,897,287	$4,997,621	$1,899,666	16.0	5
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	$714,316	$624,456	$89,860	6.7	2
Food & Beverage Stores	445	$25,005,319	$53,234,150	-$28,228,831	-36.1	10
Grocery Stores	4451	$21,146,426	$49,194,066	-$28,047,640	-39.9	7
Specialty Food Stores	4452	$2,223,562	$3,301,338	-$1,077,776	-19.5	2
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	$1,635,331	$738,746	$896,585	37.8	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	$10,765,914	$8,842,725	$1,923,189	9.8	7
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	$8,815,659	$5,399,283	$3,416,376	24.0	3
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	$9,460,035	$3,248,243	$6,211,792	48.9	9
Clothing Stores	4481	$6,779,670	$1,200,613	$5,579,057	69.9	6
Shoe Stores	4482	$1,038,153	$0	$1,038,153	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	$1,642,212	$2,041,232	-$399,020	-10.8	3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	$3,562,723	$2,430,012	$1,132,711	18.9	3
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	$2,942,922	$2,079,994	$862,930	17.2	2
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	$619,801	$350,018	$269,783	27.8	1
General Merchandise Stores	452	$16,919,667	$4,111,763	$12,807,904	60.9	4
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	$11,035,005	$567,016	$10,467,989	90.2	1
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	$5,884,662	$3,544,747	$2,339,915	24.8	3
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	$5,679,035	$10,925,726	-$5,246,691	-31.6	18
Florists	4531	$417,981	$446,912	-$28,931	-3.3	2
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	$1,435,511	$546,700	$888,811	44.8	3
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	$597,036	$505,559	$91,477	8.3	4
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	$3,228,507	$9,426,556	-$6,198,049	-49.0	9
Nonstore Retailers	454	$4,553,238	$2,565,870	$1,987,368	27.9	2
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	$3,605,384	$928,341	$2,677,043	59.0	1
Vending Machine Operators	4542	$85,382	$0	$85,382	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	$862,472	$1,637,529	-$775,057	-31.0	2
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	$13,699,799	$27,725,402	-$14,025,603	-33.9	46
Special Food Services	7223	$619,289	$1,292,911	-$673,622	-35.2	2
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	$756,853	$1,380,902	-$624,049	-29.2	8
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	$12,323,656	$25,051,589	-$12,727,933	-34	36

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.

http://www.esri.com/data/esri_data/methodology-statements

esri — Retail MarketPlace Profile

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 4 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores
Food & Beverage Stores
Health & Personal Care Stores
Gasoline Stations
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores
General Merchandise Stores
Miscellaneous Store Retailers
Nonstore Retailers
Food Services & Drinking Places

Leakage/Surplus Factor

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group

Automobile Dealers
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers
Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Stores
Furniture Stores
Home Furnishings Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores
Building Material and Supplies Dealers
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores
Grocery Stores
Specialty Food Stores
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores
Health & Personal Care Stores
Gasoline Stations
Clothing Stores
Shoe Stores
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Stores
Book, Periodical, and Music Stores
Department Stores (Excluding Leased Depts.)
Other General Merchandise Stores
Florists
Office Supplies, Stationery, and Gift Stores
Used Merchandise Stores
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers
Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses
Vending Machine Operators
Direct Selling Establishments
Special Food Services
Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)
Restaurants/Other Eating Places

Leakage/Surplus Factor

esri Retail MarketPlace Profile

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 6 minute radius

Prepared by Esri
Latitude: 43.01095
Longitude: -78.47618

Summary Demographics

2016 Population	29,261
2016 Households	13,901
2016 Median Disposable Income	$34,666
2016 Per Capita Income	$25,486

Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-	$413,901,022	$254,214,670	$159,686,352	23.9	211
Total Retail Trade	44-45	$376,040,067	$211,825,720	$164,214,347	27.9	144
Total Food & Drink	722	$37,860,955	$42,388,950	-$4,527,995	-5.6	67

Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	$85,799,973	$19,632,354	$66,167,619	62.8	21
Automobile Dealers	4411	$74,190,488	$7,489,621	$66,700,867	81.7	5
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	$6,525,584	$827,219	$5,698,365	77.5	3
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	$5,083,901	$11,315,514	-$6,231,613	-38.0	12
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	$11,890,722	$6,533,501	$5,357,221	29.1	4
Furniture Stores	4421	$6,411,964	$1,986,943	$4,425,021	52.7	1
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	$5,478,757	$4,546,558	$932,199	9.3	3
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	$21,118,089	$9,041,903	$12,076,186	40.0	10
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	$20,865,514	$10,900,843	$9,964,671	31.4	15
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	$18,829,376	$9,293,800	$9,535,576	33.9	10
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	$2,036,138	$1,607,043	$429,095	11.8	5
Food & Beverage Stores	445	$69,733,069	$93,071,488	-$23,338,419	-14.3	19
Grocery Stores	4451	$58,988,281	$79,943,258	-$20,954,977	-15.1	13
Specialty Food Stores	4452	$6,191,599	$12,087,953	-$5,896,354	-32.3	5
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	$4,553,190	$1,040,277	$3,512,913	62.8	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	$30,294,559	$15,947,648	$14,346,911	31.0	12
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	$24,776,777	$11,387,166	$13,389,611	37.0	6
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	$26,135,073	$4,154,253	$21,980,820	72.6	10
Clothing Stores	4481	$18,743,993	$1,277,573	$17,466,420	87.2	6
Shoe Stores	4482	$2,868,643	$0	$2,868,643	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	$4,522,436	$2,806,303	$1,716,133	23.4	4
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	$9,845,567	$6,705,365	$3,140,202	19.0	8
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	$8,125,474	$6,266,434	$1,859,040	12.9	6
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	$1,720,093	$438,931	$1,281,162	59.3	2
General Merchandise Stores	452	$46,914,458	$12,099,602	$34,814,856	59.0	8
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	$30,524,718	$567,016	$29,957,702	96.4	1
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	$16,389,740	$11,532,586	$4,857,154	17.4	7
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	$15,909,560	$16,906,790	-$997,230	-3.0	27
Florists	4531	$1,170,618	$546,827	$623,791	36.3	3
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	$3,979,306	$977,333	$3,001,973	60.6	5
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	$1,632,742	$833,982	$798,760	32.4	5
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	$9,126,893	$14,548,648	-$5,421,755	-22.9	14
Nonstore Retailers	454	$12,756,708	$5,444,807	$7,311,901	40.2	4
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	$9,980,964	$3,184,557	$6,796,407	51.6	2
Vending Machine Operators	4542	$237,237	$0	$237,237	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	$2,538,507	$2,260,250	$278,257	5.8	2
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	$37,860,955	$42,388,950	-$4,527,995	-5.6	67
Special Food Services	7223	$1,677,664	$1,595,657	$82,007	2.5	3
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	$2,055,489	$2,099,193	-$43,704	-1.1	10
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	$34,127,802	$38,694,100	-$4,566,298	-6	55

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents "leakage" of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.

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esri — Retail MarketPlace Profile

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 8 minute radius

Prepared by Esri
Latitude: 43.01095
Longitude: -78.47618

Summary Demographics

2016 Population	55,885
2016 Households	25,879
2016 Median Disposable Income	$36,276
2016 Per Capita Income	$26,880

Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-	$821,161,958	$568,916,860	$252,245,098	18.1	366
Total Retail Trade	44-45	$746,105,867	$458,559,194	$287,546,673	23.9	249
Total Food & Drink	722	$75,056,091	$110,357,666	-$35,301,575	-19.0	117

Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	$170,422,708	$60,107,275	$110,315,433	47.9	30
Automobile Dealers	4411	$147,232,385	$43,182,647	$104,049,738	54.6	11
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	$13,075,002	$1,723,498	$11,351,504	76.7	3
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	$10,115,321	$15,201,131	-$5,085,810	-20.1	17
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	$23,661,409	$11,406,826	$12,254,583	34.9	10
Furniture Stores	4421	$12,693,601	$4,663,730	$8,029,871	46.3	3
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	$10,967,808	$6,743,096	$4,224,712	23.9	7
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	$41,917,252	$21,428,260	$20,488,992	32.3	17
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	$42,181,870	$18,875,255	$23,306,615	38.2	23
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	$38,045,445	$16,999,552	$21,045,893	38.2	18
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	$4,136,425	$1,875,703	$2,260,722	37.6	5
Food & Beverage Stores	445	$137,546,481	$173,151,424	-$35,604,943	-11.5	38
Grocery Stores	4451	$116,297,971	$152,064,386	-$35,766,415	-13.3	25
Specialty Food Stores	4452	$12,193,066	$16,522,091	-$4,329,025	-15.1	9
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	$9,055,444	$4,564,946	$4,490,498	33.0	4
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	$60,307,224	$48,501,865	$11,805,359	10.8	28
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	$48,958,848	$27,130,530	$21,828,318	28.7	12
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	$51,765,794	$6,040,108	$45,725,686	79.1	14
Clothing Stores	4481	$37,109,778	$2,658,836	$34,450,942	86.6	8
Shoe Stores	4482	$5,668,899	$0	$5,668,899	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	$8,987,116	$3,174,922	$5,812,194	47.8	5
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	$19,468,284	$13,079,226	$6,389,058	19.6	20
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	$16,073,821	$11,710,130	$4,363,691	15.7	16
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	$3,394,463	$1,369,096	$2,025,367	42.5	4
General Merchandise Stores	452	$92,766,063	$33,000,120	$59,765,943	47.5	9
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	$60,396,750	$20,704,602	$39,692,148	48.9	2
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	$32,369,313	$12,295,518	$20,073,795	44.9	8
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	$31,569,429	$27,564,156	$4,005,273	6.8	41
Florists	4531	$2,377,965	$1,226,761	$1,151,204	31.9	6
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	$7,902,557	$1,911,349	$5,991,208	61.0	7
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	$3,211,119	$1,728,777	$1,482,342	30.0	8
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	$18,077,787	$22,697,268	-$4,619,481	-11.3	20
Nonstore Retailers	454	$25,540,505	$18,274,149	$7,266,356	16.6	7
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	$19,855,602	$14,233,308	$5,622,294	16.5	4
Vending Machine Operators	4542	$467,717	$287,042	$180,675	23.9	1
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	$5,217,186	$3,753,799	$1,463,387	16.3	2
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	$75,056,091	$110,357,666	-$35,301,575	-19.0	117
Special Food Services	7223	$3,342,980	$1,993,524	$1,349,456	25.3	3
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	$4,112,695	$11,732,536	-$7,619,841	-48.1	12
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	$67,600,416	$96,631,606	-$29,031,190	-18	101

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents "leakage" of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.

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esri **Retail MarketPlace Profile**

6 Main St, Tonawanda, New York, 14150
Drive Time: 8 minute radius

Prepared by Esri

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group

Appendix D: Parking Count

OFF STREET LOTS		CITY LOTS			
TOPS	**NIAGARA CITY LOT**	**TIM HORTONS**	**ST. FRAN. SCHOOL**	**ADAM/SEYMOUR CITY LOT**	**NIA./CREEK. PLAZA**
383	66	17	21	49	105
43.020358, -78.883021	*43.019966, -78.881595*	*43.019778, -78.880822*	*43.019330, -78.881482*	*43.019448, -78.880742*	*43.020703, -78.881074*
CANAL-DEV. NIA. (WEST)	**CANAL-DEV. NIA. (EAST)**	**RITE AID**	**MCDONALDS**	**ADAM PLAZA (WEST)**	**ADAM PLAZA (EAST)**
18	21	64	49	17	19
43.020999, -78.879556	*43.021076, -78.879036*	*43.020133,-78.880017*	*43.020327, -78.878816*	*43.019545, -78.880071*	*43.019812, -78.879046*
CITIZENS BANK	**HAMP FUNERAL HOME**	**PROFESSIONAL CENTER**	**CASH FOR CANS**	**7-ELEVEN**	**USPS**
14	22	10	16	11	55
43.019828, -78.878837	*43.019078, -78.879840*	*43.018523, -78.880119*	*43.018115, -78.879934*	*43.018223, -78.879443*	*43.016694, -78.879610*
FIVE CORNERS AUTO	**STAMPS BAR**	**AUTOMOTIVE PLUS**	**M&T BANK**	**ROTH FUNERAL HOME**	**ELDREDGE BIKE CLUB**
15	3	11	28	30	42
43.016937, -78.879017	*43.017386, -78.879226*	*43.018369, -78.878798*	*43.018351, -78.877286*	*43.018710, -78.876601*	*43.018264, -78.875035*
BETHESDA TABERNACLE	**BURGER KING**	**SWISTONS**	**CONSUMER BEVERAGES**	**SMOKE ON THE WATER**	***BIKE HUB LOT**
25	53	34	27	14	192
43.018993, -78.875208	*43.019057, -78.874611*	*43.019111, -78.873358*	*43.019421, -78.873981*	*43.019720, -78.874853*	*43.019759, -78.876902*
MED. CLAIMS PROCESSORS	**MAIN/BROAD REAR LOT**				**LOT UNDER CONSTRUSTION*
11	63				
43.019204, -78.877584	*43.019130, -78.879068*				

ON STREET (N>S | W>E)		NO SPACES	MULTI. CAR	INDV. SPACES	MIXTURE
SEYMOUR (2)	**SEYMOUR (3)**	**SEYMOUR (4)**	**MAIN (1)**	**MAIN (2)**	**MAIN (3)**
11	6	9	33	33	22
43.018878, -78.880106	*43.017809, -78.879672*	*43.016976, -78.879330*	*43.020169, -78.878226*	*43.019245, -78.878333*	*43.018213, -78.878530*
MAIN (4)	**GROVE (2)**	**ADAM (1)**	**ADAM (2)**	**BROAD (1)**	**BROAD (2)**
26	10	21	27	7	9
43.017210, -78.878725	*43.017258, -78.878247*	*43.019027, -78.881325*	*43.019486, -78.879252*	*43.018253, -78.880593*	*43.018491, -78.879167*
BROAD (3)	**MORGAN (1)**	**MORGAN (2)**	**MORGAN (4)**	**MORGAN (5)**	**MORGAN (6)**
56	6	5	40	17	10
43.019033, -78.876749	*43.017255, -78.880268*	*43.017510, -78.879093*	*43.017845, -78.877599*	*43.018300, -78.875536*	*43.018660, -78.873944*

MAIN ST. AREA FRINGE		CITY LOTS		
USPS (REMAINDER)	FIRST PRES. CHURCH	CDA (BEHIND TOPS)	CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT	SQUIRES CIRCLE
11	28	57	15	23
43.017084, -78.880047	43.017924, -78.880495	43.019359, -78.885466	43.017728, -78.876970	43.019643, -78.883056

OFF STREET	ON STREET	TOTAL	WITH FRINGE	FRINGE	ON STREET SINGLE
1505	348	1853	1987	134	77

Appendix E: Selected Zoning Ordinances

Sec. 62-205. - Permit parking.

Patrons of businesses located on Main Street between Broad Street and Young Street/Niagara Street shall be allowed to park all day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Main Street provided they have an appropriate permit issued to the business owner by the city clerk. The permit shall be prominently displayed in the windshield area of the motor vehicle. No more than three permits shall be issued for any business per calendar year.

Sec. 82-351. - Number of spaces.

Off-street parking spaces shall be provided as specified in this division at the time a building or structure is erected or at the time a new use of open land is established. In the case of an enlargement of any existing building, structure or use after May 27, 1968, off-street parking spaces shall be provided as specified in this division for the enlarged portion of such building, structure or use. No existing off-street parking area shall be reduced in capacity so as to be less than required by this chapter, or, if such parking capacity is already less than required in this chapter, such parking area shall not be further reduced; provided, however, that a reduction in such existing parking area shall be allowed if equivalent parking space is provided for the use involved. In the case of a change of use which would result in a requirement for a greater parking area than is provided, the board of appeals shall determine the number of additional spaces to be required. The required number of spaces is as follows:

Use			*Parking* Spaces
(1)	Dwellings.		
	a.	Single-family or two-family dwelling	1 for each dwelling unit
	b.	Multifamily dwelling	1.5 for each dwelling unit
	c.	Tourist home, hotel, motel, roominghouse or lodginghouse	1 for each unit accommodation
	d.	Additional spaces for accessory uses:	

		1.	Office for treatment of humans	5 for each office
		2.	Other offices	2 for each office
(2)	Institutional uses.			
	a.		Hospital	1.5 for each bed
	b.		Sanatorium, nursing or convalescent home	1 for each 5 persons in residence
	c.		Home for aged or orphanage	1 for each 5 persons in residence
(3)	Places of assembly.			
	a.		School	1 for each classroom, plus 1 for each 5 seats in the auditorium
	b.		Church, principal or accessory auditorium, theater, stadium or sports arena	1 for each 5 seats
	c.		Library, museum or art gallery	1 for each 300 square feet of gross floor area
	d.		Bowling alley	10 per alley
	e.		Dancehall or dance studio, skating rink or other place of public amusement not otherwise specified	1 for each 100 square feet of gross floor area
	f.		Eating or drinking establishments, principal or accessory:	
		1.	Drive-in type	3 for each 25 square feet of gross floor area
		2.	Other types	2 for each 5 seats
	g.		Club or lodge	1 for each 100 square feet of floor area used for club or lodge purposes, plus 1 for each sleeping room

	h.	Mortuary or funeral parlor	10 for each parlor
(4)		Business or industrial uses.	
	a.	Furniture, floor covering or appliance stores, custom shops, wholesale business	1 for each 700 square feet of gross floor area
	b.	New or used car sales	5 for customer parking and 1 for each employee. Such spaces shall be clearly marked and shall not be used for the parking of unregistered motor vehicles.
	c.	Gasoline station, public garage or repair garage, principal or accessory	3 for each service bay
	d.	Food store, shopping center or group of stores over 20,000 square feet of gross floor area	1 for each 200 square feet of gross floor area
	e.	Individual retail stores or service establishments	1 for each 250 square feet of gross floor area
	f.	Doctor, dentist or real estate office	5 for each office
	g.	Other business or professional offices or banks	1 for each 175 square feet of gross floor area
	h.	Manufacturing, storage or other industrial floor area	1 for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area used for such purposes, but shall not be less than 1 for each 2 employees and need not be more than 1 for each 1.5 employees
(5)		*Other principal uses.* Other principal uses not enumerated in this section or excepted	1 for each 350 square feet of gross floor area
(6)		*Mixed uses.* Except as otherwise provided in this division, where any building or lot is occupied by two or more uses having different parking requirements, the parking requirement for each use shall be computed separately to determine the total off-street parking requirement.	

