

North Tonawanda



# momentum



city resurgence, from downtown to the waterfront

## 2021 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE WATERFRONT, EXPERIENCE THE MOMENTUM

*WORK, LIVE, & PLAY IN NORTH TONAWANDA!*



downtown



waterfront



residential





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# Office of the Mayor

ARTHUR G. PAPPAS

August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council:

On behalf of the City of North Tonawanda, I am honored to present you with NT Momentum, our proposal for the fifth round for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The NT Momentum project is a culmination of over ten years of comprehensive planning focused on North Tonawanda's historic downtown.

Downtown North Tonawanda, located at the confluence of the Niagara River and Historic Erie Canal, was once a thriving canal commerce district. The bustling lumber yards and mills along with nearby mansions of the lumber barons, gave North Tonawanda the moniker of "The Lumber City". Unfortunately, North Tonawanda has felt the same effects as many upstate New York communities have over recent decades including disinvestment, property neglect and abandonment, and population decline. Strong infrastructure assets remained and in recent years North Tonawanda has begun to invest in and leverage those assets to spark resurgence in our downtown.

New business growth and investment have begun to reshape downtown North Tonawanda. Attractions such as the Remington Lofts on the Canal, the Riviera Theatre, Webster's Bistro, and Gateway Harbor bring thousands of people into this community annually. New developments are currently in progress including the Timber Shore residential development on Tonawanda Island, the Enterprise Lumber and Silo project at 211 Main Street, along with a wide new range of businesses on Webster Street.

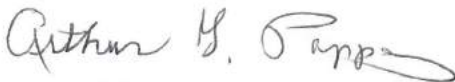
With the assistance of New York State, Downtown North Tonawanda is positioning itself to thrive long-term. The NT Momentum project, a plan developed in partnership with the New York State Department of State has allowed us to create a new zoning code, streamline the development process, and providing a roadmap for a new generation of development in North Tonawanda's downtown and waterfront.

Through support from the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council for the Smart Growth Community Fund, the City has begun to cultivate a successful downtown area through a variety of projects to enhance placemaking, waterfront access, and walkability. Although this funding has laid the necessary framework within the public realm, the process is still far from complete. There are still many areas that need new development, many opportunities for new business, and many challenges to overcome to build a renewed downtown.

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

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

Sincerely,



Arthur G. Pappas  
Mayor

# FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE WATERFRONT, EXPERIENCE THE MOMENTUM!

## VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

North Tonawanda, through the NT Momentum project, envisions Downtown developing into a vibrant mixed-use district centered on the confluence of two waterfronts; the Erie Canal and the Niagara River. Residents will be able to live, work, or relax while taking advantage of abundant commercial opportunities, employment options, restaurants, and recreation assets, all of which capitalize on the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape. Visitors will come not only to enjoy the waterways, but to experience the multitude of landside cultural and recreational amenities offered at this “Gateway to the Erie Canal.”

To establish this vision, North Tonawanda has built the NT Momentum plan on the following principles: make the waterfront a destination, offer a dynamic urban experience, design for people, and work collaboratively to define and market the unique opportunity that is Downtown North Tonawanda. With this guiding philosophy, Downtown North Tonawanda is poised to become an energetic, diverse, high quality, and unique city experience for residents and visitors.

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## BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development  
Council (REDC) Region:

Western New York

Municipality Name:

City of North Tonawanda

Downtown Name:

Downtown North Tonawanda

County Name:

Niagara

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## JUSTIFICATION

*Provide an overview of the downtown area nominated for the DRI program, highlighting the area's defining characteristics and the reasons for its selection.*

*Explain why the downtown is ready for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) investment, and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.*

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

Now in 2021, these building blocks serve as the foundation of a uniquely exciting destination for outdoor tourism, recreation, entertainment, dining and culture- a manifest expression of the goals of New York State's vision for the Erie Canalway Trail and Empire State Waterway, which comes into the downtown center of North Tonawanda and continues to the mighty Niagara River.

No other Erie Canal downtown offers recreational tourism access and connection to the diversity of amenities available in North Tonawanda. Situated between Buffalo and Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda is well connected throughout

the region and New York State via the Erie Canalway Trail. Once fully developed into a regional hub, the City of North Tonawanda will host more residents and visitors seeking a quality urban waterfront experience. Visitors will come to eat, drink, shop, listen to music, and experience art and culture, and find new adventures along our beautiful local waterways.

North Tonawanda has capitalized on past public and private investment, such as the success of the Remington Lofts and the redevelopment of Webster Street, to catalyze growth in Downtown. An overall vision for revitalization has been built through numerous planning initiatives, culminating in the NT Momentum project, and North Tonawanda has created and embraced key policies to support downtown revitalization and growth including the use of Smart Growth principles and modern form-based zoning. The Smart Growth Community Fund, awarded to North Tonawanda in 2017, has invested \$2.5 Million into the downtown area with the large majority of that funding going to making public spaces more accessible, attractive, and walkable. A North Tonawanda DRI award would catalyze on past public and private development projects to take advantage of the Smart Growth Community Fund by bringing projects into a new, healthy, and vibrant, growing downtown.

# 1) BOUNDARIES OF THE PROPOSED DRI AREA

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

The City of North Tonawanda, also known as the Lumber City, is a traditional small city located on the eastern banks of the Niagara River at the present-day western terminus of the Erie Canal. North Tonawanda is geographically located 10 miles north from the City of Buffalo, and 14 miles south from the Canadian border.

Nestled between two bodies of water, the City of North Tonawanda is approximately 15 square miles and is rich in natural, cultural, and historic resources. Within the city, there is an array of different land uses including residential, retail, entertainment, waterfront, manufacturing, commercial, and a historic downtown. The area is key to a cyclist-friendly region and is interconnected to adjacent communities by a series of bicycle paths including the Erie Canalway Trail and the nearby Empire State Trail in the City of Tonawanda. These trails play an integral role in connecting North Tonawanda to Western New York and beyond. Downtown North Tonawanda is defined by the Niagara River and Tonawanda Island on the west, Raymond Klimek Veteran's Park on the north, Oliver Street and Vandervoort Street to the east, and Sweeney Street/ the Erie Canal on the south. In total, this area includes approximately 243 acres and a wide variety of land uses and types.

North Tonawanda's historic core is defined by Webster and Main Streets and is considered the heart of activity for the city. The historic core features the quintessential "Main Street" urban form of buildings close to the street line, active store fronts, on-street parking, sidewalks, streetlights and crosswalks. The area is comfortably walkable and directly adjacent to the Gateway Harbor of the Tonawandas. Throughout the past decade, this area has undergone a renaissance and today is home to numerous gift shops, eateries, and art galleries, all of which are anchored by the Historic Riviera Theatre.

The area north of Goundry Street is a transitional space that contains significant commercial activity with a development pattern that spans many time periods. Areas of pre-WWII development is interspersed with a more post-war suburban style development. This area also includes some former industrial properties which are no longer compatible with the Downtown sense of place.

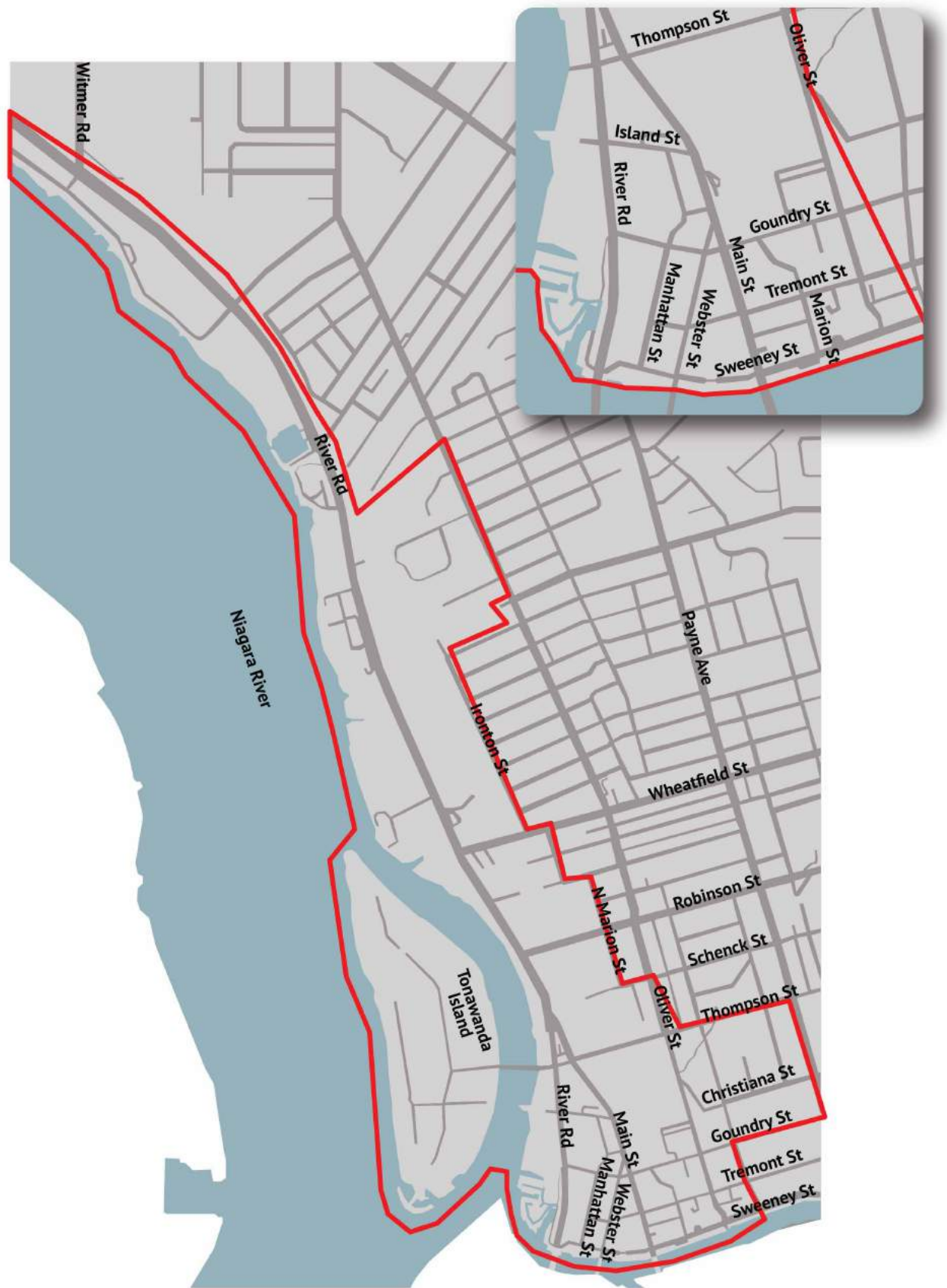
The Oliver Street corridor once was a thriving neighborhood commercial district but has suffered from disinvestment and neglect as the regional and national economy shifted in the late 20th century. This primarily residential neighborhood provides downtown residential density, which is critical to its success. Many residents in these neighborhoods work and shop downtown, as well as take advantage of the vast recreational amenities and events at the waterfront. These neighborhoods provide flexible housing options from luxury living at the Remington Lofts for young professionals and empty nesters, to affordable multi-unit rentals and single-family homes for growing families. Having this supportive neighborhood helps stabilize and support all of the investments made in Downtown North Tonawanda.

A unique feature to Downtown North Tonawanda is Tonawanda Island, an 80-acre island in the Niagara River, immediately adjacent to the historic Webster Street corridor. Historically, Tonawanda Island was the hub of the local lumber industry as it provided easy access to the waterfront. Today, Tonawanda Island is underutilized and contains some industrial and marine dependent uses, while much of the island consists of vacant brownfield sites. Tonawanda Island has been identified as a critical development opportunity in the NT Momentum Plan.



# DOWNTOWN NORTH TONAWANDA BOUNDARY MAP

DOWNTOWN INSET MAP



## 2) PAST INVESTMENT, FUTURE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

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

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

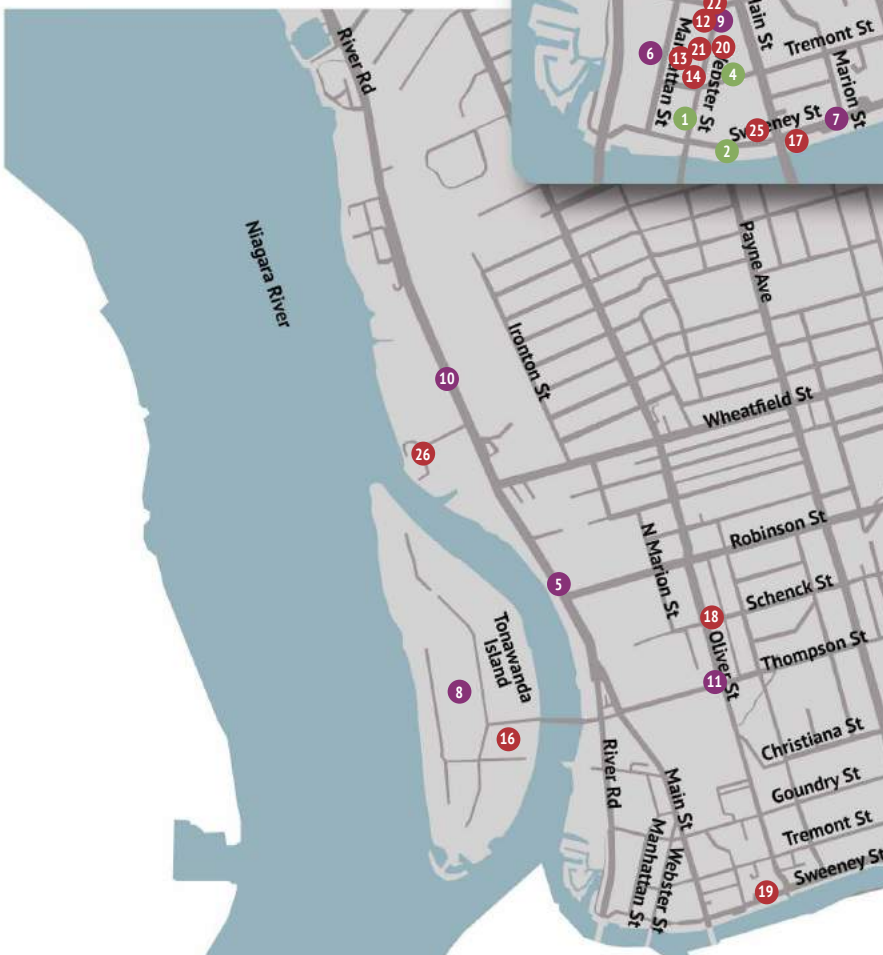
The NT Momentum project seeks to accelerate the development of Downtown by leveraging these past investments, focusing on the unique existing assets, and highlighting and incentivizing the redevelopment of key opportunities in Downtown. The end result will be economic development projects that feed one another, strengthening the local economy and building a sense of place in Downtown North Tonawanda that is attractive to new residents of all ages, income levels, and backgrounds.

