Scenario Planning Workshops

Mapping a Future
Buffalo Niagara

Update on Findings
January 17, 2014
Scenario Planning Workshops

Two Hours, Five Workshops, 57 Maps and 350 Participants

What do they say?
Scenario Planning Workshops

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What citizens across our region want Buffalo Niagara to look like in 40 years
Citizens preserved villages with strong Main Streets (e.g. East Aurora, Orchard Park, Lewiston, Youngstown, Hamburg and Williamsville).

Some highlighted the whole urbanized area.
Farmland protection and open space conservation were strong themes in principles and in practice (mapping).

35 percent of maps protected everything outside the urbanized area... the functional equivalent of an urban growth boundary.

Controlling sprawl was a prominent principle for almost half the tables.
Where citizens placed Urban Center chips

Downtowns in Buffalo and Niagara Falls were prioritized
More than 90 percent of maps focused revitalization there.

That translates to 64 percent of new jobs and 11 percent of new housing in downtown areas.

Lockport, Amherst, and the Tonawandas were seen by some as potential centers of urban growth.
Why citizens placed Village Center chips

To strengthen existing village centers around the region.

Revitalizing neighborhoods in urban areas like the East Side.

Emphasizing “mixed use,” “density,” and “walkability.”

One quarter of new homes and 14 percent of new jobs.

The most popular place type.
Older urban neighborhoods
Where vacant land and distressed housing may prevail.

Inner ring suburbs, villages
Experiencing the first signs of decline and disinvestment.

Three fifths of new housing and 5 percent of new jobs in traditional neighborhoods

Revitalization of existing areas emphasized in principles
The edge of the urbanized area
Filling in between existing suburban developments.

Revitalizing urban areas
Such as Niagara Falls and neighborhoods on the Buffalo Cheektowaga border.

Citizens used SF chips sparingly
Trading in 45 percent for denser forms of development – accounting for only 7 percent of new housing.
Across the rural towns of the Buffalo Niagara region or the edge of the urbanized area. Only 2 percent of new homes at one per acre or more.

The least popular place type with 85 percent of chips traded away for more dense development and many maps with none.

Where citizens placed Exurban Residential chips
Almost exclusively within the urbanized area
Often near highways and clusters of existing strip retail.

Only six percent of new jobs in “suburban strip” developments

Participants preferred urban forms of retail development
Trading in nearly three-fifths of SS chips for other place types

Where citizens placed Suburban Strip chips
Where citizens placed Office Industrial chips

Existing industrial areas or “brownfields” especially...
South Buffalo, Lackawanna, Tonawanda and Niagara Falls

Many suburban areas suggesting office development near highway infrastructure.

Job creation was a priority with fewer of these chips traded away even if participants weren’t fond of the place type.
Map principles gave heavy emphasis to “connections” and improvements to transit with many specific places to link.

Transit links from Downtown Buffalo drawn by roughly half to UB North Campus, Buffalo airport, and Niagara Falls.

Nearly all maps added transit and pedestrian connections. And more than four-fifths added 20 miles or more.
Connecting waterfronts, parks, rural communities and natural assets

All maps added trails or bikeways: on average 55 miles

Half of tables put trails on Erie and/or Ontario lakefronts
At the Buffalo-Fort Erie crossing of the Niagara River

To relieve major road and highway bottlenecks
Transit Road, Interstate 90, the “Blue Water Tower.”

Most tables added no highway infrastructure at all

A few suggested removing highway infrastructure
Like the Humboldt, Niagara Thruway, Scajaquada
Next Steps
ONE REGION FORWARD
SCENARIO PLANNING
HOST A WORKSHOP TO MAP A VISION FOR BUFFALO NIAGARA

SCENARIO PLANNING WORKSHOPS ON THE ROAD

Missed the Community Congress Workshops in November? Learn how to bring the Workshops to your community or organization.
Scheduled Upcoming Workshops

January 21st – Junior League of Buffalo
*Six members’ homes – Buffalo, Clarence, Orchard Park*

February 8th – Clarence Town Hall, 10am – 12n
(open to the public)
Upcoming Workshops in Discussion

- Tapestry Charter School
- Niagara BOCES
- Southtowns – Evans & Eden
- Niagara Falls Housing Authority
- Various sites in coordination with MSNT

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Questions?
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