Appendix X: Commercial Structure Survey

SBL	CLASS	TYPE	OWNER	ADDRESS	OCCUPANT	NOTES
39.45-3-1	471	FUNERAL HOME	HAMP FREDERICK W	37 ADAM ST	HAMP FUNERAL HOME	GREY STONE
39.45-6-7	612	SCHOOL	ST FRANCIS CHURCH SOC OF	76 ADAM ST	ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL	
39.45-3-10	482	DET ROW BLDG	SCHULER KORY M	102 BROAD ST	SWEET BRIAR ANTIQUES	
39.53-1-1	486	MINI-MART	93 NYRPT LLC	115 BROAD ST	SEVEN ELEVEN	RED BROWN BRICK
39.45-3-13	620	RELIGIOUS	FELLOWSHIP OF GODS WORD CHURCH	116 BROAD ST	THE FELLOWSHIP OF GODS WORD	
39.53-11-5	422	DINER/LUNCH	CLC 123 LLC	123 BROAD ST	CASH FOR CANS	RED BROWN BRICK
39.53-12-2	464	OFFICE BLDG.	HISTORICAL SOC. OF TONAWANDAS	126 BROAD ST	HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TONAWANDAS RESOURCE CENTER	
39.46-6-18	534	SOCIAL ORG.	ELDREDGE BICYCLE CLUB	17 BROAD ST	ELDRIDGE CLUB	ORANGE BRICK
39.45-2-12	632	BENEVOLENT	THE SALVATION ARMY	46 BROAD ST	SALVATION ARMY	STONE ASSORTMENT
39.53-2-9	433	AUTO BODY	ALS SUPER SERVICE	57 BROAD ST	ALS SUPER SERVICE	GREY AUTO SHOP
39.45-2-13	481	ATT ROW BLDG	D. AVID COMMERCIAL PROP. LLC	60 BROAD ST	COMPLETE HOMECARE	
39.53-2-8	482	DET ROW BLDG	KLOCK LAWRENCE W	61 BROAD ST	TONAWANDA WINE AND LIQUOR	
39.45-2-14	464	OFFICE BLDG.	SWANSON PATRICE	64 BROAD ST	MEDICAL CLAIMS PROCESSORS	
39.53-2-5.1	462	BRANCH BANK	M & T BANK	65 BROAD ST	M AND T	PEACH. STONE, AND GLASS
39.53-2-3	482	DET ROW BLDG	DONOHUE BARRY J	77 BROAD ST	JOHN F DONAHUE, ATTORNEYS	
39.53-2-2	482	DET ROW BLDG	MERRITT DARLENE	83 BROAD ST	ATTIC TO BASEMENT REPEATS	GREEN PAINTED BRICK, TALL WINDOWS
39.46-5-1.1	426	FAST FOOD	LOPEZ LIVING TRUST	11 DELAWARE ST	BURGER KING	
39.46-6-3	482	DET ROW BLDG	BETHESDA FULL GOSPEL	22 DELAWARE ST	N/A	
39.46-6-4	482	DET ROW BLDG	METZEN PAUL M	26 DELAWARE ST	VACANT	
39.46-6-1	620	RELIGIOUS	BETHESDA FULL GOSPEL	8 DELAWARE ST	BETHESDA FULL GOSPEL TABERNACLE	
39.46-1-6.1	681	CULTURE BLDG	CITY OF TONAWANDA	24 EAST NIAGARA ST		
39.45-4-24	426	FAST FOOD	MSF NIAGARA LLC	10 MAIN ST	MCDONALDS	BRIGHT RED AND WHITE BRICK
39.53-7-3.1	482	DET ROW BLDG	DAMAR HOMES INC	102 MAIN ST	N/A	CONVERTED TO RES

39.45-2-5.11	425	BAR	MCFALL KEVIN	11-13 MAIN ST	MOONEYS	
39.53-7-4	432	GAS STATION	DURFEY NEIL	114 MAIN ST	NEILS 5 CORNERS AUTOMOTIVE	
39.53-6-1	681	CULTURE BLDG	CITY OF TONAWANDA	117 MAIN ST	HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TONAWANDAS	
39.45-2-25	481	ATT ROW BLDG	FRENKEL EUGENE	19 MAIN ST	ALLSTATE |VACANT | SHANGHAI |TWISTED TIKI	FOR SALE. RED BRICK ROW BUILDING
39.45-1-7	481	ATT ROW BLDG	TWO MAIN TONAWANDA LLC	2 MAIN ST	TP.P.W. WEBSITES | JJ GUTT AND ASSOCIATES INC	YELLOW STONE, ATTACHED TO BANK
39.45-4-14.121	462	BRANCH BANK	MSF NIAGARA LLC	20 MAIN ST	CITIZENS BANK | METRO PCS | VACANT	
39.45-2-24	464	OFFICE BLDG.	PEARL PROPERTIES OF NY LLC	27-31 MAIN ST	NICKEL REALTY	ONE OFFICE VACANT, TINTED GLASS FRONT, YELLOW BRICK
39.45-2-23	481	ATT ROW BLDG	CITY OF TONAWANDA	33-35 MAIN ST	TONAWANDA SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER	RED BRICK, TALL WINDOWS
39.45-2-22	482	DET ROW BLDG	FIREMANS BENEV ASSN OF TONA	39-43 MAIN ST	AMERICAN LEGION	
39.45-3-5	481	ATT ROW BLDG	40 MAIN STREET TONAWANDA LLC	40-46 MAIN ST	40 COIN LAUNDRY | 44 VAPEES	
39.45-2-21	481	ATT ROW BLDG	RONEKER EARL A	45-47 MAIN ST	VIETNAM VETERANS CHAPTER 77	
39.45-3-6	481	ATT ROW BLDG	GEORGE SCOTT	48-50 MAIN ST	SALT WATER PARADISE	CONTINUED ON 52 58, LIKELY STORAGE
39.45-2-20	481	ATT ROW BLDG	RONEKER EARL A	49 MAIN ST	MULBERRY TREE ANTIQUES AND GIFTS	GLASSFRONT, GREY STONE
39.45-2-1.1	411	APARTMENT	TONAWANDA II LP	5 MAIN ST	TONAWANDA TOWERS	
39.45-2-19	534	SOCIAL ORG.	LODGE 860 HOLDING CORP.	51-55 MAIN ST	ELKS LODGE 860	GLASS FRONT, GREY AND WHITE STONE
39.45-3-7	481	ATT ROW BLDG	KWITCHOFF ANN	52-58 MAIN ST	54 SALT WATER PARADIS | 56 AURELIOS| 58 CIPRIANO INC REAL ESTATE	
39.45-2-18	481	ATT ROW BLDG	57 MAIN LLC	57 MAIN ST	ATOMIC BARBER SHOP AND SALON | 59 SWEET HEART PIN UP | 61 VACANT | 61.5 VACANT	GLASS FRONT, TAN BRICK
39.45-1-6	461	BANK	CANAL SIDE DEVELOPMENT	6 MAIN ST	VACANT	RED BRICK BANK, POSSIBLE ASSETT AT MAIN INTERSECTION
39.45-3-8	481	ATT ROW BLDG	KC BUFFALO ENTERPRISES LLC	60 MAIN ST	GOOMBAS BOXING GYM	RED BRICK, TALL STRUCTURE
39.45-2-17	481	ATT ROW BLDG	63 MAIN STREET LLC	63 MAIN ST	MUELLER, DOCTOR	YELLOW BRICK R STORIES
39.45-3-9	482	DET ROW BLDG	BENNETT TRACY L	66 MAIN ST	COLLOSO TACO	RED BRICK, BLUE AWNINGS
39.53-2-1	482	DET ROW BLDG	HEDGES BARBARA R	67 MAIN ST	67 CATS LIKE US | 69 VACANT, |MARK A DOANE ATTOURNE | 73 HAIRCUTS	ORANGE BRICK