### PAST INVESTMENTS AND FUTURE INVESTMENTS MAP

#### LEGEND

- SMART GROWTH IMPROVEMENTS
- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS
- PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

#### DOWNTOWN INSET MAP



#### SMART GROWTH COMMUNITY FUND

1. DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING ENHANCEMENTS
2. GATEWAY HARBOR PARK IMPROVEMENTS
3. MAIN STREET STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS
4. YWCA OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER

#### PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

5. EMPIRE STATE TRAIL BICYCLE PATH CONNECTION
6. MANHATTAN STREET GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
7. SWEENEY STREET IMPROVEMENTS
8. TONAWANDA ISLAND BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION
9. WEBSTER STREET GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
10. RIVER ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

#### PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

11. OLIVER STREET REVITALIZATION
12. MARTINSVILLE SOAPWORKS
13. CANAL CLUB 62
14. DestinationNT/54 WEBSTER ST
15. ENTERPRISE LUMBER 211 MAIN STREET
16. TIMBERSHORE/78 BRIDGE ST
17. DOCKSIDE BAR & GRILL
18. MICROENTERPRISE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
19. REMINGTON LOFTS & REMINGTON TAVERN AND SEAFOOD EXCHANGE
20. RIVIERA THEATRE EXPANSION
21. TEDDY BEAR BUILDING REDEVELOPMENT
22. WEBSTER STREET REDEVELOPMENT
23. WEBSTER'S BISTRO & BAR
24. WEBSTER'S KITCHEN
25. 110 MAIN STREET
26. RIVER EDGE APARTMENTS



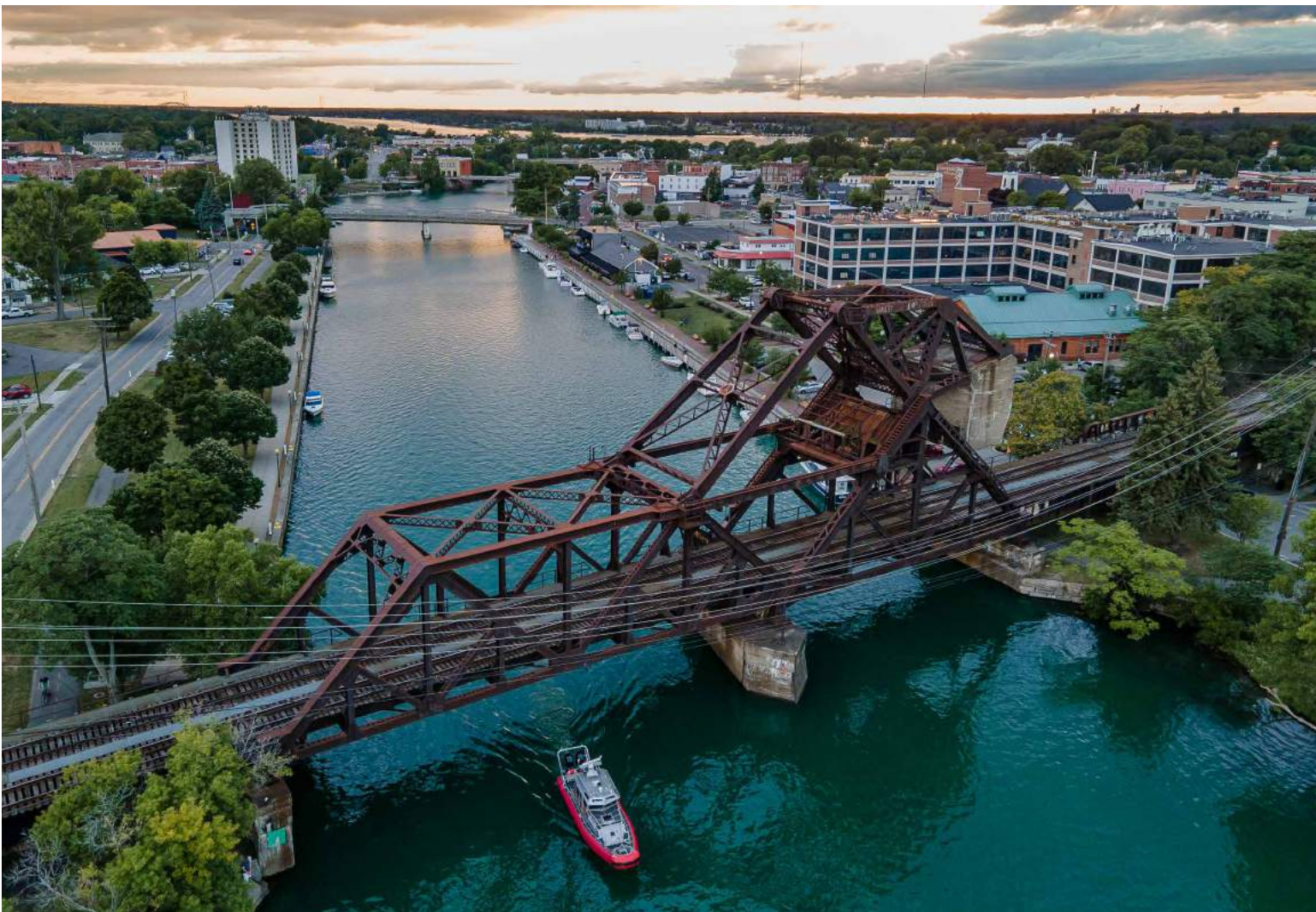
# SMART GROWTH COMMUNITY FUND



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

Downtown North Tonawanda has many of the ingredients necessary to create a unique sense of place. Few other communities are lucky enough to be home to historic architecture, an arts and cultural anchor such as the Riviera Theatre, both canal and river waterfronts, an island, a strong festival and event calendar, a summertime population of boaters and tourists, and a robust core of small businesses.

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



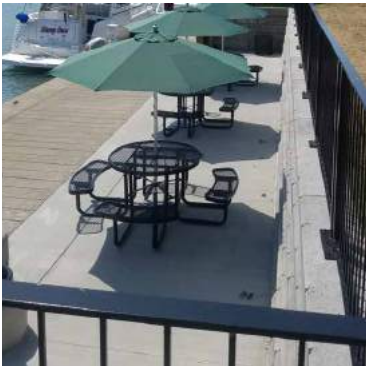
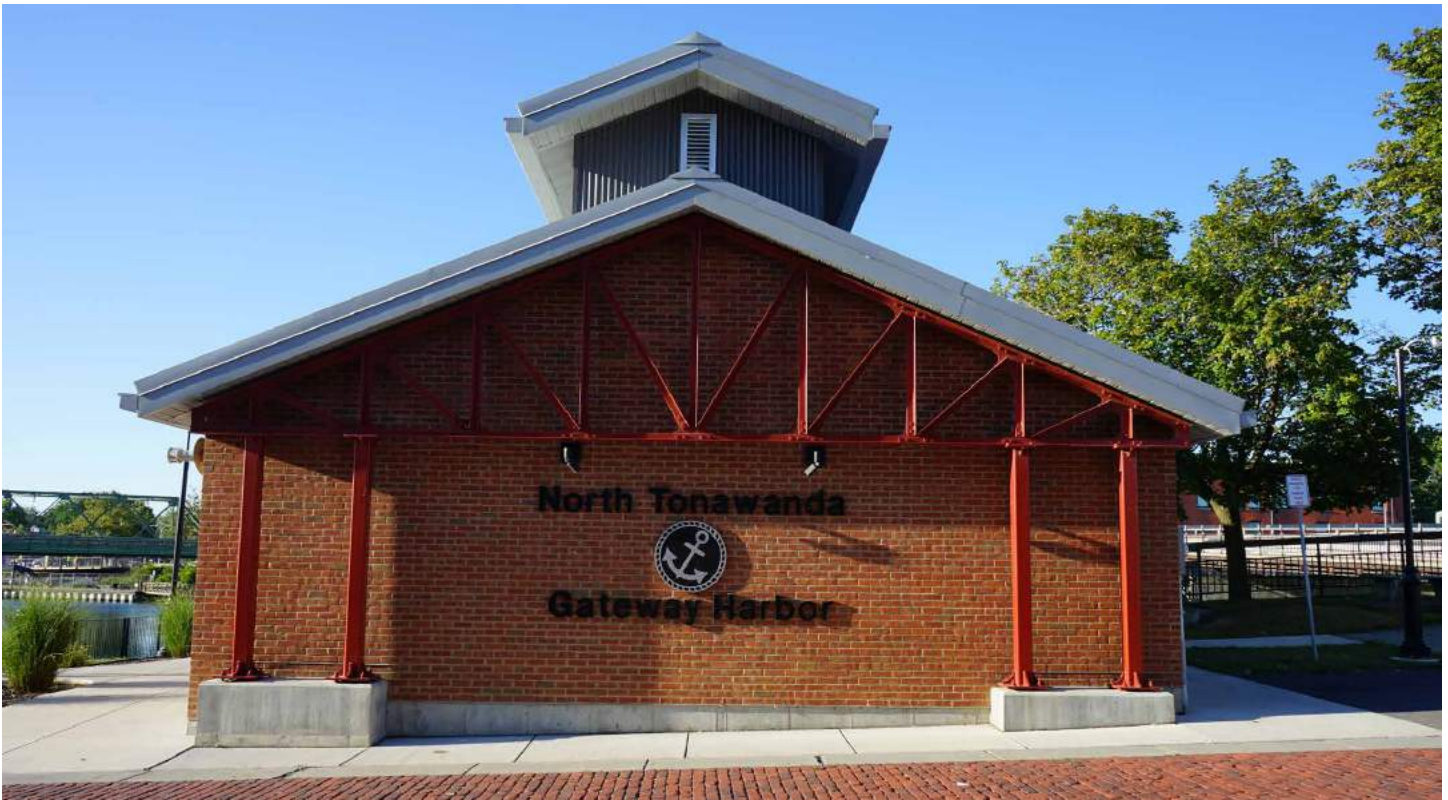


# DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING ENHANCEMENTS (\$1,600,000)

Downtown placemaking enhancements through the Smart Growth Community Fund has had the largest impact on the physical environment in North Tonawanda. Through this funding, NT hired a professional team of architects and engineers in early 2018 to lead the project. This project which had a robust public engagement process included meetings with the City of Tonawanda to align efforts, an open public meeting held at the Carnegie Arts Center, multiple walking tours of Oliver Street, Downtown, and River Road, and community conversations at local businesses. These public engagement sessions have taken a community driven-new urbanism approach to development and have been attended by members of the community. Projects completed through the Downtown Placemaking project included enhancements to a municipally owned walkway (lighting improvements and signage), improved pedestrian crossings, curb bumpouts, signage and visual improvements at strategic gateway sites, and expansion of Charles Fleishman Park. Construction was completed in Spring of 2020, and the project is substantially complete.







## GATEWAY HARBOR PARK IMPROVEMENTS (\$1,700,000)

Gateway Harbor on the Erie Canal has become the centerpiece of downtown and a tourist destination for people throughout Western New York. Offering scenic views, direct water access, recreational amenities, and a rich cultural history. Gateway Harbor has become a hub for kayakers, pedestrians, and bicyclists via the adjacent Erie Canal Bike Path. Gateway Harbor is also known for its plethora of events including a summer concert series, food truck events, holiday celebrations, and a craft market featuring local artisans. As Gateway Harbor increases in popularity, there became a critical need for facility improvements in order to handle the increase in visitors and to ensure a high-quality public experience.

Upgrades through the Smart Growth Community Fund and other public sources included the expansion of Canal dock space to allow for more boaters, utility upgrades for boaters, a new restroom facility, and park overlook seating areas. Construction was completed in 2019 and has allowed Gateway Harbor to continue to evolve into a regional destination while fostering continued investment in the adjacent downtown area.



# YWCA OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER (\$3,000,000)

The YWCA of the Niagara Frontier is a well-respected organization that strives to empower women, strengthen families, and promote social justice in our communities. The YWCA located on Tremont Street in North Tonawanda has always hosted a number of annual events as well as ongoing programming that supports the organization's mission. The YWCA has committed to a redevelopment project at their North Tonawanda location. This multi-million dollar project has converted the existing structure into a mixed-use facility featuring 12 studio apartments, programming space, and a social enterprise retail bakery and café space. The addition of these new housing units, which are affordable permanent housing for women, adds critical density as well as adds to the diverse housing options available in Downtown NT. This project also features a unique social enterprise component in the retail space which will foster the job skills of disadvantaged members of our community. The YWCA, through its robust workforce training capabilities, plans to staff this bakery and café with women in their programs who will be receiving assistance with job training, skills development, and future job placement. This model has been successful at other YWCA projects in both Niagara Falls and Lockport, and has proven to have very successful impacts on the community. Construction is substantially complete and the YWCA is expecting a grand opening in February 2022.





# MAIN STREET STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS (\$975,000)

North Tonawanda is already a uniquely “green” downtown with rain gardens and bioretention units handling all stormwater management on Webster Street and the large municipal parking lot on Manhattan Street. As private development begins to spread north on Main Street, there was a need for streetscape improvements to leverage private investment and further enhance the pedestrian friendliness of the area. Through the Smart Growth Community Fund, the City of North Tonawanda was able to make critical upgrades to this corridor. Upgrades included a green infrastructure project through the use of permeable pavement, bioretention units, and rain gardens; the installation of new lighting, sidewalks, striping, and tree plantings. This project was completed in 2020.



PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PROJECT COST	COMPLETION DATE
Downtown Placemaking	Placemaking enhancements included curb bumpouts, crosswalks, wayfinding, signage, alleyway improvements, and development of Charles Fleischman Park	\$1.6 Million	2021
Gateway Harbor Park Improvements	New harbor master facility with public restrooms, updated dock facilities, upgraded boater utilities	\$1.7 Million	2019
YWCA of the Niagara Frontier	Redevelopment of the YWCA building to include housing units and a social enterprise component	\$3 Million	2022*
Main Street Streetscape Enhancements	Installation of green infrastructure and sidewalks	\$975,000	2020