39.53-1-4	433	AUTO BODY	BAMPTON MICHAEL	74 MAIN ST	AUTOMORIVE PLUS PLUS	
39.53-1-5	483	CONVERTED RES	YOUNG JAMES A	82 MAIN ST	STYLES UNIQUE	HAIR SALON, SIDING
39.53-1-7	433	AUTO BODY	ZIEHM MARK D	92 MAIN ST	DICKS GARAGE	
39.53-7-1	425	BAR	GOETZ THOMAS	98 MAIN ST	STAMPS BAR	RED BRICK
39.53-2-17	620	RELIGIOUS	SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST	114 MORGAN ST	UNITER CHURCH OF CHRIST	
39.45-7-1.11	452	NBH SHOP CTR	TG-COTOPS TONAWANDA NY LLC	100 NIAGARA ST	FAMILY DOLLAR | UNYTS | JOES NY STYLE PIZZA | VACANT | WNY DENTAL | DAIRY QUEEN | SUPERCUTS | ADVANCED AUTO PARTS	RED BRICK
39.45-6-2	482	DET ROW BLDG	SR & DN PROPERTIES LLC	103 NIAGARA ST	AUDIOLOGY HEARING ASSOCIATES	TAN WOOD
38.52-3-7.1	454	SUPERMARKET	TG-COTOPS TONAWANDA NY LLC	150 NIAGARA ST	TOPS	
39.45-1-5	482	DET ROW BLDG	PDE REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS LLC	24 NIAGARA ST	VACANT	
39.45-1-3	482	DET ROW BLDG	J A ENTERPRISES INC	36 NIAGARA ST	AMATO, FOX & COMPANY PC	
39.45-1-1.1	482	DET ROW BLDG	GMK BAKERY INC	38 NIAGARA ST	BILLYGANS CAFE	
39.45-4-1.11	452	NBH SHOP CTR	MSF NIAGARA LLC	47A NIAGARA ST	25 EDDIBLE ARRANGEMENTS | 21 DOLLAR GENERAL | 33 BEIJING GARDEN | 37 HORIZON | 41 ASPIRE | 43 CRICKET | 45 SUBWAY	
39.45-4-1.12	456		INLAND WNY PORTFOLIO LLC	47ECKERD NIAGARA ST	RITE AID	
39.45-6-6.2	426	FAST FOOD	TIM DONUT U S LIMITED INC	71 NIAGARA ST	TIM HORTONS	
39.45-6-5	482	DET ROW BLDG	RODGERS ANA ELSA	73 NIAGARA ST	ANAS HAIR DESIGN	
39.45-6-4	421	RESTAURANT	WEST END PROPERTIES	75 NIAGARA ST	VACANT	RESTARAUNT, SHOULD BE 85
39.45-6-3	710	MANUFACTURE	LEE MICHAEL J	99 NIAGARA ST	BIG FOUR NORTH EAST CLEANERS	
39.45-5-11	482	DET ROW BLDG	DAVIS WILLIAM A	28 SEYMOUR ST	LANE JEWELERS	
39.45-5-12.11	464	OFFICE BLDG.	CCC INDUSTRIES LLC	34 SEYMOUR ST	COMMERCIAL COLECTION CORP OF NY |UNITED WAY OF THE TONAWANDAS	WHITE BRICK
39.53-9-5	652	GOVT BLDGS	UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE	96 SEYMOUR ST	USPS	
39.46-6-12.1	471	FUNERAL HOME	ROTH JAY W	25 WILLIAM ST	JOHN O ROTH FUNERAL HOME	
39.46-7-5.2	456		NORPAT GROUP LLC	10 YOUNG ST	WALGREENS	

39.46-2-9	421	RESTAURANT	KOLLIDAS DIMITRIOS	101 YOUNG ST	SWISTONS	
39.54-5-2	482	DET ROW BLDG	SCHEPPERLY NORMAN	115 YOUNG ST	UNMARKED WAREHOUSE	
39.46-2-11	425	BAR	RICHERT KEVIN	79 YOUNG ST	SMOKE ON THE WATER	
39.46-2-10	449	WAREHOUSE	2230 SOUTH PARK LTD PARTNERSHP	81 YOUNG ST		

Appendix F: Matthews Streetscapes

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Town of **Matthews** North Carolina

North Trade Street at Matthews Street (Looking North)

#13 Existing North Trade St. at Matthews Street

#13 Proposed North Trade St. at Matthews Street

Town of **Matthews** North Carolina

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Photographic Representations (Before & After)

The following "Before and After" images provide a graphical representation of how new and existing streets could be developed or redeveloped in the future. Many different streetscape elements such as sidewalks, multipurpose paths, traffic calming, street lighting, landscaping, buildings and parking configurations are explored.

The intent of the photographic representations is not to dictate specific design expectations or configurations but instead are meant to relay design possibilities intended to encourage an attractive and successful public realm.

North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (1)

BEFORE

AFTER

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Town of
Matthews
North Carolina

North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (2)

BEFORE

AFTER

Town of
Matthews
North Carolina

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

North Trade Street and East Matthews Street (3)

BEFORE

AFTER

Appendix G: Decatur Parking

PARKING in Decatur

We've got more than **2,500** places to park, at meters, in decks and lots, and in front of shops all around the city.

City of Decatur

Parking meters are not intended to provide a source of revenue for the City of Decatur. Rather, they serve as a form of parking management that helps to ensure the most convenient spaces are available for our retail and restaurant customers. A two-hour limit is enforced 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Metered parking is free after 6 p.m.

Meter Rates

Enforced Monday-Saturday

Nickel	2 min
Dime	4 min
Quarter	10 min

Meet Our PALS

Our PALS (Parking, Assistance, Liaison with Merchants and Safety) staff monitors downtown parking and writes parking tickets, but among their primary responsibilities is to serve as ambassadors for Decatur. PALS always carry retail directories to hand out to visitors seeking directions.

Need a Map?

Contact the Decatur Downtown Development Authority at 404-371-8386, or info@decaturga.com for a map of Decatur parking options.

City of Decatur

Free Validated Parking

Many of our retail and restaurant operators offer free validated parking in nearby decks. Be sure to ask.

Pay-by-Cell-Phone

Pay on-the-spot with your cell phone when you park in the E. Court Square and N. McDonough Street lots.

PARKING LOCATIONS AND RATES AROUND DOWNTOWN DECATUR

Town Center Deck
$0.75 First 1/2 hr.
$1.50 1 hr.
$2.25 1.5 hr.
$3.00 2 hrs.
$7.00 3 hrs.-all day

Courthouse/ County Deck
$6.00 all day, 8 am-5 pm.
Free after 5 p.m.

Holiday Inn/ Conference Center
.75 First 1/2 hr.
.75 Each additional 1/2 hr.
$4.00 3-12 hrs.
$5.00 12-24 hrs.

Decatur Renaissance Deck
$1.00 First 1/2 hr.
$2.50 1 hr.
$1.00 ea. additional 1/2 hr.
$7.50 All day

One West Court Square
(Behind Ruby Tuesdays and Crescent Moon)
$6.00 Flat rate
Validated parking available for Ruby Tuesdays and Crescent Moon patrons

335 Condominium
335 W. Ponce de Leon Ave.
Parking for 335 West Ponce shop patrons only

The Artisan
1179 Commerce Dr.
$1.00 First 1/2 hr.
$2.00 1 hr.
$3.00 1.5 hrs.
$4.00 2 hrs.
$5.00 2.5 hrs.
$7.00 3 hrs.
$9.00 3-5 hrs.
$11.00 5-24 hrs.

Church Street Lot
320 Church St.
$3.00 Flat rate before 5 p.m.
$5.00 Flat rate after 5 p.m.
$45.00 Monthly

Town Square Condominium
225 E. Ponce de Leon Ave.
Token system for Town Square shops
$5.00 Flat rate

Manuel Maloof Building Lot
Entrance on Swanton Way
Free after 5 p.m.

Appendix H: VPS Results

5/7/2017

5/7/2017

5/7/2017

Planning Process

Planning Process diagram: Plan Kickoff → Inventory → Vision, Goals & Policies → Land Use Plan → Action Plan → Draft Plan → Review → Final Plan (Summer 2017). Outreach.

Planning Process

What's been done so far?

- Steering Committee meetings
- Brainstorming
- Project branding
- Website/Facebook
- Draft vision
- Initial community outreach

CITY of TONAWANDA

Planning Process

Concurrent Planning Efforts

The Comprehensive Plan update will help inform two additional efforts also underway in Tonawanda:

- **Main Street Program** – a downtown economic development and historic preservation effort
- **Community Housing Project** – An effort to address zombie and distressed properties in the City and develop policies to support neighborhood investment

Planning Process

Basic Plan Elements

- Community Profile
  What is and has been happening – what do we have to work with....
- Vision & Goals
  What do we want for the City in the future....
- Objectives/Actions
  What do we want to do / where do we want to be....
- Implementation Plan
  How do we make it happen and get there....