\*DENOTES ESTIMATED

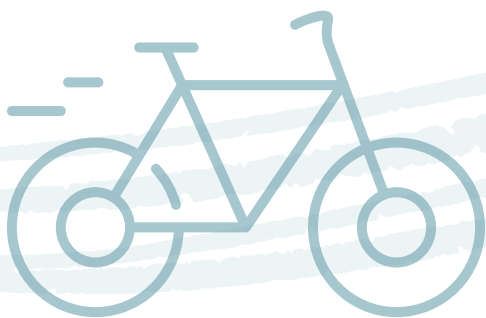
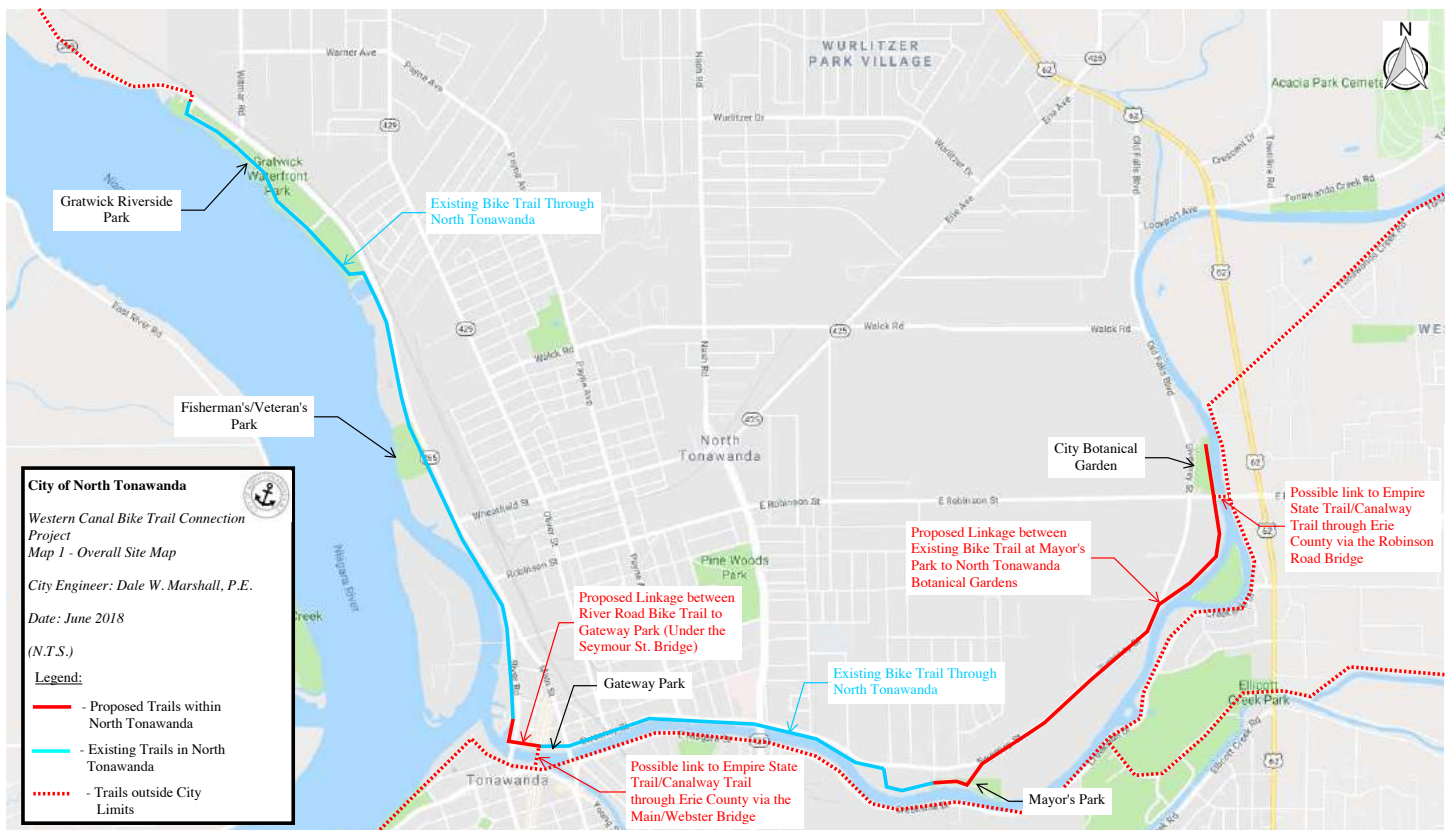


# PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

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

## EMPIRE STATE TRAIL BICYCLE PATH CONNECTION (IN PROGRESS)

With funding awarded in 2019 through the NYS DOT and the Niagara River Greenway, a small but critical bicycle path connection is slated for completion in 2022. Currently the Shoreline Trail along River Road is cut off from downtown and is not functionally connected to the rest of the trail system. This project will extend a dedicated bike path from River Road along the water, connecting to Gateway Harbor and extending over the renaissance bridge to connect to the intermodal hub in the City of Tonawanda. Once complete, this project will address a critical missing link in the Empire Trail System and allow regional cyclists a safer, more attractive, and more accessible option for visiting Downtown North Tonawanda.



## OLIVER STREET REVITALIZATION (IN PROGRESS)

Oliver Street redevelopment has become a key priority for the City of North Tonawanda. By leveraging private and public funds, Lumber City Development Corporation has been able to renovate 21 commercial facades on Oliver Street through the New York Main Street Program in 2015, and through the OATH Community Benefit Fund in 2019. The CDBG Microenterprise Assistance program has assisted many Oliver Street businesses including Aunt Eno's Sandwich Shop, Brownie's Sports Bar & Tavern, The Vegan Grocery Store, and Little Black Heart Coffee, all of which have added jobs to our local economy and have supported low-to-moderate income business owners. In early 2018, Lumber City Development Corporation completed the Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment through the CDBG Planning program. This robust plan analyzed current market conditions and trends and provided action-oriented strategies for revitalization. Included in this analysis were redevelopment scenarios of key anchor properties within the corridor, which all demonstrated a positive return on investment. Through partnerships with key stakeholders including the Oliver Street Merchants Association and Project Pride of North Tonawanda, many of the recommendations set forth in the plan have been implemented including a community garden, streetscape enhancements, and a public art project.



## RIVER ROAD RECONSTRUCTION (IN PROGRESS)

River Road poses as a physical barrier which prohibits residents and visitors from Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods to the Niagara River waterfront. Currently, River Road is a heavily trafficked area, where drivers typically travel at speeds 15-20mph over the posted 40 mph speed limit.

Through the New York State Department of Transportation, River Road is undergoing a significant reconstruction that includes milling, repaving, a road diet, and the inclusion of designated bicycle lanes.

Scheduled for completion in 2022, River Road between Main & Goundry Streets will include 1 north bound lane, 1 south bound lane, a center turn lane, and 2 bicycle lanes. Beyond Goundry Street, between Main and Felton Streets, there will be 2 north bound lanes, one southbound lane, and 2 bicycle lanes.

This project will promote walkability and expand the downtown footprint to include the Niagara River waterfront.



## PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENTS

PROJECT	MEASURABLE RESULTS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	COMPLETION DATE
Erie Canal Bicycle Path Extension	Bicycle path development along Sweeney Street between Payne Avenue & Mayor's Park	\$310,690	2016
Erie Canal Kayak Launches	Installation of 3 kayak launches along the Erie Canal	\$142,000	2016
Erie Canalway Bicycle Path Extension II	Bicycle path development between Mayor's Park & Botanical Gardens	\$1 Million	2022*
Gateway Harbor Bridge Lighting	Iconic lighting of bridges in Gateway Harbor Park	\$255,000	2022*
Gateway Harbor Mural Installation	Historic mural located at Gateway Harbor Park	\$7,000	2021
Gateway Harbor Recreation Hub Implementation	Various recreation amenities installed through Gateway Harbor and Downtown including wifi, a mobile application and phone charging stations	\$2,175,500	2022*
Manhattan Street Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure installations in municipal parking lot	\$265,000	2012
New York Main Street Downtown Streetscape	Public art at three locations throughout the downtown corridor	\$20,000	2021*
New York Main Street Technical Assistance- Riviera Theatre Expansion Project	Procurement of professional architect to perform a code review and feasibility analysis	\$21,000	2021
Oliver Street Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation of 25 homes for low income homeowners located within the Oliver Street neighborhood	\$400,000	2018
River Road Bicycle Path	Development of a road diet and bicycle lanes along River Road	\$644,800	2022*
Smart Growth Projects	Downtown placemaking enhancements, Gateway Harbor improvements, Main Street Green Infrastructure, and YWCA	\$2.5 Million	2021
Tonawanda Island Bridge Reconstruction	Reconstruction of the bridge from River Road to Tonawanda Island	\$3 Million	2015
Webster Street Green Infrastructure	Installation of street trees for stormwater management	\$575,000	2014
Webster Street & Oliver Street Sidewalk Repairs	Critical sidewalk repairs on Webster Street and Oliver Street, new street trees and grass terrace installed on sections of Oliver Street	\$73,535	2021
Western Canal Bicycle Path Extension	Bicycle path connection of the Riverwalk Trail to the Empire State Trail/Erie Canalway Trail	\$1.6 Million	2022*

\*DENOTES ESTIMATED







# PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

The attractiveness of the physical environment has leveraged the private investment needed to add vibrancy, jobs, and density to our downtown core, all while accelerating the NT Momentum vision for our Downtown and waterfront

## DestinationNT/54 WEBSTER STREET REDEVELOPMENT (IN PROGRESS)

Located at 54 Webster Street, DestinationNT is one of the latest private development projects currently happening in downtown North Tonawanda. Located in the former G.C. Murphy's department store, this 30,000 square foot building was underutilized for decades. Now, the property is undergoing significant renovations to become three floors of mixed-use, professional, residential retail and office space.

Ground floor commercial tenants have been secured and include Spot Coffee, which opened in February 2021, and El Gringo Mexican Cantina, which is currently under construction and scheduled to open in the Fall of 2021.

To further add residential density and vibrancy to our downtown, this project includes four market rate apartment units on the 3rd floor and Class A office space (on the Manhattan Street side). A tenant has been secured for the office space portion upon construction completion.





## TIMBER SHORE- 78 BRIDGE STREET (IN PROGRESS)

Located on Tonawanda Island, 78 Bridge Street (the former Fire Training site) is a 3.41 acre waterfront property is aimed at catalyzing the NT Momentum Plan. In late 2020, Lumber City Development Corporation and the City of North Tonawanda selected Pennrose Development as the preferred developer for the site.

Timber Shore, a \$24 Million project, will include a mixed-use multi family development with 70 housing units with a wide range of affordability, 1,250 square feet of retail space, family amenities, as well as a public benefit area along the Little River waterfront. The design of Timber Shore was an inclusionary planning process that involved key stakeholders and residents through a series of online meetings and an on-site presentation. Through this public engagement, participants were able to provide input on the planning process and ensure it met the needs of our downtown.

As the first large scale development on Tonawanda Island, this project will bring the critical residential density to our waterfront and boost the economic vitality of our downtown by connecting the Niagara River Waterfront to our downtown core, while further attracting quality private development to Tonawanda Island. Pennrose Development has submitted an affordable housing tax credit application to New York State Homes and Community Renewal and construction is expected to begin in 2023.





## RIVER EDGE APARTMENTS 600 RIVER ROAD

This former brownfield site located at 600 River Road, includes 88 market rate luxury apartments along the Niagara River Waterfront. The complex includes luxury amenities including sweeping views of the river, physical waterfront access, kayak launches, pickle ball courts, fitness center, pool, playground and theater. Opened in 2019, this \$20 million development is the largest private housing development the City has seen to date.



## 624 RIVER ROAD- PHASE I

Adjacent to 600 River Road, 624 River Road is the former Tonawanda Iron & Steel Company facility. This underutilized brownfield property is currently undergoing a two phased redevelopment.

Phase I includes remediation of approximately 1.3 acres of the site and construction of a two-story 13,740 ft mixed-use building that will include 9 multi-family units. The estimated cost for Phase I is \$2.4 Million and includes \$500,000 from the Niagara County Brownfield Development Corporation to assist with site remediation costs. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Fall of 2021 with completion in 2022.





## ENTERPRISE LUMBER & SILO- 211 MAIN STREET (IN PROGRESS)

The Enterprise Lumber & Silo redevelopment project at 211 Main Street includes rehabilitation of a dilapidated former lumber mill into 17,000 square feet of Class A office space. This project is being led by two local women architects who will move their offices into a portion of the building. The developers envision a business-to-business design service collaborative and work environment for emerging businesses seeking office space that is an outward reflection of neighborhood revitalization. This facility will also provide space for larger conversations including community presentations, special interest symposiums, evenings lectures and create an educational platform for collaboration with North Tonawanda High School's Architecture and Engineering Academy. The Enterprise Lumber and Silo project advances the NT Momentum plan and upon completion will be the catalyst for development along the newly enhanced northern entrance of Main Street. Demolition has begun in August 2021 and construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2021.

DEMOLITION (BEFORE)



RENDERING





## REMINGTON LOFTS ON THE CANAL AND REMINGTON TAVERN AND SEAFOOD EXCHANGE

Opened in 2011, the Remington Lofts converted a 175,000 square foot former factory into 81 high-end lofts and 3 commercial spaces. Over \$1 Million in public investment and access to both historic and brownfield tax credit programs leveraged over \$20 million worth of private investment into a critical historic property on the Erie Canal. The Remington Lofts has established a new, viable market for downtown living and has attracted the interest of new businesses and developers to the area. As the anchor commercial tenant of the Remington Lofts, the Remington Tavern was opened in 2012 and immediately became one Western New York's hottest restaurants. This 9,000 square foot facility is an adaptive reuse of the oldest portion of the Remington Complex, the historic "power house" building. Development of this restaurant was over \$1 million and was supported by \$250,000 of State assistance. Today, the Remington Tavern employs over 40 people and has helped put North Tonawanda on the map as a go-to place for dining and entertainment in the region.

BEFORE



AFTER





## 110 SWEENEY

Located at a key property adjacent to the Erie Canal and Gateway Harbor, the 110 Sweeney Street project will include 23,000 square feet of new mixed-use space. This vacant parcel will be transformed into a waterfront restaurant, with 16 market rate residential units, and first floor commercial/retail space. This project will transform the landscape of Gateway Harbor and advance activity and vibrancy along our canal waterfront. This project is currently underway and construction is expected to begin in Fall of 2021.



## WEBSTER STREET REDEVELOPMENT

Leveraging funds provided by previous State programs including the New York State Main Street program, the Yahoo Community Benefit Fund for Niagara County, and the CDBG Microenterprise Assistance Program, North Tonawanda has been able to assist façade redevelopment at nineteen commercial properties and have also assisted in the start-up or expansion of eleven small businesses on Webster Street. These State assistance programs allowed North Tonawanda to support a group of entrepreneurs including Pulp 716 Comic Book Café, Barre[tend] on the Water, Webster's Kitchen, Martinsville Soapworks, and Partners in Art.

Successful past development on Webster Street has further attracted private businesses to this corridor including Frankie Primos +39, Just Say Cheesecake Bakery & Café, and Empire Boards & Bikes.



## PRIVATE INVESTMENTS

PROJECT	MEASURABLE RESULTS	PRIVATE DOLLARS	PUBLIC DOLLARS	TOTAL COST	COMPLETION
110 Sweeney Street Redevelopment	Redevelopment of 110 Sweeney Street to include apartment units and restaurant	\$2,525,000	\$800,000	\$3,325,000	2022*
2019 Microenterprise Business Assistance Program	Business assistance to start ups and Microenterprise businesses	\$189,488	\$170,000	\$359,488	2021
624 River Road- Phase I	Site remediation and construction of 9 multi-family units	\$1.9 Million	\$500,000	\$2.4 Million	2023
Canal Club 62	Redevelopment of the former Teddy Bear building into a restaurant	\$365,000	\$135,000	\$500,000	2015
DestinationNT	Redevelopment of 54 Webster Street to include Spot Coffee, El Gringo Mexican Cantina, 4 apartment units, and office space	\$1,745,000	\$255,000	\$2 Million	2022*
Dockside Bar & Grill Renovation	Renovation of a waterfront restaurant adjacent to Gateway Harbor Park	\$600,000	–	\$600,000	2015
Enterprise Lumber & Silo- 211 Main Street	Redevelopment of a former lumber facility into class A office space	\$2,152,000	\$850,000	\$3,002,000	2022*
Martinsville Soapworks (88 Webster Street)	Façade enhancement at 88 Webster Street	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	2015
New York Main Street Redevelopment Projects: Oliver Street	NYMS façade program for 8 Oliver Street Businesses	\$95,000	\$50,000	\$145,000	2016
NT Small Business Assistance Program	Assistance to businesses affected by COVID-19	\$62,500	\$200,000	\$262,500	2022
Oliver Street Commercial Facade Enhancement Program	Enhancements for small scale improvements to commerical properties on Oliver Street	\$499,483	\$50,000	\$549,483	2019
Remington Lofts on the Canal	Luxury lofts overlooking the Erie Canal	\$18,850	\$11,150	\$30,000	2014
Remington Tavern	Seafood restaurant located on the ground level of the Remington Lofts	\$650,000	\$350,000	\$1 Million	2014
Rivers Edge Apartments	Waterfront luxury living with waterfront access and upscale amenities	\$18 Million	\$2.6 Million	\$20,600,000	2019
Riviera Theatre Site Remediation	Environmental remediation of a former transmission shop	–	\$440,000	\$440,000	2014
Timbershore Apartments 78 Bridge Street	Construction of 70 affordable housing units on former fire training site at 78 Bridge Street	\$18.6 Million	\$6.3 Million	\$24 Million	2023*
Webster Street façade Improvements	NYMS façade program for 7 Webster Street businesses	\$130,800	\$250,000	\$380,800	2011
Webster's Bistro & Bar	Redevelopment of 102 Webster Street to include a french restaurant	\$415,000	\$135,000	\$550,000	2014
Webster's Kitchen	Event space and cooking classes at 110 Webster Street	\$107,000	\$35,000	\$142,000	2018

\*DENOTES ESTIMATED



## COMMITMENT TO PLANNING

While public and private investment momentum has slowly built within recent years, the City of North Tonawanda has been hard at work planning and preparing for a significant opportunity to grow the community. The DRI is that opportunity.

In the past 10 years, the City of North Tonawanda has completed 4 significant plans or programs, each of which has informed the DRI process. These plans are valued at \$746,000, representing a significant State commitment to a sustainable development future in North Tonawanda.

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

## DEVELOPMENT READY

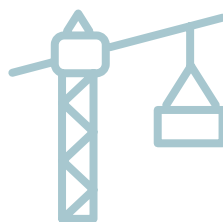
In addition to over a decade of planning, the City of North Tonawanda has the necessary tools and incentives in place to attract future development including:

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

## FEDERAL OPPORTUNITY ZONE

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

PLANNING PROGRAM	AMOUNT
City of North Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA)	\$598,500
City of North Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)	\$95,500
Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment	\$975,000
City of North Tonawanda Downtown Parking Analysis	\$2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$746,000</b>



### 3) RECENT OR IMPENDING JOB GROWTH

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



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

While several manufacturing and industrial companies remain viable in North Tonawanda, our

economic future is once again dependent on capitalizing on the Erie Canal and Niagara River. But in this century these waterways will drive new residents and tourists to the area, bolstering an economy built on the arts, recreation, entertainment, and tourism.

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

According to the 2019 American Community Survey Data, manufacturing remains a productive industry in North Tonawanda and employs 2,455 people, and accounts for 15.7% of employment. By comparison, manufacturing accounts for 5.7% of employment in New York State and 9.9% nationally. In Niagara County, manufacturing is still the largest economic driver, bringing in 953 million dollars annually into our region. Education, health, and social services account for 23.4% of jobs in North Tonawanda according to US Census Bureau estimates. In North Tonawanda, DeGraff Memorial Hospital is one of the largest and most stable employers in the city with over 500 employees.

The retail trade industry remains a strong component of the North Tonawanda employment base. At 3.2%, this is similar to the nation's retail employment level of 11.2% for 2019. Growth in North Tonawanda's anchored on a burgeoning arts, culture, and recreational economy, will drive future retail and growth in the area.

A positive sign for North Tonawanda is the growth of professional and management industries, which now account for 11.6% of all jobs in 2019, as opposed to 9% in 2017. Professional and management industries typically offer higher pay and greater benefits, offering a potential increase in disposable income for households and an improved quality of life. The City of North Tonawanda aims to attract these types of industries who are typically comprised of young professionals looking to live, work, and play in downtown, as well as spend their dollars locally.





The Enterprise Lumber & Silo development at 211 Main Street will catalyze on this effort by becoming a hub for design specific industries such as architecture, planning, and design. Included in the project is a co-working space that will allow for creative collaborations amongst these industries.

Existing market rate housing opportunities at 600 River Road, the Remington Lofts, and the recently completed Colonel Payne Apartments will further attract these professionals who live an active life downtown and support sustainable long-term growth.

Employment in the tourism industry (arts, culture, and recreation) has grown significantly since 2012.

The opening of new downtown stores, restaurants, and businesses has brought over 120 new jobs to downtown. There have been ongoing efforts to develop a hotel in the downtown core, which would create more job opportunities and compliment the growing tourism industry. According to a professional study, the economic impact of an 80-room hotel would create 21 direct and indirect jobs, as well as invest over \$1.3 million dollars annually into the local economy.

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

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

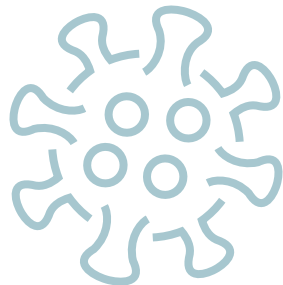
With so many opportunities for job growth in proximity to Downtown North Tonawanda it is critical to the success of the Buffalo-Niagara region that these employees have access to the type of traditional downtown that is so attractive to the next generation of the American workforce. Downtown North Tonawanda's accessible location, cultural amenities, waterfront features and overall quality of life make it an ideal area for public investment that will support private development.



## IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Businesses in North Tonawanda felt the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, whether it was through reduced hours, change in operations or staffing. Since the initial shutdown in March 2020, our small business community has rebounded. North Tonawanda has had many new businesses open during the pandemic including Aunt Eno's Sandwich Shop, Barre[tend] on the Water, and Frankie Primo's Restaurant.

To further allow for growth of businesses impacted by the pandemic, the City of North Tonawanda has been awarded CDBG Cares Act Funds. This program which includes a combination of business grants and loans will assist businesses in responding to or preparing for the pandemic. For businesses that incurred a loss of revenue, reduction in employee hours, or a shut down- funds can be used for working capital, fixed assets, and the purchase of PPE/other social distancing measures such as barriers and touchless systems. Through this program, there is a job creation or retention requirement. This will allow for those who lost their jobs during the pandemic to become active in the workforce and allow for our small businesses to have the necessary staffing capacity to run their operations.





# QUALITY OF LIFE

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

The goal of the North Tonawanda DRI is to leverage ongoing public and private investments to create a unified and interconnected environment in and around the central business district, centered around Gateway Harbor, that would be a catalyst for increased tourism, economic development, recreation, and public interaction. North Tonawanda's greatest asset is its location on the Erie Canal and the confluence of the Niagara River. These waterways are homes to public parks and open space that support extensive recreational activity. Adjacent to Gateway Harbor, Downtown NT has been developed and includes shopping, commercial and services establishments that satisfy the needs of residents, youth, seniors, workers, and visitors. The unique waterfront access, physical connections and regional location enhance Downtown North Tonawanda. However, North Tonawanda still offers several opportunities for improvement to allow for the creation of a more prosperous city center, and expansion of the existing downtown footprint to include the Niagara River waterfront.



# ANCHOR ATTRACTIONS

## HISTORIC RIVIERA THEATRE

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



## ARTS & CULTURAL AMENITIES

North Tonawanda has found its niche in the arts and culture amenities, which has become a point of pride for the community. In addition to the Riviera Theatre, the Carnegie Arts Center, Ghost Light Theater, and Project 308 Art Gallery have begun to draw the creative professionals that downtowns thrive on. On any night of the week, a downtown visitor can partake in many classes and workshops including stained glass creations at Gleam and Glimmer Stained Glass Studio, soapmaking at Martinsville Soapworks, cooking classes and demonstrations at Webster’s Kitchen, belly dancing classes at Oasis Dance Studio, and painting classes at Partners In Art.



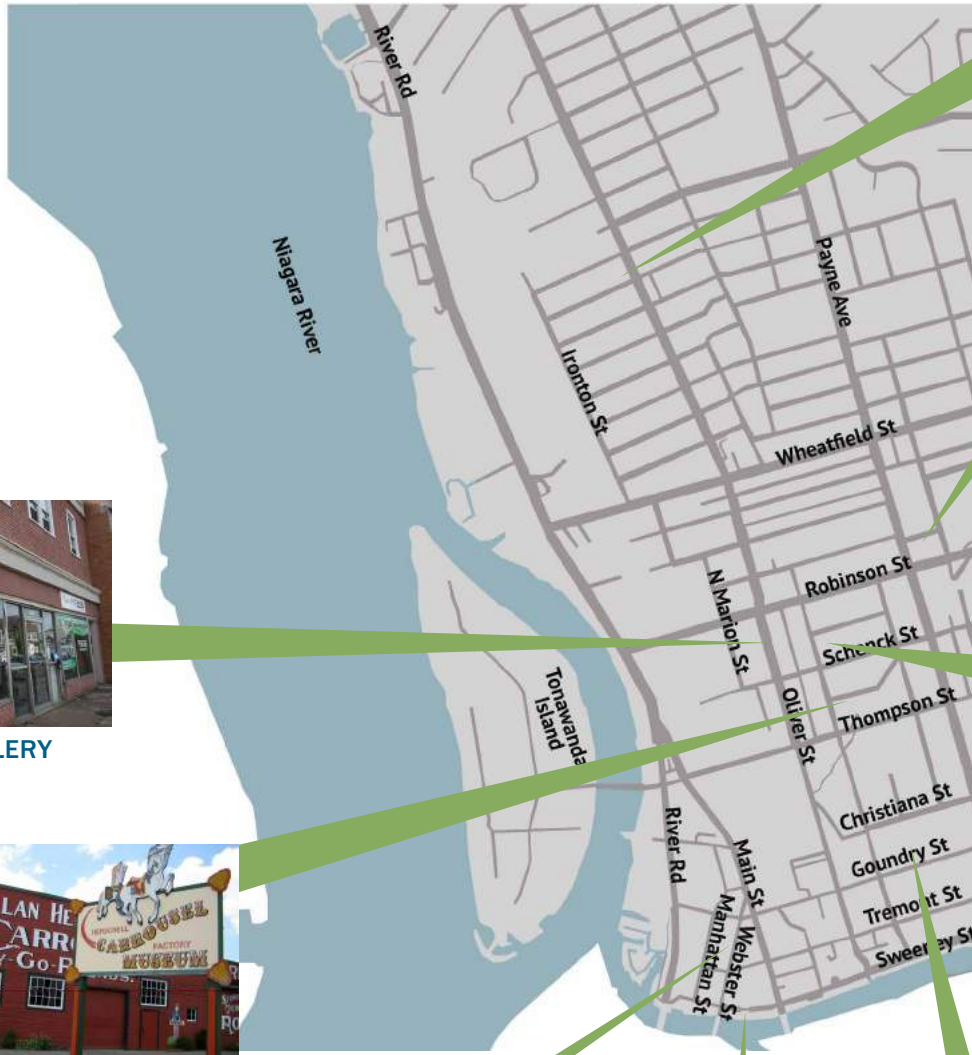
## HERSHELL CARROUSEL FACTORY MUSEUM

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





# KEY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS



NT HISTORY MUSEUM



FARMERS MARKET



PROJECT 308 GALLERY



HERSCHELL CARROUSEL MUSEUM



GHOSTLIGHT THEATRE



RIVIERA THEATRE



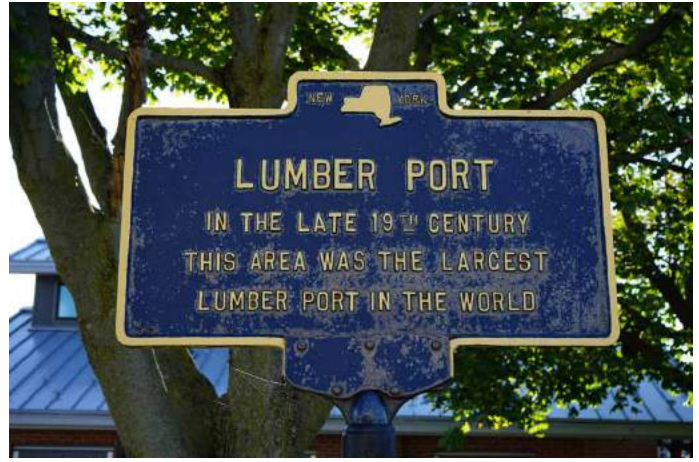
GATEWAY HARBOR PARK



CARNEGIE ART CENTER

## HISTORIC RESOURCES ALONG THE ERIE CANAL

From its opening in 1825, the Erie Canal has been an integral part of the development of North Tonawanda. The position on this extraordinary corridor that connected New York City with the Great Lakes, gave the city a substantial start in development and commerce. Downtown North Tonawanda is water focused, with waterfronts on the Erie Canal and Niagara River, with historic architecture dating back to the late 19th century.



In 2018, the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas created the “Heritage Tour of the Tonawandas”. This online narrated walking tour with accompanying map, guides users through 26 historic sites throughout the Twin Cities including many North Tonawanda sites such as the Richardson Boat Company, Riviera Theatre, and various veterans memorials.

## GATEWAY HARBOR PARK

Gateway Harbor Park is the centerpiece of Downtown North Tonawanda. This area includes a shared urban park with the City of Tonawanda. This area is very walkable and provides direct physical and visual access to the Canal waterfront. Gateway Harbor has become a premier destination for the WNY boating community and boasts ample recreation amenities such as bicycle path connections and kayak launches.



In May 2021, the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas Gateway Cities Promotions Committee opened the seasonal location of the Tonawandas Visitors Center at Gateway Harbor Park. This staffed visitor center contains information about local businesses, things to do throughout the region, and an up-to-date calendar of events. Thus far, the center has received approximately 300 visitors.

## COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

The corridor of Webster and Main Streets is the heart of downtown activity in north Tonawanda. This historic core features the quintessential “Main Street” urban form of buildings close to the street line, mixed-use retail and residential properties, on-street parking, active sidewalks, appropriately scaled lighting and crosswalks and bump outs. After completion of the Smart Growth Community Fund, the downtown area is comfortably walkable and is center on Gateway Harbor Park.





## HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS

The North Tonawanda Farmers Market, located in the residential neighborhood that supports downtown, is one of Western New York's largest farmers markets. Bustling with local vendors, residents of NT can obtain healthy and affordable food 3 days a week. In addition to produce, there are multiple vendors selling meats, cheeses, baked goods, and fresh flowers. Many of the vendors accept SNAP benefits to expand access to healthy food options to everybody.



In addition, the area is home to a community garden along the Oliver Street corridor. Developed in 2018 with a partnership between the faith-based community and the City of North Tonawanda, the vegetables cultivated at this site are given directly to families in need and local food pantries. The community garden also hosts various programming events to teach people how to cook the food they grow and lead overall healthy lifestyles.



## YEAR ROUND EVENTS

Although NT sees the greatest amount of visitors during the summer months, there is certainly no lack of year-round events. In addition to the Wednesday Night Concert Series, Food Truck Thursdays and Haunted Harbor, the Webster Street Merchants Association has been instrumental in organizing events such as Lumber City Winter Walk, street sales, and an art crawl.



## DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

North Tonawanda provides a variety of flexible housing options for residents varying in affordability and type, and conveniently located on NFTA bus routes. In Downtown NT, there are approximately 120 residential units ranging from luxury waterfront lofts to studio apartments. New housing projects currently under development at 78 Bridge Street, 624 River Road, and 110 Sweeney Street will add over 200 units to the area including both market rate and affordable housing options. Single family housing in the dense surrounding neighborhoods of downtown are extremely affordable, making it attractive for young people looking to purchase their first home, young families, or empty nesters looking to downsize.



## BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY

Downtown North Tonawanda is positioned as the nexus between the Erie Canalway Trail, the River Walk Trail, and the Niagara River Shoreline trails. This infrastructure makes NT more attractive, enhances public space, draws visitors to the area, and spurs related commercial activity.

Through public and private partnerships and funding from the Niagara River Greenway Commission, the Ralph Wilson Foundation, East Hill Foundation, New York State Department of Transportation, the NYS Canal Corporation, NYS DOS, and the City of North Tonawanda, North Tonawanda has been able to establish itself as a premier biking and recreation hub in Western New York

## RIVER WALK TRAIL & ERIE CANALWAY TRAIL

The Empire State Trail was announced by the Governor in 2017 as an initiative and investment to create a continuous off-road trail framework across the State of New York, with much of the route following the Erie Canal. In filling the gaps of the Erie Canalway Trail the 750-mile Empire State Trail is making it possible to travel across the State- from New York City or the Adirondacks to Buffalo and Niagara Falls. This trail allows for connection into Canada in both the North Country and in Western New York while also facilitating future opportunities for connections south into Pennsylvania.

In Western New York, the Tonawandas is a critical juncture in the Empire State Trail, recognized as one of its gateways. In the City of Tonawanda, the Shoreline trail allows for connection south to Buffalo, and in the City of North Tonawanda, the Riverwalk Trail allows for connection north to Niagara Falls-following the Niagara River in both directions.

North Tonawanda is currently completing a critical connection to the Empire State Trail which will link the existing River Walk trail to the Erie Canalway Trail through Wardell's Boat Yard. Completion of this linkage will enable more bicyclists to visit downtown while providing direct waterfront access. To the east, the City of North Tonawanda is completing another critical linkage of the Erie Canalway Trail which will connect Mayor's Park to the City of NT Botanical Gardens. From there, connections can be made to Amherst and other surrounding municipalities.





## WATER-BASED RECREATION

The City of North Tonawanda serves as a meeting point and hub of water based recreational activity. Personal non-motorized watercraft such as kayaks and canoes can travel through the Canal and Niagara River- which meet in North Tonawanda. The city currently has 3 municipal kayak launch sites at different points along the Erie Canal, including one at Gateway Harbor Park. Similarly, motorized watercrafts travel off the Niagara River to dock along the canal and seek various dining and entertainment options on Webster Street. The Erie Canal also attracts boats traveling its length staying overnight in various towns and cities, similar to cyclists traveling the length of the canal.



## COMMITTED TO A GREEN DOWNTOWN

With the completion of many Green Infrastructure projects, Downtown North Tonawanda has become a uniquely green downtown.

The large 1.5 acre Manhattan Street public parking lot provides critical parking capacity for downtown visitors, especially during the summer months. In 2009, this parking lot was completely redone and includes seven large rain gardens which use natural processes to filter polluted stormwater before it enters the Niagara River watershed. This project also included permeable pavement to reduce runoff.

In 2013, North Tonawanda extended these green practices to Webster Street with the installation of 24 bio-retention units and appropriate street trees. Today, all the storm water that falls in the Webster and Manhattan Street core of downtown is treated by green infrastructure.

Through the leveraging of the Smart Growth Community Fund, the NYS DEC and National Grid, the City of North Tonawanda was able to further expand green infrastructure practices along an underutilized section of Main Street in 2020.

Northern Main Street, between Island and Thompson Streets was lacking in both pedestrian amenities and necessary municipal infrastructure. This corridor was enhanced to include the installation of permeable pavement, bioretention units, sidewalks, street trees, plantings, and lighting to proactively prepare the area for intensive development.



These projects have beautified Downtown, reduced the number of pollutants entering our waterways, and reduced a strain on municipal infrastructure. Private developers bringing their projects into North Tonawanda will be able to be a part of a progressively green downtown that is attractive and sustainable for future generations.

## 5) SUPPORTIVE LOCAL POLICIES

*Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes or New York State Stretch Code, comprehensive plans, Clean Energy Communities or Climate Smart Communities designation, complete streets plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies*

The City of North Tonawanda is committed to planning for and implementing downtown redevelopment which has been fueled by a new era of collaboration and partnerships. The city is heavily focused on revitalizing the downtown waterfront district to improve livability, overall quality of life, and tourism as evidenced by the years of planning and refinement of our community vision. Prepared to move forward with the DRI program, the City of North Tonawanda has the quality-of-life policies integrated into the use of area planning, local regulations, historic preservation standards and guidelines, land bank rehabilitation strategies, housing stabilization programs, bicycle friendly programs, canal recreation and an experienced local development corporation.

The City of North Tonawanda has laid out several policy areas that direct City activities in the Comprehensive Plan, Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) plan, and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). Downtown NT is the focus of many of these policies including concentrating economic development efforts downtown, improving the availability and diversity of housing options, fostering the City of NT as a unique waterfront destination, and enhancing the small city atmosphere through space, walkability, and overall character. A brief summary of the relevant area plans and their corresponding vision and impacts are provided in the table below. Each of these plans has emphasized the importance of undertaking projects that improve the quality of life for North Tonawanda residents. Policies focusing on improvements to parks, waterfront amenities, school and youth programs, and housing equity can be found throughout these planning documents.

### SUMMARY OF LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENTS

PLAN	RESULTS
<b>Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the downtown and waterfront areas that were selected as a BOA through the nomination process in 2012;</li> <li>• Certified designation for the BOA in 2015;</li> <li>• Designates projects within the BOA plan as priorities for state funding;</li> <li>• Qualifies BOA projects applying for the State Brownfield Cleanup Tax Credits to receive 5% in bonus development tax credit;</li> <li>• Establishment of the NT Momentum brand to emphasize the resurgence of a downtown community that is built upon waterfront, arts and cultural, and historic assets. Specifically designed to draw attention to the downtown area and get prospective developers engaged about available opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive Plan, 2009</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the water as a key community driver of economic development on areas such as downtown and Tonawanda Island.</li> </ul>
<b>Downtown Redevelopment Plan, 2006</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a basic analysis of existing conditions that has laid a roadmap for redevelopment.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes goals and detailed policies for the waterfront revitalization area, to promote the canal as a resource and destination.</li> </ul>
<b>Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the corridor's strengths and limitations and recommends action-oriented implementation strategies to meet community needs.</li> </ul>





## LOCAL REGULATIONS

The City of North Tonawanda is able to support and foster the Downtown Revitalization Initiative through the implementation of modern waterfront and downtown district zoning, including modern form-based zoning. The Downtown Mixed-Use district and Waterfront District was codified through the NT Momentum BOA process and aligns the City's zoning code with the community's long-term vision for a vibrant downtown that offers a mix of housing choices, retail, and services all while maintaining the local historic character. This new zoning code will make the area more attractive for infill investment and ensure that future development and uses meet our revitalization goals.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Downtown North Tonawanda is a local historic preservation district, governed by the North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission follows guidelines set forth by NYSHPO in determining if property developments in the area are consistent with historic integrity. Marrying the Commission's expertise with compatible zoning codes will ease the burden on developers and provide anyone interested in investing downtown with a clear, concise road map to successfully complete their project.



## LAND BANKS

North Tonawanda is fortunate enough to be a member of the Niagara-Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC). The primary mission of NORLIC is to revitalize vacant homes in the most vulnerable neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown district, including the Oliver Street neighborhood. North Tonawanda's association with NORLIC is relatively new, less than four years old, but has already seen the successful rehabilitation of four properties with more in progress.

## ZOMBIE 2.0 HOUSING PROGRAM

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

## BIKE FRIENDLY NEW YORK

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

The Niagara River Greenway is working to enroll City of North Tonawanda businesses in the program to take advantage of the economic opportunity afforded by being located along the Erie Canal Trail. This programming is part of a larger effort to make NT more attractive for cyclists.



**BIKE FRIENDLY  
NEW YORK**

**CERTIFIED BUSINESS**

[CycletheErieCanal.com](http://CycletheErieCanal.com)



## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Lumber City Development Corporation (LCDC) formed as North Tonawanda's local development corporation in 2004. Over seventeen years, LCDC has implemented 123 economic development projects, assisted with the creation and retention of 637 jobs, and leveraged \$44 million in development. LCDC has also led the City's community planning efforts, managed by a variety of grants programs, and has become the leading advocate for downtown revitalization in North Tonawanda.

**LUMBER CITY**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION





## REIMAGINE THE CANALS

In late 2018, the Twin Cities submitted an application to the “Re-imagine the Canals” competition. This was a statewide competition in which communities were able to evaluate how the Erie Canal can support and enhance economic development along the canal corridor, find new opportunities to enhance recreation and tourism, and identify potential new uses for the Canal aimed at improving the quality of life for New Yorkers.



In collaboration with the City of Tonawanda, the “Twin Cities Gateway Experience” was developed. This proposal included physical concepts and programming initiatives which build upon our existing assets while furthering the efforts of both communities along this shared waterfront area. The main goal of this proposal was to blend our canal heritage with first class events, new aesthetics, and technology.

## GATEWAY HARBOR RECREATION HUB

The Re-Imagine the Canals planning process has allowed the City of NT to bring its goals to fruition through the Erie Canal Recreation Hub pilot program. Led by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, the hub will be a distinctive, environmentally- and visitor-friendly immersion point with amenities for varied recreational enthusiasts to enjoy a day or multi-day journey along the NYS Canal System and its land-and water-based trail network. With technical assistance provided by the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, hub implementation is underway and includes projects such as public wifi, phone charging stations, public art, a mobile walking tour application (currently under development) and more.



## ERIE CANALWAY HERITAGE AWARD

In 2020, Gateway Harbor of the Tonawandas was the recipient of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Heritage Award. The Heritage Award recognizes outstanding places and highlights the work that has gone into making them great- based on the same principles that built the Erie Canal including a bold vision, strong leadership and perseverance. This award recognized the evolution of Gateway Harbor through decades of planning, robust citizen engagement, and waterfront investments that have catalyzed the rebirth of North Tonawanda to a vibrant gateway to the Erie Canal.



## 6) PUBLIC SUPPORT

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

The City of North Tonawanda has strived to make community planning an inclusive process and at each step has convened citizen steering committees to direct the planning process.

**These committees have included local business leaders, non-profit organizations, community groups, and concerned citizens. Workshops and design charettes have been held to direct all local planning activities, ensuring that our plans produced for the redevelopment of North Tonawanda is driven by a community consensus and has strong local support.**

To implement the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, the city will enlist a team of local professionals and citizens with diverse skill sets and a vested interest in the growth of NT. The team will be led by Lumber City Development Corporation. LCDC's mission is to stimulate economic and community development in North Tonawanda by creating new employment opportunities, strengthening existing businesses, fostering entrepreneurship, revitalizing the downtown core and waterfront, and planning for future growth in North Tonawanda. LCDC's overlapping role in community and economic development makes them an ideal organization to lead and implement this initiative.

To help facilitate implementation of the DRI process, LCDC and the City of North Tonawanda has recruited a strong collaboration of business organizations, arts and cultural groups, service organizations, and citizen community groups. These groups represent a diverse population of community interests and bring a wide variety of skills to assist in project implementation. Specifically:

The Boards and Officers of the Riviera Theatre, Carnegie Art Center, and Herschell Carousel Factory Museum have combined decades of experience in tourism and hospitality. Their work and perspective support the artistic economy in North Tonawanda and brings hundreds of thousands of visitors to our area each year.

The Webster Street Merchants Association and Tonawanda's Gateway Harbor organizations are primarily responsible for organizing dozens of annual events in the downtown area and driving the year-round tourism sector. These groups, along with the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas, also provide critical business support to new and growing downtown businesses and act as advocates to the city on behalf of the downtown community to ensure responsible growth and development in the area.

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



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

Upon award of the DRI, the City of North Tonawanda will convene a Local Planning Committee with many of our current key stakeholders. This team will meet monthly to brainstorm ideas, provide direction to consultants, review planning products and prioritize actions. This team will work actively to prepare a Strategic Investment Plan that will include a downtown profile, a refined DRI vision, strategies and methods to achieve the vision, and identification of key projects to guide overall downtown revitalization.

Similar to other planning processes, community involvement will be a key component to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to ensure an inclusive revitalization program. The City of North Tonawanda will make effort to include under-represented groups such as minorities, senior citizens, low-income individuals, families living in poverty, and individuals with disabilities as part of the planning process. To coordinate this, the City of North Tonawanda will collaborate with key local non-profit service providers including the John R. Oishei Mobile Safety Net Team, Twin City Community Outreach, Belmont Housing, Lumber City Hope Center, YWCA, and the NT Senior Center. In alignment with the REDC's Western New York Opportunity Agenda, education, transportation, and affordable housing will be key themes to ensure context-sensitive planning, equity, diversity, and opportunity for the entire community.

The DRI Public Engagement strategy will use innovative and hands-on approaches towards community engagement in the form of public events, speaking events, pop-up store front galleries, an idea wall, and utilization of vacant storefronts.



## RE-IMAGINE OLIVER STREET

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



## BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA

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





## SMART GROWTH COMMUNITY FUND

The most recent community engagement process has been initiated by the Smart Growth Community Fund process, with the goal of bringing an innovative, robust approach to community engagement. As opposed to a typical open-forum style meeting, more hands-on methods to reach the public such as walking tours, community conversations, and games to spark ideas and creativity were utilized. A steering committee comprised of individuals from the City Council, cultural institutions, city departments, LCDC, business owners and the faith-based community was formed to establish project scope and process. The consultant then hosted a joint meeting with the City of Tonawanda. This meeting helped establish that both communities share a similar downtown vision.

The public was then invited to the Carnegie Art Center for a forum that included giving participants the opportunity to design their ideal downtown gateway. Well attended walking tours of Oliver Street, River Road, and Webster Street were then held which gave participants the opportunity to interact with these areas firsthand on foot and learn more about the proposed street enhancements.

## BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS MEETINGS

In 2019, North Tonawanda hosted an open forum with business and property owners in the River Road and downtown corridors. About twenty private stakeholders attended and voiced their ideas about the future of our waterfront community and how we might best maximize our unique assets. Through engagement of these key stakeholders, we were able to identify strategies towards revitalization in both the near and long term, while leveraging their existing businesses.

## COVID-19 BUSINESS SURVEYS

To gauge how the pandemic impacted our businesses, a series of surveys were conducted throughout our local business community. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas, this survey helped LCDC and the City of North Tonawanda identify how the pandemic affected local businesses, what types of assistance is needed, and their plans for recovery. The survey had over 50 responses and has guided LCDC to implement programming to allow businesses to recover from the pandemic including funding through the CDBG CARES Act funds.





## 7) TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES AND READINESS

*Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years.*

North Tonawanda has prepared for near-term implementation of our various planning efforts. Through these planning processes, we have identified a broad range of transformative projects that can be completed with an infusion of DRI funds within 1-2 years of award. These projects advance the vision for downtown redevelopment while leveraging private investment.





# TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS

DOWNTOWN INSET MAP



- CAROUSEL PARK APARTMENT REHABILITATION
- GATEWAY HARBOR OF THE TONAWANDAS HUB IMPLEMENTATION
- ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATIONS
- NORTHERN MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT
- 624 RIVER ROAD PHASE II
- 10 GOUNDRY STREET INFILL
- CHARLES FLEISCHMAN PARK
- 78 BRIDGE ST PUBLIC BENEFIT AREA
- TONAWANDA ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE
- RIVIERA THEATRE EXPANSION PROJECT
- CARNEGIE ART CENTER
- HERSCHELL CARROUSELL MUSEUM MUSIC ROOM EXPANSION
- COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM
- VETERAN'S PARK PUBLIC PAVILION
- 230 OLIVER STREET REHABILITATION
- HUBMANN VAULT BUILDING STABILIZATION
- LUMBER CITY VILLAGE
- RT JONES REDEVELOPMENT, PHASE I
- THE SHORES MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

## PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

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

### TRANSFORMATIVE PUBLIC PROJECTS

PROJECT	MEASURABLE RESULTS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	ESTIMATED DRI FUNDING	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
78 Bridge Street Public Benefit Area	Development of a public access area adjacent to the Timber Shore complex at 78 Bridge Street	\$1.2 Million	\$1 Million	2023
78 Bridge Street Public Benefit Area Feasibility Study (2021 CFA Application)	Analysis of 78 Bridge Street Public Benefit Area	\$176,000	\$100,000	2022
Carnegie Art Center	Critical building enhancements and installation of green infrastructure to expand arts programming	\$325,000	\$150,000	2023
Charles Fleischman Park enhancements	Installation of landscaping, seating, and sprinkler system at Charles Fleischman Park	\$300,000	\$300,000	2022
Charles Fleischman Park Clock Tower	Clock tower feature within a downtown pocket park	\$446,000	\$246,000	2022
Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program	Commercial façade program for properties on Webster & Oliver Streets	\$400,000	\$300,000	2023
Downtown Small Business Revolving Loan Fund	Support for seasonal small businesses downtown	\$400,000	\$300,000	2022
Electric Car Charging Stations in Manhattan Street municipal parking lot	Installation of four electric car charging stations	\$400,000	\$350,000	2022
Enhanced seating at Gateway Harbor of the Tonawandas	Amphitheater style seating under existing pavilion	\$500,000	\$500,000	2022
Gateway Harbor Recreation Hub Implementation	Wifi connectivity, installation of phone charging stations, Tonawanda Visitors Center technology enhancements, seasonal attraction, and public art at Gateway Harbor park	\$2.1 Million	\$1.9 Million	2022
Manhattan Street Parking Lot Enhancements	Infrastructure and sidewalk improvements in Manhattan Street municipal parking lot	\$2 Million	\$2 Million	2023



## TRANSFORMATIVE PUBLIC PROJECTS CONTINUED

PROJECT	MEASURABLE RESULTS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	ESTIMATED DRI FUNDING	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
Oliver Street Walkability Enhancements	Installation of greenspace or pavers along terrace of Oliver Street	\$400,000	\$400,000	2022
Tonawanda Island Infrastructure	Critical infrastructure improvements for future development	\$1.5 Million	\$1.3 Million	2023
Tonawanda Island Infrastructure Analysis (2021 CFA Application)	Analysis of existing infrastructure (water/sanitary) on Tonawanda Island	\$200,000	\$100,000	2022
Veteran's Park Public Pavilion	Development of a public pavilion along the Niagara River for public use	\$1.3 Million	\$1.3 Million	2023
Wayfinding, Branding & Marketing	Consistent branding wayfinding throughout the downtown corridor, waterfront and supporting neighborhood	\$110,000	\$100,000	2022



# 78 BRIDGE STREET PUBLIC BENEFIT AREA

Included in the Timber Shore residential development at 78 Bridge Street is a public benefit area along the shoreline of the Little River Waterfront. Development of this area will provide residents and visitors direct public access to this portion of our waterfront while transforming the view from Downtown and River Road. The proposed public benefit area will allow for new areas of passive and active recreation while setting the prescient for future public waterfront access on Tonawanda Island. The City of North Tonawanda submitted for LWRP Implementation funds in the 2021 CFA Round to complete a feasibility study for the PBA, which would include concepts, cost estimates, and identify potential funding opportunities for construction.

Total Project Cost:	\$1.2 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$1 Million
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	NYS Department of State, City of North Tonawanda, Niagara Greenway Commission, Pennrose Development





## TONAWANDA ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE

To support the future vision of Tonawanda Island as a high density, mixed-use destination, there is a critical need for city-owned infrastructure improvements including water, sanitary sewers, roads, and sidewalks. The current infrastructure on the Island is insufficient to meet the demands expected from full build out of the NT Momentum vision. Because these concerns have hindered private development on Tonawanda Island, the City of North Tonawanda submitted for BOA Implementation funds in the 2021 CFA Round to complete a full infrastructure analysis on Tonawanda Island. The proposed analysis will assist the City in identifying the age, condition, and capacity of the existing systems, while providing recommendations on how these systems can be improved.

Total Project Cost:	\$1.5 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$1.3 Million
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	NYS Department of State, City of North Tonawanda



## ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

As noted throughout the DRI nomination, the City of North Tonawanda is committed to reducing carbon emissions, clean air, and promoting a sustainable environment for future generations. In order to prepare for the uprise in electric vehicles, the city is able to dedicate 5 parking spaces in the municipally owned Manhattan Street parking lot for fast-charging upper level electric vehicle stations. These electric vehicle charging stations will encourage travelers to visit our downtown and provide a convenient amenity for our residents.

Total Project Cost:	\$400,000
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$350,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	City of North Tonawanda, NYS Department of State, Niagara Greenway Commission



GATEWAY HARBOR OF THE TONAWANDAS: RECREATION HUB IMPLEMENTATION

In early 2020, the Twin Cities responded to a Request for Proposals to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor for the Erie Canal Recreation Hub pilot program. The recreation hub includes a distinct, environmentally-and visitor-friendly immersion point with amenities for varied recreational enthusiasts to enjoy a day or multi-day journey along the New York State Canal System and its land-and-water-based trail network. The evolution of our canal waterfront, existing assets, and its rich historic past has allowed the City of North Tonawanda to receive this prestigious designation.

The City of North Tonawanda in partnership with the City of Tonawanda has been working diligently with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor to identify and implement projects, identifying potential funding sources, and developing the pilot hub. The recreation hub identifies a number of potential projects for Gateway Harbor including, public wifi, development of a mobile walking tour app, public art, mobile phone charging stations, consistent branding and marketing, a seasonal attraction, kayak/canoe storage, iconic lighting of the train bridge, and more. Many of these projects are underway including:

- **Development Mobile Walking Tour Application**
  - Through a recent award by the Grigg Lewis Foundation, the City of North Tonawanda is in the process of launching a mobile walking tour which will highlight 10 key sites throughout our Downtown and waterfront. This free self-guided tour will be GPS enabled, but will allow for virtual tours for individuals to access all over the world. This mobile application will promote tourism in North Tonawanda and further allow for a vibrant and welcoming downtown area.
- **Iconic Bridge Lighting of the Bascule Bridge**
  - Through the Re-Imagine the Canals Competition, the New York Power Authority has announced iconic lighting at multiple Erie Canal sites across New York State. As the western terminus of the Erie Canal, the Bascule rail bridge has been identified as a key site. This lighting will allow for seasonal displays, nightly lightshow events, and assist in allowing Gateway Harbor to become a 24/7 destination.

Total Project Cost:	\$2.1 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$1.9 Million
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	New York Power Authority, City of North Tonawanda, Grigg Lewis Foundation, East Hill Foundation, Niagara Greenway Commission, Ralph Wilson Foundation, Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor







CARNEGIE ART CENTER

Built in 1903, this public library building was gifted to the City of North Tonawanda by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. After functioning as a public library for over 70 years, in 1975 the building became home to the Carnegie Art Center. The Carnegie Art Center plays an integral role in the arts and culture community in NT. As a 501c3 organization, their mission is to sponsor, promote, and encourage the development of visual and performing arts, and provide educational and cultural enrichment to the Western New York region. Their current programming includes rotating artist exhibitions, live music events, various art classes for youth and adults, yoga classes and a weekly Makers Market during the summer months.

In order to further enhance additional programming and generate revenues for the organization, there are critical building enhancements that need to be made including an elevator for ADA accessibility, roof repair, new HVAC systems, green infrastructure improvements to reduce flooding issues, and restoration of the original mosaic tile. Through this added capacity, the Carnegie will be able to host more visitors into this historic building and further enhance the local arts and culture community.

Total Project Cost:	\$325,000
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$150,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	NYS Preservation League, East Hill Foundation, Greater Hudson Heritage Newtowrk, City of North Tonawanda, Carnegie Art Center



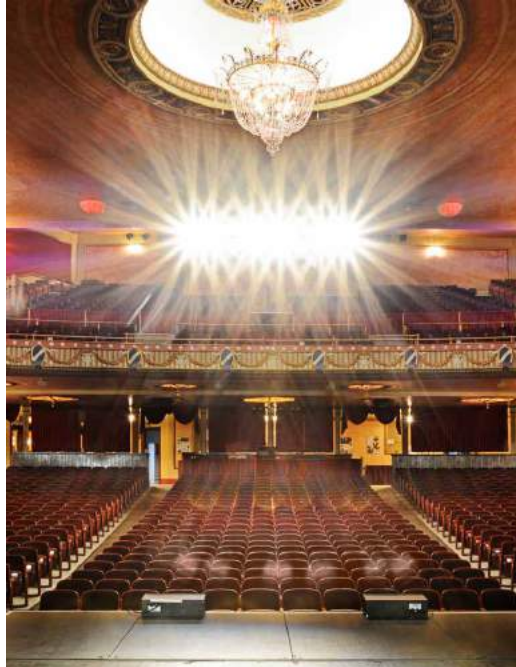
# NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REHABILITATION

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

## TRANSFORMATIVE PRIVATE PROJECTS

PROJECT	MEASURABLE RESULTS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	ESTIMATED DRI FUNDING	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
230 Oliver Street Rehabilitation	Redevelopment of historic anchor building in the Oliver Street corridor	\$500,000	\$150,000	In Progress-2022
624 River Road Phase II	Site remediation and development of 5 acres to include 100 residential units	\$22 Million	\$2 Million	2023
Carousel Park Apartments Rehabilitation Phase II	Redevelopment of adjacent brownfield site to include workforce apartments and town homes	\$30 Million	\$4 Million	2025
Carousel Park Apartments Rehabilitation Phase I	Rehabilitation of existing 162 unit affordable housing complex and the adjoining North Tonawanda Senior Center	\$10 Million	\$3 Million	2023
Goundry Street Mixed Use Infill Development	Opportunities for mixed-use development adjacent to Webster Street	\$935,000	\$374,000	2023
Herschell Carrousel Museum Expansion	Building rehabilitation for an expanded music room	\$654,922	\$150,000	2023
Hubbman Vault Stabilization	Stabilize dilapidated historic building	\$500,000	\$100,000	2023
Lumber City Village	Redevelopment of underutilized warehouse building on Main Street to include mixed-use residential, retail, and hotel	\$20 Million	\$4 Million	2024
Northern Main Street Redevelopment	Mixed use development at 4 acre brownfield site	\$10.2 Million	\$400,000	2024
Riviera Theatre Expansion	Expansion of the Riviera Theatre to include update patron facilities and new lobby/concessions area	\$2 Million	\$500,000	2022
RT Jones Redevelopment Site- Phase 1	Remediation and mixed-use development on 22 acres of Tonawanda Island	\$30 Million	\$10 Million	2023
The Shores Mixed Use Development	Development of 2 Bridge Street on Tonawanda Island into entertainment, dining and residential	\$30 Million	\$1 Million	2024





## HISTORIC RIVIERA THEATRE EXPANSION PROJECT

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

However, the Riviera Theatre lacks modern amenities for both patrons and performers, limiting the facilities ability to grow and continue to attract national acts. Hence, the Riviera Theatre in partnership with Lumber City Development Corporation, has embarked on an ambitious expansion project.

In August 2021, the Riviera Theatre purchased the adjacent storefront at 73 Webster Street. This 6,118 square foot building will expand the existing footprint of the Riviera Theatre and include new ADA restroom facilities, an expanded lobby/concessions area, areas for artist's merchandise, and a new box office. Through the New York Main Street Technical Assistance Program, the Riviera Theatre has received funding to hire a professional architect to perform a code review and feasibility analysis of the new space. Concept designs are expected to be complete in September 2021.

The expansion of the Riviera Theatre is critical to the sustainability of the organization, as well as the long term economic health of Downtown. The Riviera Theatre is fully committed to completing this long-awaited expansion and establishing the best performing arts center in the region.

Total Project Cost:	\$2 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$500,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Niagara River Greenway, East Hill Foundation, Cullen Foundation, Wendt Foundation, Ralph Wilson Foundation, Grigg Lewis Foundation, Riviera Theatre, Private Donations.

**HERSCHELL CARROUSEL MUSEUM- MUSIC ROOM EXPANSION**

The Herschell Carrousel Museum is a key cultural institution in North Tonawanda, drawing thousands of families annually to the Oliver Street corridor. The museum not only celebrates the beloved carousel, but is also home of the band organ. North Tonawanda was the only city in the United States to produce these musical machines which provide the magical sounds of a carousel ride.

The museum currently has a collection of seven band organs and related equipment spread around the current facility and is unable to display them with any comprehensive interpretation of their significance. Through the proposed music room expansion project, it will reconstruct a portion of the Allan Herschell complex which collapsed in 1995, to celebrate and preserve the band organ collection and 100-year-old master rolls in a controlled environment.

Completion of this project will increase the capacity of the Carrousel Museum to fulfill its mission and serve its visitors, providing an expanded, authentic cultural tourism experience for visitors. Additionally, it will complete the restoration of a significant historic resource in New York State, and provide new educational opportunities.

The Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier has secured \$504,922 for this project, however, due to COVID-19 supply chain issues, the cost of materials has dramatically increased by \$150,000. Through an injection of DRI funds, the museum expects the project to be completed by Summer 2022.

Total Project Cost:	\$654,922
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$150,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	PDASNY, Niagara Greenway, NYS Parks, NYPA, Oishei Foundation, WNY Foundation, Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier





CAROUSEL PARK APARTMENTS- PHASE I REHABILITATION

Located adjacent to the downtown corridor along Oliver Street, the Carousel Park Apartments is a 10 story senior housing complex built in 1974. The complex includes 162 housing units- ranging from 130 one bedroom units, and 32 efficiency units.

Due to the current age of the Carousel Park Apartment complex, this property needs critical updates to continue serving senior residents in North Tonawanda. Proposed building rehabilitation involves a new elevator, renovation of individual apartment units to include updated fixtures and appliances, and renovations to common spaces. Through these renovations, the Carousel Park Apartments can provide seniors in our community with a safe and supportive living facility adjacent to our downtown core. These residents will assist in activating the Oliver Street streetscape and continue to add vibrancy downtown.

Managed by the North Tonawanda Parks and Recreation Department, the NT Senior Center is located on the first floor of the Carousel Park Apartment complex. The Senior Center has become a community focal point for our 55+ residents with 15,000-17,000 served annually. The senior center provides daily recreational activities, guest speaker events, field trips and more. The NT Senior Center has a strong partnership with the Niagara County Office of the Aging to provide coordinated supportive services such as a grocery store shuttle service, income tax preparation services, nutrition programs and legal assistance. The NT Senior Center is in need of critical updates including a roof, an updated kitchen facility, and HVAC upgrades. By updating this key community facility, the NT Senior Center can enhance and expand its current programming to continue to serve seniors in our community.