Visual Preference Survey

What is it?

A **visualization** technique that allows:

- Citizens and decision-makers to determine preferences for various types of community design, architectural styles, land/streetscaping, and/or built-environment options.
- Stakeholders to determine which components of a plan or project contribute positively to a community's overall image or features.

A **public engagement** technique/tool that provides for:

- Citizen-based land-use planning
- Visualization in land-use, development, and transportation planning
- Visioning and consensus-building

Visual Preference Survey

Activating your clicker

To activate your clicker, you'll select "GO," then input the provided receiver ID number (41), and then "GO" again. If done properly, the light should turn green, indicating it is active and ready to go!

Planning Process

Draft Vision Statement

"Tonawanda is a historically rich waterfront community in the Buffalo Niagara Region where the canal meets the Niagara River. We engage with our residents, businesses, schools and community leaders and look ahead to make our neighborhoods and businesses vibrant. By capitalizing on our assets, both natural and man-made, we strive to be a sustainable City, a community for a lifetime."

Visual Preference Survey

Tonight we will ask participant's about their values and preferences:

- Neighborhoods
- Housing
- Street trees
- Signs
- Pedestrian and bicycle routes and amenities
- Lighting
- Building design
- Parking lots

5/7/2017

5/7/2017

5/7/2017

5/7/2017

Appendix I: Historic – Current – Future

Historic	Current	Future	One Thing
Canal	Tree Canopy	Uniform Building Styles	Pedestrians Walkways (Safe + Handicap Adpatable)
Creek	Diverse Housing Stock	Tighter Zoning	Connect Rails To Trails To Waterfront With Bike Paths, Signage, Directions
River	High School Facilities (Weight Room + Track)	Lighting	Economic Development
Historic Buildings	Safe Community	Balance Tax Base	Better Communications
Clinton	Concerts	Improve Parking In Neighborhoods	Beautify What We Have- Murals, Flowers, Artwork, Trees
Elmwood	Trees	Accepted Pedestrians Walk Paths Only	More Social Capital
Grove	Sidewalks	Incentives For Property Improvements	Better Infrastructure
Old Train Station	Gateway	Get All Old Home On Tax Role	More Tree Lined Streets
Long Homestead	Niawanda	Better Design For Parking Lots	Shops And Tax Paying Businesses
Architecture	Strong Community	Hanging Plants	Entrance/Exit To City- Improve Signage
Canal-Lumbering	Kohler Pool	Better Communication (Monthly Newsletter)	Continue Main Street Improvements- Generate Foot Traffic
River	Little Lights In Trees	Light Rail Train From Buffalo To Niagara Falls	Fix Parking Lots Across From Tops (Tim Hortons/ Bedells)
Sidewalks	Don't Like- No Trains	Trees	Fix Sidewalks On Niagara Street By New Bakery/ Café Coming Off Of Bike Path
Trees	Parks	Playgrounds	Close Young Street Extensions + Force Traffic To Main Street
Kohler Pool	Water Front	Neighborhood Schools + Gardens	No Smoking Enforcement In Parks
Tonawanda News	Civic Organizations	Economic Development	Enforce Snow Removal - Sidewalks
Sense Of Community	Libraries	Bike Paths- Accommodate Seniors	Food Trucks
Trains+ Trolleys	Senior Citizen Center	Curb Cuts	
Canal Heritage	Intermunicipal Agreement	Public Art	
Ferry Between Tonawanda + Grand Island	Events- Art Shows, Car Shows, Concerts	Better Crosswalks	

HSBC Bank	River, Canal,Bike Path - For Its Commercial Athletic Value	Wifi Connected Downtown	
Canal	Clinto Park Area Including Houses That Are Really Nice	Historic Light Poles Throught City	
Niawanda Park	Niawanda Paark	Historic Downtown Guidelines	
Close Knit Communtity	Not Bringing In Visitors Or $	Ecological Valuable	
Good Place To Raise Family	Downtown Has No Streetscape/Business To Attract $	Downtown Connection To Canal	
Architecture	Lack Of Water Restaurants	Absent Landlord Registry	
Walkable Community	Young Street Is Forgotten	Historic Preservation	
Waterfront Resources	Walkable Community	Hsbc Bank Restoration	

CITY OF TONAWANDA
COMMUNITY EXERCISE
HISTORIC – CURRENT – FUTURE

Clark Patterson Lee
ARCHITECTURE · ENGINEERING · PLANNING

Instructions

The purpose of this exercise is to allow residents and stakeholders to describe, discuss, and explore the characteristics and elements they value in their community and neighborhoods.

You will jot down your ideas in the circles on the left based on the following framework:

Historic – What historic characteristics and elements of your community and neighborhood do you value? What cannot or should not change?
Example: Architecturally pleasing homes.

Current – What about your community or neighborhood do you currently value?
Example: Neighborhood schools

Future – Thinking ahead, what are your core values, priorities, and goals for your community and neighborhood
Example: Improved housing conditions

One Thing – If you could change, improve, implement, or create *one* thing, what would it be?

Future

Current

Historic

Appendix K: Saratoga Springs

§ 212-74

Purpose and intent.

The City Council of the City of Saratoga Springs hereby finds it is necessary and proper to provide a real property tax incentive to encourage investment in the rehabilitation of historic properties.

§ 212-75

Eligible properties.

The historic investment exemption established in this article shall be available for those structures on properties within either of the following geographic districts:

A.

All structures on properties that have been designated as a contributing or noncontributing structure within the State or National Register of Historic Places and which are located in the City of Saratoga Springs.

B.

All structures on properties that have been designated as a City landmark or in an historic district in Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Saratoga Springs.

§ 212-76

Eligible investments.

No historic investment exemption established in this article shall be granted for the alteration or rehabilitation of an existing structure, or for an addition thereto, unless each of the following criteria are met:

A.

Eligibility for the historic investment exemption is limited to improvements that involve the alteration or rehabilitation of an existing structure, or an addition thereto, that increase the assessed valuation of the improvements on the property as determined by the Assessment Office of the City of Saratoga Springs. New construction on a vacant lot is not an eligible investment.

B.

All eligible improvements on the property must have commenced construction subsequent to the filing of this article with the Secretary of State of the State of New York.

C.

All eligible improvements on the property in either of the geographic areas identified in § 212-75

must have the approval of the City of Saratoga Springs Design Review Commission pursuant to the review criteria established in Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Saratoga Springs, prior to the commencement of any construction.

D.

All eligible improvements must have appropriate construction permits and certificate of completion or occupancy issued by the Building Department of the City of Saratoga Springs.

E.

Real property tax payments on the property must be current.

§ 212-77

Percent of exemption; computation.

A.

Eligible property shall be exempt from taxation to the extent of any increase in assessed value attributable to the alteration, rehabilitation or addition pursuant to the following exemption schedule:

Year of Exemption	Percentage of Exemption
1 through 5	100%
6	80%
7	60%
8	40%
9	20%
10	0%

B.

The historic investment exemptions as set forth in the article are only applicable to the general tax rate of the City of Saratoga Springs and any of its ad valorem tax rates. The exemptions are not applicable to the property taxes collected for the Saratoga Springs City School District or the County

of Saratoga, unless those entities enact legislation granting similar exemptions.

§ 212-78

Commencement of exemption; inception.

Notwithstanding any other provision under this article, an approved project shall begin to receive the appropriate exemption pursuant to this article in the first year that the improved project or parcel is fully assessed on the City assessment roll.

§ 212-79

Application.

The historic investment exemption shall be granted only by application of the owner or owners of eligible properties on a form prescribed by the New York State Board of Real Property Services. The application shall be filed with the Assessor of the City of Saratoga Springs on or before the appropriate taxable status date (June 1) of the City of Saratoga Springs.

§ 212-80

Procedure.

The historic investment exemption shall be granted where the Assessor is satisfied that the applicant is entitled to an exemption pursuant to this article. The Assessor shall approve such application and such property shall thereafter be exempt from taxation and special ad valorem levies as hereby provided commencing with the assessment roll prepared on the basis of the taxable status date referred to above. The assessed value of any exemptions granted pursuant to this article shall be entered by the Assessor on the assessment roll with the taxable property, with the amount of the exemption shown in a separate column.

§ 212-81

Ineligibility due to benefits from other incentive programs.

The historic investment exemption shall not be eligible to a property that is the subject of or the recipient of benefits, payments, credits, exemptions or other valuable allowances or consideration under any other incentive programs or improvement program which has been established or may be established from time to time by the federal government of the United States of America, the state government of New York, the county government of the County of Saratoga, the City government of the City of Saratoga Springs and any and all other governmental agencies and private or public foundations which provide a reduction or abatement of City of Saratoga Springs real property taxes.