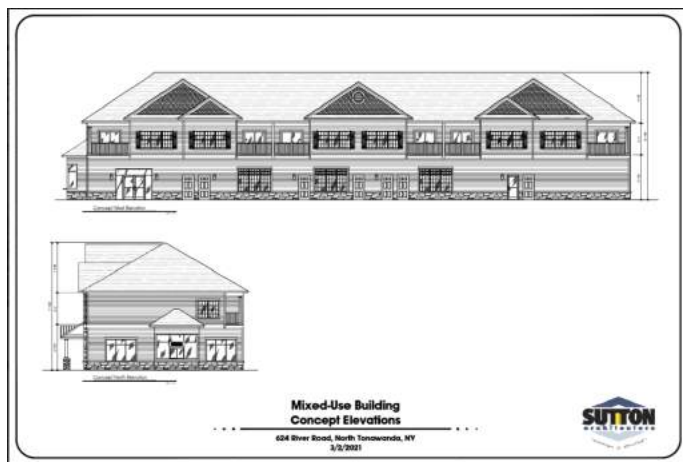
Long term, Phase II of the Carousel Park project includes acquisition and redevelopment of a brownfield site to include an affordable town home community for seniors.

Total Project Cost:	\$10 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$3 Million
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Private, NYS Office of Homes & Community Renewal, City of North Tonawanda



## 624 RIVER ROAD- PHASE II

Adjacent to 600 River Road, 624 River Road is the former Tonawanda Iron & Steel Company facility. This underutilized brownfield property is currently undergoing a two phased redevelopment. Phase II will include remediation of the remainder of the 5-acre site along with construction of a large multi-family housing building. This phase is still in the planning stages; however, an architect was hired and initial concept designs include an over 100 unit, 5 story building with first floor parking. The residential units would range from 1-3 bedrooms. The total project cost for phase II is over \$22 million and construction would begin after completion of phase I, and last approximately 2 years.



Total Project Cost:	\$22 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$2 Million
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Private, Niagara County IDA, Niagara County Brownfield Redevelopment Revolving Loan Fund

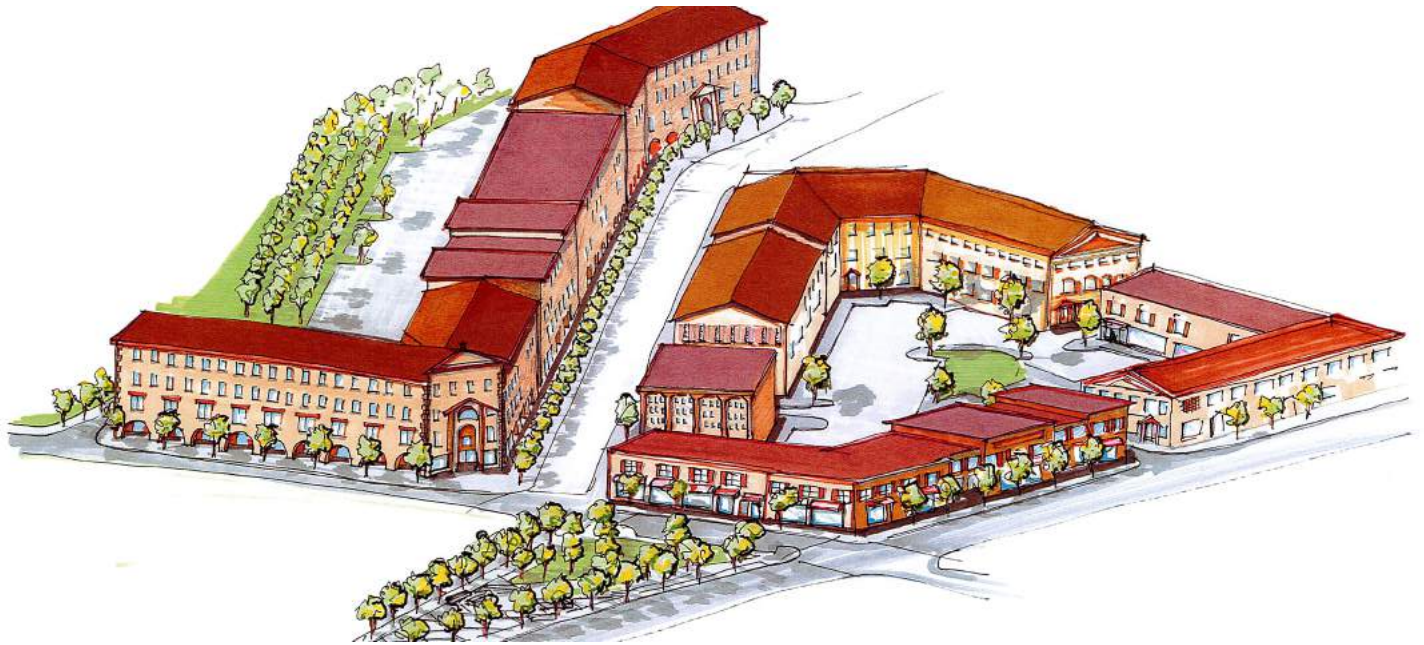
## 10 GOUNDRY STREET MIXED-USE INFILL

Located adjacent to Webster Street, 10 Goundry Street is a two-story underutilized building consisting of 10 apartment units that are currently uninhabitable. The proposed rehabilitation project will include demolition of the existing building and new infill construction that would occupy the entire parcel. The new mixed-use construction would be two stories tall and include 8 one-bedroom apartment units with indoor parking, and 2 commercial storefronts. The developer is seeking to lease the commercial space to include a unique recreational/experiential business that will compliment visitors to stay in Downtown North Tonawanda. The developer currently owns the site and projects an estimated completion in 2023.

Total Project Cost:	\$935,000
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$374,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation- Site Control
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Private, Niagara County IDA, NYS Office of Homes & Community Renewal







### NORTHERN MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT

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

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

This location is envisioned to be transformed into a mixed-use node with approximately 120 -one- and two-bedroom residential units, and 4,500 square feet of ground floor commercial/retail space. An appropriate size and massing will fit within the character of the existing Downtown. Redevelopment of this site is critical to the NT Momentum vision as this property sits at the gateway point between Tonawanda Island and the historic downtown core. This project will help NT’s efforts in expanding the downtown footprint to include the Niagara River waterfront via Main Street, and compliment the adjacent Enterprise Lumber & Silo project and Main Street streetscape enhancements.

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

Total Project Cost:	\$10.2 Million
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$400,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Private, Niagara County IDA, Niagara County Brownfield Redevelopment Revolving Loan Fund, NYS Office of Homes & Community Renewal

# REVOLVING FUND PROGRAMS

## COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In addition to the proposed private development projects identified above, there are a collection of vacant and underutilized buildings along key streets within the DRI area that would benefit from investment through a revolving grant fund and help to promote continued development in North Tonawanda. Redevelopment of these commercial properties would bring these buildings up to code, promote walkability, and provide space for new commercial tenants. Potential properties include 53 Oliver Street, 200 Oliver Street, 230 Oliver Street, and 236 Oliver Street, as the owners of these properties have expressed interest in participating in such program. This potential program would be managed by Lumber City Development Corporation, as they have vast experience managing prior façade programs through the New York Main Street program, National Grid, and the OATH Community Benefit Fund.



Total Project Cost:	\$400,000
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$300,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Owner Equity, New York Main Street Program



## SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM

The City of North Tonawanda embraces small business growth and promotes entrepreneurship for startup businesses in our community. Through a small business support program, the city can incentivize small businesses to open in NT and fill vacant and underutilized commercial properties throughout our downtown. Specifically, this program can be used to attract seasonal tourism related businesses such as bicycle rentals, non-motorized boat rentals, tours, snow shoe rentals, and pop-up types of retail at Gateway Harbor Park to enhance the visitor experience and allow for our waterfront to become a

four-season destination. This program would be managed by Lumber City Development Corporation, as they have vast experience working with small business owners through the CDBG Microenterprise program. LCDC has administered six microenterprise programs since 2010 which has assisted over 46 businesses, and maintains an ongoing list of interested applicants.

Total Project Cost:	\$400,000
Estimated DRI Funding:	\$300,000
Project Readiness:	Immediate Implementation
Leveraging of other funding sources:	Owner Equity, New York State Office of Homes & Community Renewal



## 8) ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

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

The North Tonawanda DRI application was built on the recognition that the City of North Tonawanda already brings significant administrative capacity, development, project experience, and passion and community commitment to the DRI implementation process.

While the Local Planning Committee would direct all DRI planning and activities, Laura Kee Wilson, the City of North Tonawanda Community Development Director will be the DRI point of contact. Ms. Wilson would be responsible for all coordination and communication, and act as the direct liaison to Empire State Development, Department of State, Office of Homes and Community Renewal and the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council.

Primary DRI administration will be handled by the City's Community Development office and Lumber City Development Corporation. Lumber City Development has directed North Tonawanda's redevelopment activities for the past seventeen years. Lumber City Development has a Board of Directors of 15 volunteers with a diverse array of professional experience including attorneys, commercial lenders, small business owners, engineers, architects, and CEOs.

Laura Wilson is Lumber City Development Corporation's Executive Director while simultaneously serving as Director of Community Development for North Tonawanda. In this dual role, Ms. Wilson oversees all planning, grant administration, economic development, and community development activities throughout the City. Ms. Wilson has her Master's in Urban Planning and eight years of municipal planning and economic development experience. Although newly appointed in the Executive Director role, Ms. Wilson served as the Planning and Development Specialist for the past six years where she managed millions of dollars of grant funded initiatives including the CDBG Microenterprise program, various commercial façade programs, a public art initiative, and the City's redevelopment planning process through the Brownfield Opportunity Area.

In addition, the City of North Tonawanda will bring the direction of numerous City departments into this project including the City Engineer, Building Inspection, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation Departments. The Directors of these departments have robust experience in their respective fields and will provide valuable input on the redevelopment initiative, project feasibility, and the impact of the project as a whole.

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

## 9) Other

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

### SUPPORT & COMMITMENT

As identified in the attached letters, many key partners, stakeholders, and developers are committed to the North Tonawanda DRI project including:

#### Elected Leaders

Senator Robert Ort

Legislator Richard Andres

#### Stakeholders & Community Partners

Lumber City Development Corporation

Carnegie Art Center

Gateway Harbor Inc.

Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas

Oliver Street Merchants Association

Project Pride of NT

Webster Street Downtown Merchants Association

Niagara County Center for Economic Development

Parks & Trails, NY

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

Niagara Greenway Commission

Riviera Theatre

#### Developer Interest

Pennrose, LLC

Smith Boys Marine

Visone Co. Development

KCG Development

Barbara & Kevin Hughes





THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY 12247

WEBSITE:  
ORTT.NYSENATE.GOV

August 30, 2021

ROBERT G. ORTT  
62ND SENATE DISTRICT  
SENATE MINORITY LEADER

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

Dear Regional Council Members,

On behalf of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Senate District of New York State, I would like to express my support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The City of North Tonawanda, through the NT Momentum Plan, has planned for and began to implement a redevelopment strategy aimed at making Downtown North Tonawanda a unique, attractive and vibrant place to live, work, and play. Through the DRI opportunity, the transformative developments envisioned through this process will bring new life to the Erie Canal waterfront, Niagara River waterfront, and Tonawanda Island.

Since the 2017 WNY Regional Economic Development Council's award of the Smart Growth Community Fund, the City of North Tonawanda has been able to make critical walkability and placemaking enhancements throughout the downtown corridor and Erie Canal waterfront. These enhancements have attracted and leveraged private development. With an injection of DRI funds, the City of North Tonawanda can further capitalize on the momentum in an effort to completely transform the downtown area.

If you have any questions regarding my support for this project, please do not hesitate to contact my district office staff at 716-434-0680.

Sincerely,



Robert G. Ortt  
NYS Senate Minority Leader  
62<sup>nd</sup> District



Niagara County Legislature

*From the Desk of Legislator Richard Andres*

August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

On behalf of the 8<sup>th</sup> District of the Niagara County Legislature, I would like to express my enthusiastic support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The City of North Tonawanda has planned for and began to implement a redevelopment strategy aimed at making the downtown corridor a unique, attractive, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. With an injection of DRI funds, Downtown North Tonawanda can accelerate implementation of the NT Momentum plan throughout our downtown and along the Niagara River Waterfront. Additional investment will leverage past investment, while attracting private development for a variety of housing developments, office and professional space, and commercial/retail amenities.

I look forward to a continued collaboration with the City of North Tonawanda and all of its partners in downtown development. Thank you for considering the NT Momentum project for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Andres", is written over a horizontal line.

Richard Andres  
Niagara County Legislator, 8<sup>th</sup> District



# LUMBER CITY

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

*Your Partner in Success*

August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

On behalf of the Lumber City Development Corporation, I am honored to support the City of North Tonawanda's NT Momentum project submission to the 2021 Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Lumber City Development Corporation has served as North Tonawanda's economic development agency since 2004. In that time Lumber City has worked closely with the City of North Tonawanda, the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas, the NT Downtown Merchants Association, and many other local and regional partners in an effort to redevelop and revitalize Downtown North Tonawanda. The NT Momentum project is a culmination of that collaborative effort and Lumber City Development is excited to work with the City of North Tonawanda to implement this vision.

The NT Momentum project will leverage North Tonawanda's strengths such as picturesque waterfront property, first class cultural amenities, popular dining and entertainment venues, and historic architecture to attract new residents, companies, and developments to the area. The projects outlined in the NT Momentum vision will significantly transform Downtown North Tonawanda and positively impact the lives of residents throughout the Niagara Frontier.

Lumber City Development Corporation fully supports the NT Momentum project and is committed to working with the City of North Tonawanda and the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council to implement an NT Momentum Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Douglas Taylor  
Chairman



# Carnegie Art Center

August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

On behalf of the Carnegie Art Center, I would like to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The purpose of the Carnegie Art Center, directed by the Tonawandas' Council on the Arts, is to sponsor, promote, and encourage the development of the visual and performing arts through the presentation of exhibitions, concerts, performances, classes, and other artistic related activities. It provides educational and cultural enrichment to North Tonawanda and the Western New York region.

The City of North Tonawanda has found its niche in the arts and cultural amenities, which enhances the livability of downtown and contributes to the overall vibrancy in our city. Through the opportunity, the City of North Tonawanda will be able to advance the NT Momentum plan including proposed improvements to our 116 year old building donated to the city by Andrew Carnegie. The improvements highlighted in this nomination are as relevant as they were in 1905 and are in line with Carnegie's philanthropic philosophy:

*"The main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves; to provide part of the means by which those who design to improve may do so; to give those who desire to ride the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all"*

The necessary restoration of this historic site will allow our organization to expand our current programming and generate the revenues necessary for long term sustainability of the organization. Upon implementation of the project, the Carnegie Art Center will continue to play a collaborative and supportive role with both the city, private sector, and other cultural organizations.

We are proud to supposed the City of North Tonawanda's efforts to continue the momentum of prior investments that promote livability and vibrancy in our historic neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Kimberly Renda-Vosler  
President, Board of Directors





August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

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

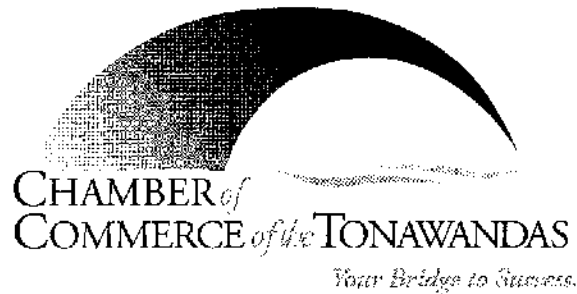
Our mission is to promote economic growth, tourism, recreation, and cultural and historic heritage through the utilization of Gateway Harbor Park, which is the centerpiece of Downtown North Tonawanda. Our programming consists of a variety of events including a weekly concert series, Food Truck Thursdays,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

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

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Linda Foels  
President



August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

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

The City of North Tonawanda has planned for and began to implement a redevelopment strategy aimed at making Downtown North Tonawanda a unique, attractive, and vibrant place to live, work and play. The Chamber of Commerce has been proud to welcome new businesses along historic Webster Street, Oliver Street, and the Erie Canal.