§ 212-82

Enactment.

This article shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with Municipal Home Rule Law § 27.

Appendix L: Requirements

Section 3: Requirements for Certification

In order to qualify for certification, the local government must meet the following requirements:

A) The local government must have and enforce local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties enacted under the provisions of the New York State General Municipal Law Article 5, Section 96-a and 119aa-119dd. The following provisions must be included either in the local legislation or implementation regulations:

1) A statement of purpose;

2) The establishment of an historic preservation review commission;

3) Assignment of powers to the commission, which must include at least the power to:

i) Designate or recommend designation of properties worthy of preservation;

ii) Provide advice and guidance to property owners and government agencies concerning historic preservation issues;

iii) Adopt rules for the conduct of commission business; and

iv) In the case of cities, towns, and villages, the power to approve or disapprove any demolition, relocation, new construction, or exterior alteration affecting designated properties under its jurisdiction;

v) In the case of counties, at least the power:

(a) To review and comment upon all county undertakings and to recommend approval, modification, or disapproval of undertakings that might affect properties included in the county inventory or other historic properties. See Section 5.B.3(i)(c).

(b) To review and report to the pertinent county agency or municipality whenever the county is called upon to formulate planning advice concerning actions that may affect properties included in the county inventory.

4) Provisions must include establishment of criteria and procedures for designation of historic properties worthy of preservation:

i) Legislation encompassing all classes of historic properties is recommended; however, it is sufficient that the criteria admit at least one category of historic resources, such as historic districts, etc.

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ii) The criteria may not exclude a class of resources that is defined solely in terms of the property's use or ownership, for example, religious properties, nor the actions of its owner such as designation subject to owner's consent. However, publicly owned properties that fall outside the commissions' ordinary jurisdiction may be explicitly or implicitly excluded.

5) The provisions must also include procedures for commission actions and standards and criteria for commission decisions that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation. The Standards can be accessed online at www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/arch_stnds_0.htm.

6) The provisions must also include procedures for enforcing commission decisions; and

7) A process for seeking relief from the strict application of the law in cases where unnecessary economic hardship can be proven; and

8) Other provisions to ensure due process, including notification procedures.

B) The historic preservation review commission established by the local government must meet the following qualifications:

1) The commission must have no fewer than five members.

2) All commission members must have a demonstrated interest, competence or knowledge of historic preservation.

3) To the extent that such professionals are available, the community must appoint commission members to represent the disciplines of history, archeology, architecture, architectural history, and historic architecture. Members may also represent the fields of planning, folklore, cultural anthropology, conservation, landscape architecture, museums, and other historic preservation-related professions.

4) Terms of office must be staggered.

5) Commission meetings must be scheduled at regular intervals.

6) The jurisdiction of the commission must coincide with the geographical jurisdiction of the local government.

7) The commission must have at least the powers described in Section 3.A.3.

C) The local government must maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic

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properties within its jurisdiction, and must be coordinated with and complementary to the survey activities of the SHPO.

1) To ensure that local survey and inventory data can be readily integrated into the statewide comprehensive historic preservation planning process and other appropriate planning processes, the local government must follow survey methods, standards and format established by the SHPO. Guidelines for survey are available from the SHPO.

i) If the local government receives prior written approval from the SHPO, the local government may use some other survey system and format.

ii) The survey system should include all classes and types of historic resources, not only those that may be subject to the commission's jurisdiction.

2) All inventory material must be securely maintained and must be accessible to the public; however, access may be restricted in the case of inventoried properties that might be damaged by unauthorized persons if its location were generally publicized.

D) The local government must provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program.

1) All meetings must be open to the general public, announced by public notice, and documented through the taking of minutes, which must record all decisions and the reasons for those decisions, as required under the NYS Open Meetings Law (articles 6 and 7 of chapter 47 of the Consolidated Laws--Public Officers Law).

2) All policies, procedures, and guidelines used by the local government or commission must be maintained in written form and be readily accessible to the general public.

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Section 4: Process for Certifying Local Governments

A) The local government shall make a formal request to the SHPO for certification. The request must include the following:

1) A request to participate in the CLG program, including an assurance of the local government's intent to enter into a certification agreement, signed by the chief elected official of the local government or that official's designee;

2) A copy of the local historic preservation legislation and any policies, procedures, or regulations that have been adopted for administering and enforcing the legislation;

3) Information on the membership of the commission, documenting each member's interest or expertise in fields related to historic preservation and a description of the appointment process. If the commission membership is not drawn from the professional disciplines defined in 36 CFR 61.6 and the Secretary's Professional Qualification Standards (history, archeology, architectural history, architecture, or historic architecture), the local government must document its efforts to obtain representation in such discipline(s) and its proposed mechanism for obtaining professional expertise when needed. See Section 5.B.2.iii.

4) A description of the survey system in use by the municipality, a chronology of past survey efforts, a listing of all properties included in the local inventory, and a listing of properties designated under the local legislation;

5) If available, a copy of the current local historic preservation plan or a statement describing the local preservation program; and

6) If applicable, a statement concerning additional historic preservation responsibilities that the local government agrees to undertake if certified.

B) The SHPO shall review the local government's submission to determine if it fulfills the requirements outlined in Section 3. During the review process, the SHPO may request additional documentation necessary to evaluate the municipality's eligibility for certification. The SHPO shall respond to the chief elected official within sixty (60) days of receipt of an adequately documented application for certification.

1) If the SHPO determines that the municipality's historic preservation program fails to qualify, the SHPO will identify the deficiencies and suggest remedies.

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2) If the SHPO determines that the local government meets the requirements for certification, the SHPO, in consultation with the municipality, will prepare an agreement listing the specific responsibilities the local government will assume when certified.

C) The SHPO will forward documentation of the local government's eligibility for certification to the National Park Service along with the signed certification agreement and a request for NPS concurrence. If the request for concurrence cannot be affirmed as submitted, the NPS will notify the SHPO of deficiencies within 15 working days. If the NPS concurs with

the SHPO recommendation, the date of the NPS concurrence shall be the effective date of certification. The NPS will notify the CLG of the concurrence, along with a copy to the SHPO.

Appendix M: National Register

The National Register of Historic Places includes significant properties, classified as buildings, sites, districts, structures, or objects. It is not used to list intangible values, except in so far as they are associated with or reflected by historic properties. The National Register does not list cultural events, or skilled or talented individuals, as is done in some countries. Rather, the National Register is oriented to recognizing physically concrete properties that are relatively fixed in location.

For purposes of National Register nominations, small groups of properties are listed under a single category, using the primary resource. For example, a city hall and fountain would be categorized by the city hall (building), a farmhouse with two outbuildings would be categorized by the farmhouse (building), and a city park with a gazebo would be categorized by the park (site). Properties with large acreage or a number of resources are usually considered districts. Common sense and reason should dictate the selection of categories.

BUILDING

A building, such as a house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction, is created principally to shelter any form of human activity. "Building" may also be used to refer to a historically and functionally related unit, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn.

Buildings eligible for the National Register must include all of their basic structural elements. Parts of buildings, such as interiors, facades, or wings, are not eligible independent of the rest of the existing building. The whole building must be considered, and its significant features must be identified.

If a building has lost any of its basic structural elements, it is usually considered a "ruin" and is categorized as a site.

Examples of buildings include:

Administration Building
Carriage House

Church

City Or Town Hall

Courthouse

Detached Kitchen, Barn, And Privy

Dormitory

Fort

Garage

Hotel

House

Library

Mill Building

Office Building

Post Office

School

Shed

Social Hall

Stable

Store

Theater

Train Station

STRUCTURE

The term "structure" is used to distinguish from buildings those functional constructions made usually for purposes other than creating human shelter.

Structures nominated to the National Register must include all of the extant basic structural elements. Parts of structures can not be considered eligible if the whole structure remains. For example, a truss bridge is composed of the metal or wooden truss, the abutments, and supporting piers, all of which, if extant, must be included when considering the property for eligibility.

If a structure has lost its historic configuration or pattern of organization through deterioration or demolition, it is usually considered a "ruin" and is categorized as a site.

Examples of structures include:
Aircraft
Apiary
Automobile
Bandstand
Boats And Ships Bridge
Cairn
Canal
Carousel

   Corncrib
Dam
Earthwork
Fence
Gazebo
Grain Elevator
Highway

Irrigation System
Kiln
Lighthouse
Railroad Grade
Silo
Trolly Car
Tunnel Windmill

OBJECT

The term "object" is used to distinguish from buildings and structures those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed. Although it may be, by nature or design, movable, an object is associated with a specific setting or environment.

Small objects not designed for a specific location are normally not eligible. Such works include transportable sculpture, furniture, and other decorative arts that, unlike a fixed outdoor sculpture, do not possess association with a specific place.

Objects should be in a setting appropriate to their significant historic use, roles, or character. Objects relocated to a museum are inappropriate for listing in the National Register.

Examples of objects include:

boundary marker
monument
milepost

    fountain
scupture
statuary

SITE

A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

A site can possess associative significance or information potential or both, and can be significant under any or all of the four criteria. A site need not be marked by physical remains if it is the location of a prehistoric or historic event or pattern of events and if no buildings, structures, or

objects marked it at the time of the events. However, when the location of a prehistoric or historic event cannot be conclusively determined because no other cultural materials were present or survive, documentation must be carefully evaluated to determine whether the traditionally recognized or identified site is accurate.

A site may be a natural landmark strongly associated with significant prehistoric or historic events or patterns of events, if the significance of the natural feature is well documented through scholarly research. Generally, though, the National Register excludes from the definition of "site" natural waterways or bodies of water that served as determinants in the location of communities or were significant in the locality's subsequent economic development. While they may have been "avenues of exploration," the features most appropriate to document this significance are the properties built in association with the waterways.

Examples of sites include:
Battlefield
Campsite
Cemeteries Significant For
Information Potential Or
Historic Association
Ceremonial Site   Designed Landscape
Habitation Site
Natural Feature (Such As A
Rock Formation) Having
Cultural Significance
Petroglyph
Rock Carving
Rock Shelter
Ruins Of A Building Or Structure
Shipwreck
Trail
Village Site

DISTRICT

A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

Concentration, Linkage, & Continuity of Features

A district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties. For example, a district can reflect one principal activity, such as a mill or a ranch, or it can encompass several interrelated activities, such as an area that includes industrial, residential, or commercial buildings, sites, structures, or objects. A district can also be a grouping of archeological sites related primarily by their common components; these types of districts often will not visually represent a specific historic environment.

Significance

A district must be significant, as well as being an identifiable entity. It must be important for historical, architectural, archeological, engineering, or cultural values. Therefore, districts that are significant will usually meet the last portion of Criterion C plus Criterion A, Criterion B, other portions of Criterion C, or Criterion D.

Types of Features

A district can comprise both features that lack individual distinction and individually distinctive features that serve as focal points. It may even be considered eligible if all of the components lack individual distinction, provided that the grouping achieves significance as a whole within its historic context. In either case, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole.

A district can contain buildings, structures, sites, objects, or open spaces that do not contribute to the significance of the district. The number of noncontributing properties a district can contain yet

still convey its sense of time and place and historical development depends on how these properties affect the district's integrity. In archeological districts, the primary factor to be considered is the effect of any disturbances on the information potential of the district as a whole.

Geographical Boundaries

A district must be a definable geographic area that can be distinguished from surrounding properties by changes such as density, scale, type, age, style of sites, buildings, structures, and objects, or by documented differences in patterns of historic development or associations. It is seldom defined, however, by the limits of current parcels of ownership, management, or planning boundaries. The boundaries must be based upon a shared relationship among the properties constituting the district.

Discontiguous Districts

A district is usually a single geographic area of contiguous historic properties; however, a district can also be composed of two or more definable significant areas separated by nonsignificant areas. A discontiguous district is most appropriate where:

Elements are spatially discrete;

Space between the elements is not related to the significance of the district; and

Visual continuity is not a factor in the significance.

In addition, a canal can be treated as a discontiguous district when the system consists of man- made sections of canal interspersed with sections of river navigation. For scattered archeological properties, a discontiguous district is appropriate when the deposits are related to each other through cultural affiliation, period of use, or site type.

It is not appropriate to use the discontiguous district format to include an isolated resource or small group of resources which were once connected to the district, but have since been separated either through demolition or new construction. For example, do not use the discontiguous district format to nominate individual buildings of a downtown commerical district that have become isolated through demolition.

Examples of districts include:

Business Districts

Canal Systems

Groups Of Habitation Sites

College Campuses   Estates And Farms With Large

Acreage/Numerous Properties Industrial Complexes

Irrigation Systems

Residential Areas

Rural Villages

Transportation Networks

Rural Historic Districts

Appendix Y: Cheektowaga LLR

LANDLORD LICENSING LAW

Section 1. Purpose

The Town of Cheektowaga hereby finds and declares that the rental of dwelling units constitutes a business which impacts upon the public health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the Town of Cheektowaga. Residential rental properties may become a haven for various criminal or disruptive activities that can cause disorder in our community and affect the quality of life of others in the Town of Cheektowaga.

The Town Board of the Town of Cheektowaga desires to minimize and control the adverse effects caused by illegal and nuisance activities which may occur at residential rental properties, thereby protecting the health, safety and welfare of our citizens; and preserving the quality of life, property values and the character of neighborhoods and businesses.

It is the purpose of this law to implement a registration requirement for residential rental property owners in order to curb criminal activity and disorder on residential rental properties in the Town of Cheektowaga.

Section 2. Definitions.

Criminal Activity – unlawful activity consisting of drug activity, weapons possession, assault, domestic violence, murder, assault, sexual assault, gang activity or other activity proscribed by the Penal Law of the State of New York.

Dwelling – a single family, two-family or multi-family dwelling which is rented or for rent.

Dwelling Unit – an individual rental unit in dwelling

Owner/Landlord – the owner or owners of a dwelling, or a mortgagee or vendee in possession, assignee of rents, receiver, executor, trustee or agent.

Police Report – a report issued by a Town Police Officer after said officer has responded to a complaint alleging the occurrence of criminal activity or a public nuisance.

Property Manager – a person or other entity designated by the owner to manage a dwelling on behalf of the owner

Public Nuisance – activities affecting the quality of life of residents of the Town of Cheektowaga, including violations of the Town's Noise Law, alcohol-related incidents or other violations of the Code of the Town of Cheektowaga which are enforced by the Town Police Department.

Renter/Lessee/Tenant – any person who rents a dwelling unit from an Owner in the Town of Cheektowaga.

Town – Town of Cheektowaga, exclusive of the villages of Sloan and Depew.

4.6.a

Section 3. Landlord license; registration requirement.

a. License required. No person shall allow a dwelling unit to be occupied or rented to another for occupancy unless the owner has first obtained a rental housing business license as hereafter provided.

b. Exemptions. The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to motels; bed-and-breakfast establishments; rooming or boarding houses; hospitals; nursing homes; or other dwelling units which offer or provide medical or nursing services if such units are subject to state or federal licensing or regulations concerning the safety of the users, patients or tenants.

c. Application for license. Within 30 days after the effective date of this law, the owner of each dwelling shall make written application for a rental housing business license to the Town Council Office. Such application shall be on a form furnished by the Town and shall set forth the following information, in addition to other information required by the Town from time to time which the Town deems necessary to administer, enforce and ensure compliance with the provisions of this law. Failure to provide such information shall be grounds to deny a rental housing business license:

    i.   Names, addresses (business and residence) and telephone number(s) (business and residence) of owner;

    ii.   If the owner is an association, limited liability company, partnership, joint tenancy, tenancy in common or tenancy by the entirety, then the name, address and telephone number of each and every owner, member or general partner shall be indicated on the application;

    iii.   If the owner is a corporation, the principal place of business of the corporation must be provided, along with the name, title and residence address of all officers, directors and managing/general agents must be included on the application;

    iv.   If the owner has designated an agent or managing company to assist the owner with the management of the property, then the name, principal residence address, principal business address and telephone number of such agent or managing company must be included on the application;

    v.   It shall be the responsibility of the owner to properly register any change of address, change of agent or change of any other pertinent information with the Town;

    vi.   For purposes of this law, a post office box shall not be accepted as the owner's business or residence address. Furthermore, the dwelling intended to be licensed shall not be accepted as the owner's address unless it is the principal place or residence of the owner;

    vii.   For purposes of this law, if the owner does not reside in or have its place of business in the County of Erie, then the owner must have a property manager located in the County of Erie. If the owner does not reside or have a business located in the County of Erie, then the owner must designate a property manager located in the County of Erie who can accept service of process.

    viii.   The owner shall specify the address to which all notices and invoices for fees are to be forwarded.

d. License Application Fee. The application fee for a landlord license under this law shall be Ten Dollars ($10.00) every two (2) years.

e. Issuance or denial of license. After receipt of the owner's application for a rental housing business license, the Town Council Office shall review same to ensure said application contains all of the required information. If the application is deemed complete, the Town

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Council Office, within 30 days, shall forward the owner a Rental Housing Business License. If said application is deemed incomplete, the Town Council Office shall notify the owner, and the owner shall have 30 days in which to supply the required information. If the required information is not supplied by the owner, the application shall be denied.

f. Effect of failure to make application or denial of rental housing business license. If the owner does not submit the rental housing business license application or fails to supply all of the information required on the application, the owner shall be subject to the following fines:

    i. $500.00 per owner for each 30 day period until an acceptable application is submitted;

g. Recourse if fine is not paid. If the owner neglects or refuses to pay the fine(s) as stated in subsection e. of this section within 30 days after notification, the Town shall add any such fine(s) onto the owner's property tax bill, and it shall become a lien on the property/dwelling.

h. Term of license. A rental housing business license issued pursuant to this law shall be valid for a period of two (2) years after its issuance, unless sooner revoked pursuant to this law.

i. Non-transferability of license. A rental housing business license issued pursuant to this law shall not be transferable to any person who has acquired ownership of a dwelling. A new owner is required to file a new application for a rental housing business license within 30 days after acquiring ownership.