Through this opportunity, the City of North Tonawanda will be able to advance the NT Momentum Plan. The NT Momentum project is a clear strategy to capitalize on previous success to bring new investment into the downtown area. The developments envisioned by the NT Momentum project will bring new life to the Niagara River Waterfront, Tonawanda Island, and former industrial brownfield properties. It will also enhance our burgeoning arts and culture community, thus bringing more visitors into our downtown core.

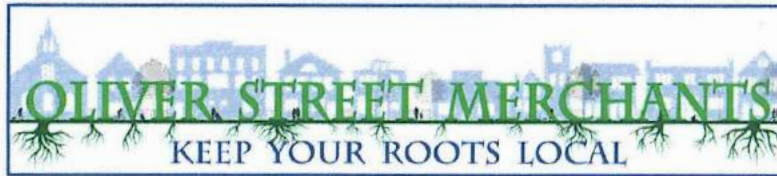
The Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas recognizes the importance of this project and is committed to being a collaborative partner throughout the process.

Sincerely,

Sarah Nelson

Director of Marketing and Membership





August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

On behalf of the Oliver Street Merchants Association, I would like to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round 5 of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The Oliver Street Merchants Association was developed in 2015 and is a volunteer organization that is committed to strengthening the Oliver Street business community and the beautification of this key business corridor. We work closely with the City of North Tonawanda, Lumber City Development Corporation, and Project Pride of North Tonawanda in organizing a number of events such as Shop with Pride on Oliver Street, Small Business Saturday, street clean ups, and flower planting. We also played a critical role in the development of the Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment.

Through this opportunity, the City of North Tonawanda will be able to advance the NT Momentum plan and strategic objectives set forth in the Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment. The developments envisioned in these key planning projects will help bring new life to the Oliver Street corridor, our surrounding dense residential neighborhoods, and the adjacent downtown and waterfront.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative aligns closely with our mission and we truly believe that the enhancements made downtown through this opportunity will build upon our current efforts to improve the public experience on Oliver Street. Upon implementation of the DRI, the Oliver Street Merchants Association will continue to play a collaborative and supportive role.

We are proud to support the City of North Tonawanda's efforts to help restore the pride and vibrancy in these historic neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

  
Lauren Schulte

President



August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

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

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

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative aligns closely with our mission and we truly believe that the enhancements made downtown through this opportunity will build upon our current efforts to improve the public experience in downtown and our waterfront. Upon implementation of the DRI, Project Pride will play a collaborative role throughout the process and is committed to serving on the Local Planning Committee.

We are proud to support the City of North Tonawanda's efforts to help restore the pride and vibrancy in these historic neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Austin Tylec". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "A".

Austin Tylec  
Vice President





August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

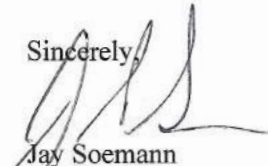
On behalf of the Webster Street Merchants Association, I would like to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

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

Through this opportunity, the City of North Tonawanda will be able to advance the NT Momentum Plan. The development envisioned in these key planning projects will help bring new life to our Downtown corridor and waterfront while driving visitors to our area, further leveraging efforts the enhance our downtown into a vibrant 24/7 destination.

Upon implementation of this project, the Webster Street Merchants Association will continue to play a collaborative and supportive role. We are proud to support the City of North Tonawanda's efforts to help restore the pride and vibrancy in these historic neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



Jay Soemann  
President

August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

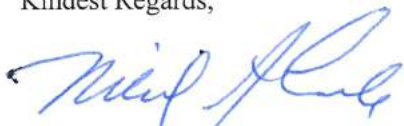
The Niagara County Center for Economic Development is proud to support the NT Momentum project, the City of North Tonawanda's proposal for Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

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

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

The Niagara County Center for Economic Development looks forward to a continued collaboration with the City of North Tonawanda and all of its partners in downtown development. Thank you for considering the NT Momentum project for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Kindest Regards,



Michael A. Casale, Commissioner  
Niagara County Department of Economic Development





August 30, 2021

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

Honorable Council,

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

The Tonawandas are a significant hub for trails in New York State, connecting the Niagara River Greenway and Western New York with the Erie Canalway Trail and the Empire State Trail. Recent investments in these state-wide trail systems have brought awareness and excitement to pedestrian and bicycle-related tourism and will result in direct economic benefits for the communities these trails run through.

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

Breathing new life into the City of North Tonawanda through the DRI opportunity will enhance the ability of Western New Yorkers to enjoy our world-class recreational assets and allow residents to realize the economic, social, environmental, and health benefits that come with them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robin Dropkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robin" and last name "Dropkin" clearly distinguishable.

Robin Dropkin



P.O. Box 219, Waterford, NY 12188 ■ P: 518-237-7000 ■ [www.eriecanalway.org](http://www.eriecanalway.org)

August 31, 2021

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

Dear Honorable Council Members:

Please allow this letter to serve as an affirmation of the strong support which the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor has for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

Centered around the Erie Canal, Downtown North Tonawanda has capitalized on upstate New York's iconic waterway to become the premier boating, bicycling, and recreation destination in Western New York. In 2020, we recognized these efforts and awarded the Twin Cities' Gateway Harbor with the designation of a Canalway Recreational Hub pilot program. This designation has allowed us to provide direct technical assistance to the Twin Cities to refine their plan for the Erie Canal waterfront and implement projects such as public wifi, public art, and a mobile application for visitors. These projects will allow Gateway Harbor and the surrounding downtown community to continue to evolve into a vibrant and sustainable destination while maintaining the historic and cultural integrity that the Tonawandas were built upon.

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor works to preserve and promote the nationally significant historical, cultural, educational, recreational, scenic, and natural resources of the 524-mile-long New York State Canal System and to foster vibrant communities connected by our waterways.

As the gateway to the western terminus of the Erie Canal, North Tonawanda is well poised for an injection of DRI funding. This NYS investment will leverage additional resources from our organization, and others, and continue to improve the quality of life for residents of North Tonawanda.

Your consideration of North Tonawanda's application consistent with all current laws, rules, regulations, and policies is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Radliff". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "B" and "R".

Bob Radliff  
Executive Director





## *Niagara River Greenway Commission*

P.O Box 1132 Niagara Falls, New York 14303

September 9, 2021

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

On behalf of the Niagara River Greenway, I would like to express my support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The Niagara River Greenway Plan was completed in 2007, and establishes a vision and a set of principles to guide various entities working toward building a world-class Greenway corridor along the Niagara River. The goals set forth in this plan help improve waterfront access, advance economic development efforts, and increase the number of recreational amenities throughout Western New York.

The City of North Tonawanda was amongst one of the first Western New York municipalities to realize the potential for an improved quality of life for residents and recreational tourism by improving bicycle trail connectivity, signage, and amenities. Through the DRI opportunity, the City of North Tonawanda can leverage its bicycle path system to attract new residents, visitors, and businesses to a well-connected downtown corridor.

The Niagara River Greenway Commission strongly supports continued collaborative development between New York State and the City of North Tonawanda and will do all we can to participate in this continued success story

Sincerely,

*Greg Stevens*

September 7, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

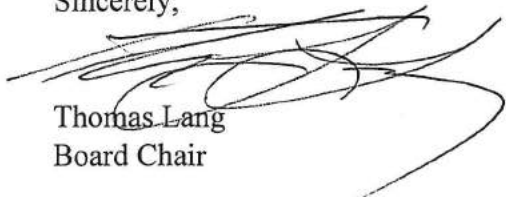
On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Riviera Theatre, I would like to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The City of North Tonawanda has planned for and begun to implement the redevelopment strategy aimed at making Downtown North Tonawanda a unique, attractive, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. The Riviera Theatre is proud to be the key stakeholder of this renaissance. As the historic anchor on Webster Street, our vast and diverse programming brings over one-hundred thousand people into the downtown corridor annually. Many of these visitors come from outside of the area and spend their dollars at the surrounding restaurants, storefronts and local businesses.

As the Riviera Theatre continues to grow, we recognize the need for updated amenities to improve patron experience. In August of 2021 we purchased the adjacent property located at 71 Webster Street as part of our capital expansion project. The project includes updated ADA accessible restrooms, and expanded lobby and concession spaces, among other amenities. Completion of this project will allow us to comfortably accommodate more guests and their needs, improve patron traffic flow, and attract high quality acts, all while providing long-term organizational sustainability. Support of this endeavor through the DRI will serve to catalyze further private investment and continue to spur economic growth in downtown North Tonawanda.

We have heavily invested in North Tonawanda and believe in its potential. We rely upon the City's commitment to supporting quality downtown development and look forward to continued collaboration through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative process.

Sincerely,



Thomas Lang  
Board Chair



August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council:

On behalf of Pennrose, LLC I am writing to express my full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application for eligibility under Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Since 1971, Pennrose has been working to improve the lives of working families by creating safe, secure housing community where residents and build fulfilling lives. Our work transforming and revitalizing communities for +50 years has earned Pennrose national reputation of excellence in real estate development and multifamily property management throughout the United States and U.S. Virgin Islands.

We have recognized that the City of North Tonawanda is an area full of opportunity and is poised for new investment and growth. In 2020, Pennrose was selected as the preferred developer for Timber Shore, located at 78 Bridge Street on Tonawanda Island. This transformative project includes 70 affordable and workforce housing units, residential amenities, and commercial space. This project will bring critical residential density to Tonawanda Island and assist in transforming the Downtown and waterfront into a vibrant and unique living community.

In addition to Timber Shore, Pennrose is exploring other potential development opportunities throughout North Tonawanda, including expansion on Tonawanda Island. Support through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will serve to catalyze private investment on our part and continue to spur competitive economic growth. We believe in the implementation of the NT Momentum vision and are committed to a continued partnership with the City of North Tonawanda.

Through cooperative and strategic investment, Tonawanda Island has the opportunity to become a one-of-a-kind destination in the region. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me directly at [dsalmons@pennrose.com](mailto:dsalmons@pennrose.com) or by phone at 267-386-8643.

Sincerely,

PENNROSE, LLC



Dylan J. Salmons, Regional Vice President



MARINE SALES, INC.

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

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

August 24, 2021

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

Honorable Council;

As the owners of Smith Boys Marine on Tonawanda Island, we are writing to express our full support for the City of North Tonawanda's application to Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

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

The Niagara River is one of Western New York's greatest assets and nowhere is there more potential for waterfront development than in North Tonawanda. We are proud to call Tonawanda Island our home for the past 49 years but believe its best days are yet to come. Through cooperative, strategic investment by local government and private businesses, North Tonawanda has the opportunity to become a one-of-a-kind destination in the region. The Smith family and Smith Boys Marine look forward to future opportunities to partner with the City of North Tonawanda and New York State to help grow this waterfront destination.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob Smith

*Sea Ray*

Outstanding Quality In Fiberglass Boats







9829 Main Street, Clarence, NY 14031

| Phone: 716.759.1715 Fax: 716.759.1501

| [www.VisoneCo.com](http://www.VisoneCo.com)

August 20, 2021

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

Honorable Council,

On behalf of VisoneCo Site Development, I would like to express my support for the City of North Tonawanda's application for Round Five of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

In 2012, we purchased 600 River Road in North Tonawanda and embarked on what became a \$20 million signature waterfront development. This project included 88 luxury residential units, resident amenities such as a fitness center, dog park, pool, and movie theater, and 500 feet of direct public access along the Niagara River. Overlooking the Niagara River and located on the site of a former iron and steel mill, this project represents the great potential to transform NT's waterfront into a vibrant living community embracing key underutilized natural elements that the area has to offer.

Further, in 2018 we purchased the adjacent land at 624 River Road with a vision to extend the development and create a unique waterfront campus featuring additional residential units, a waterfront restaurant, and a community center for residents- all while preserving and promoting the beautiful Niagara River waterfront. In total, Phase I and Phase II development of 624 River Road is expected to be \$24.4 Million. Support through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will serve to catalyze further private investment on our part to complete the development of 624 River Road and continue to spur economic growth.

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tom Celik', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tom Celik  
Chief Operating Officer



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

May 14, 2019

Dear Regional Council members;

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

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

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

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

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy Kaplowitz". The script is fluid and cursive.

Stacy Kaplowitz  
Vice President - Development

Western New York REDC  
95 Perry Street, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

August 30, 2021

Dear Honorable Council,

As the owners of 10 Goundry Street we are delighted to see the continued dedication by the City of North Tonawanda and its Downtown Revitalization Initiative team to further revive our community's historic downtown district. We support the City of North Tonawanda's DRI and would commit to undertake a partnership with the City if the program is funded and our supporting application is accepted.

We are vested in Downtown North Tonawanda as evident through our three other downtown properties. All of which have created successful hospitality businesses including Webster's Bistro, Webster's Kitchen, and Just Say Cheesecake Bakery and Café.

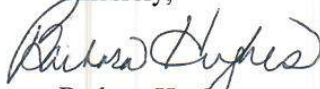
The work of the City and its Council has not gone unnoticed. The recent downtown place making and walkability enhancements has reversed a history of dilapidation and paved the way for the success of our own downtown businesses and those of our neighbors. With this in mind we felt it was our obligation to purchase the previously uninhabitable 10 Goundry Street property located adjacent to our properties located on Webster Street. We feel this is an ideal time to undertake this development project to increase downtown livability though additional housing as we can truly see North Tonawanda's redevelopment potential and the good it continues to do for our community.

With the generous allocation of funds from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative coupled with our own private investment this project could be economically achievable for our family. Upon award of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, this letter confirms our commitment to pursue the project through a partnership with the City of North Tonawanda.

Our family appreciates your time and dedication to the enrichment of our community. It has allowed us to be a part of the revitalization mission to create the foundation for a charming, successful, and economically vibrant downtown North Tonawanda and we are hopeful to continue on this vocation as your partner in the years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara Hughes

  
Kevin Hughes





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

August 30, 2021

Dear Honorable Council,

As the owner of the Carousel Park Apartments located at 100 Oliver Street, I am writing to affirm our support for the City of North Tonawanda's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and our willingness to undertake a partnership with the City if the program is funded.

Built in 1974 the Carousel Park apartments includes 10 floors of 162 affordable one-bedroom and efficiency units. These units are out of date and are in need of critical repairs to serve our current residents, while attracting new residents to the area. This affordable housing complex provides Downtown North Tonawanda with residential density to activate the Oliver Street corridor.

The North Tonawanda Senior Center is located on the ground level of this property and provides a variety of services to over 15,000 55+ seniors in North Tonawanda. The NT Senior Center, managed by the City of North Tonawanda is in need of renovations to the kitchen and the common areas, which will assist the Senior Center in enhancing its current programming and attracting more members.

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

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

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D Pearson", written over a light blue horizontal line.

David Pearson  
Senior Vice President  
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