Section 4. Criminal or Public Nuisance Activity Occurring on the Dwelling Property. In the event that the Town Police Officer responds to the dwelling unit for reports of criminal activity or public nuisance activity on the dwelling unit; finds that said activity was engaged in or facilitated by the renter, member of the household, guest or other party under the control of the renter; and issues a police report for same, the Town Council Office shall forward a notice to the owner or property manager stating that there was criminal activity or public nuisance activity on the dwelling property. The owner or property manager shall then take appropriate action to notify the tenant to cease any such activity, or evict said tenant. In the event that there are any subsequent incidents at the dwelling unit in the same calendar year in the same dwelling unit relating to activity engaged in, or facilitated by the same renter or a member of his/her household, guest or other party under the control of said renter, the Town Council Office will forward by first class mail a second notice of criminal activity or public nuisance activity to the owner or property manager notice. Subsequent incidents in the same calendar year at the same dwelling unit will be followed by a notice to the owner or property manager, along with a notice of the imposition of the following fines:

    a. Third incident in the same calendar year- $50.00 fine;

    b. Fourth incident in the same calendar year- $100.00 fine;

    c. Fifth incident in the same calendar year- $500.00 fine;

    d. All further incidents in the same calendar year - $1,000 fine per incident.

If the owner or property manager submits information to the Town Council Office that it is in the process of evicting the tenant in whose dwelling unit the criminal or public nuisance activity is occurring, future impositions of fines will cease. In the event that the owner neglects or refuses to pay the fine(s) as stated in this section within 30 days after notification, the Town shall add such fine(s) onto the dwelling's property tax bill, and it shall become a lien on the property/dwelling.

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4.6.a

Section 5. Crime Free/Crime Prevention Lease Addendum – the owner or property manager of a dwelling under this law is encouraged to utilize a Crime Free/Crime Prevention Lease Addendum, an example of which is annexed to this law, to assist the owner or property manager with the eviction of tenants who continue to conduct criminal or public nuisance activity in the dwelling unit.

Section 6. Tenant Information. The Owner of each dwelling is required to maintain information concerning all of its tenants, including the number and names of all occupants, and the full address and telephone numbers of all tenants. In the event of criminal or public nuisance activity on the property, the owner or property manager shall cooperate with the Town Police Department by providing this information to the Town Police Department if so requested.

Section 7. Appeals. Any owner or property manager who is notified of a fine under this law shall have the right to appeal the imposition of said fine to the Town Board of the Town of Cheektowaga. A written request for an appeal shall be made by the owner or property manager within 30 days after the date of the communication notifying the owner or property manager of the fine. The Town Board shall schedule a hearing within 30 days after receipt of said request for appeal. The owner or property manager shall appear at the hearing in person and shall have the right to representation by a person of his or her choice. The owner, property manager or his/her representative shall provide sworn testimony at said hearing. An appeal to the Town Board will stay the imposition of the fine until it renders its decision. The Town Board shall thereafter issue its written decision to uphold the fine or rescind the fine.

Section 8. Severability. If a term, part or provision, section, subdivision or paragraph of this law shall be held to be unconstitutional, invalid or ineffective, in whole or in part, such determination shall not be deemed to affect, impair or invalidate the remaining parts, provisions, sections, subdivisions and paragraphs of this law.

Section 9. Applicability. This law shall be applicable to all dwellings located in the Town of Cheektowaga outside of the villages of Depew and Sloan.

8/31/2011

Attachment: LANDLORD LICENSING LAW rev. 8-31 (RES-2011-491 : Call for Public Hearing - Landlord Licensing Law)

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Appendix C
Model Job Descriptions

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The work involves responsibility for planning and supervising community development activities and projects for the City of Tonawanda. The position also involves overseeing and carrying out planning, community development and economic development activities and represents the City in the community and on a variety of planning and development related organizations and boards. This is a senior level management position and work is performed under the general direction of the City of Tonawanda Mayor. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Plans, directs and supervises all personnel and activities for the Department of Community Development;

- Prepares the departmental budget, the annual work plans and oversees the work of Community Department employees;

- Develops policies, procedures and programs for the City's community and economic development functions to enhance economic growth and activities consistent with the goals of the City;

- Acts as project manager in special and ongoing planning projects including strategic planning, business retention and development and low-income housing;

- Completes grant applications for Community Block Grant programs, and other Federal and State funding and monitors expenditures of such funds by periodically reviewing records relating to the grant;

- Develops and implements programs in conjunction with City officials to retain, restore and expand the commercial and industrial tax base and attract new businesses to the area;

- Represents the interests of the City in local, regional and state organizations and in negotiations with private businesses and developers;

- Leads and coordinates the City's planning and economic development activities with existing State, Federal, local and private development agencies;

- Provides information and technical assistance in planning and development as requested by City officials, City departments, businesses and others.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of the principals, methods and techniques used in economic and community development, municipal planning and community marketing activities;

- Thorough knowledge of State, Federal and local laws, policies and programs related to the economic development and planning process;

- Thorough knowledge of business and economic conditions of the City;

- Thorough knowledge of the principals and practices in administering and monitoring grant funds;

- Good knowledge of the sources of funding available for economic and community planning projects;

- Ability to prepare, review and administer grant proposals;

- Ability to plan and supervise the work of others;

- Ability to lead, plan and implement planning and development projects;

- Ability to prepare and deliver presentations in a clear, concise and articulate manner;

- Ability to understand, interpret and analyze complex and detailed written material and quantitative data;

- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;

- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others

- Physical condition commensurate with demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees with a Master's degree in planning, public administration, economics, architecture, engineering, environmental studies, business or a closely related field and three (3) years of experience in planning or economic development, or related field; with at least one (1) year of supervisory/management experience; OR

Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees with a Bachelor's degree in planning, public administration, economics, architecture, engineering, environmental studies, business or related field and four (4) years of experience as defined in (a) with a least one (1) year of supervisory/management experience; OR

An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (a) and (b).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

This part-time position provides a variety of administrative, technical and professional services to achieve the economic and community development goals desired by the City of Tonawanda and the mission of the City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation. The position reports to the COTLDC Board of Directors. Annual performance evaluation and compensation review is done by the COTLDC Board of Directors.

POSITION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Develop, manage, and implement economic and community development projects and programs in the City of Tonawanda. Develops and coordinates implementation of plans to revitalize the commercial area in the City, encourage business development, retention and expansion; address barriers to economic growth and job creation/retention, and increase economic opportunities. Compiles, maintains and provides information needed by development prospects.

- Recruit and promote business/real estate development and investment by providing technical assistance and matching potential investors to available programs and resources. Implements economic and community development plans and implements marketing and business attraction strategies. Administers any COTLDC business loan or other incentive programs.

- Prepares grant applications and funding agreements to secure funds and services for development projects and activities.

- Establish and implement organizational policies and practices for the daily administrative and fiscal management of COTLDC operations. Reviews and interprets local, state, and federal regulations and ensures COTLDC compliance. Coordinate and document COTLDC Board and Committee meetings.

- Facilitate and participate in meetings regarding potential economic and community development projects in Tonawanda. Prepares reports and presentations, delivers presentations to a variety of audiences.

- Build and maintain effective relationships with area businesses, elected officials, developers, property owners, realtors, advisory groups, community organizations, and citizens. Develops and maintains effective working relationships with various local, state, and federal agencies.

- Perform any other services necessary to carry out the COTLDC's mission of economic and community development and its administrative responsibilities as directed.

KEY SKILLS, ABILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Some combination of education and hands-on experience specific to economic development, community development, business, marketing, or public administration. College Degree preferred.

- A sound understanding of business, economic development, public policy and community development programs and trends.

- Dedication to collaborative, community-based problem solving, and a passion to motivate others to work towards desired objectives;

- Ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, including the ability to convene and facilitate meetings, set agendas, and bring collaborative efforts to a desired outcome;

- Outstanding communication skills for written and oral communications, public speaking, negotiation and consensus building and networking and possess the ability to interact with officials at all organizational levels.

- Ability to accurately assess a wide variety of situations and determine appropriate courses of action.

- Experience with budgets, policies, procedures and other written materials.

- Strong technical and analytic skills;

- Ability to interpret and disseminate information garnered through meetings, seminars and training sessions to peers, and the Board of Directors.

- Demonstrated ability to effectively manage multiple tasks and priorities and supervise staff.

- A keen interest in small communities and main street revitalization.