towards a more sustainable
Buffalo Niagara

Housing & Neighborhoods
Working Team

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Mike Riegel, Co-Chair (Belmont Housing)
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Agenda

Welcome & Introductions

Scenario Planning & the November Congress

Fair Housing Equity Assessment

Split Group Discussions:

Strategy Theme C: Target Neighborhoods Based on Their Strategic Assets

Strategy Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System

Next steps
Scenario modeling:
A chance to say how we should grow

- A small-group hands-on exercise
- Map and “chips” to show where growth should go
- Markers to show what lands should be preserved
- And to indicate investments in transportation
Scenario modeling:
A chance to say how we should grow

- The chips represent a set of place types
- Each represents a square mile of land area
- Each has a different land use and density
- Recognizable to the typical lay person
- Illustrating the choices we have to make
- Instructing about land-use transportation connection
Scenario modeling: A chance to say how we should grow

The seven place types include:

- Urban Centers
- Village Centers
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Office/Industrial
- Suburban Strip
- Single Family Residential
- Exurban residential
Scenario modeling:
A chance to say how we should grow

- We will consolidate the maps
- Create several alternative scenarios
- Test each for their impact on key metrics
- To guide a choice of land use concept
Scenario modeling:
A chance to say how we should grow

- This builds on the Regional Framework effort
  - Base scenario was recommended in ENRF
  - But participants can trade up or down
- Learning from other regions and similar exercises
- Using an optimistic GBNRTC population projection
- Now testing the “game” by playing it
Organize Preliminary Strategies to address Final Goals

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What’s missing?
Strategy Themes from Previous Meeting

Provide Resources for Informed Decision Making & Action
-- supply data and tools for cross sector partners

Anticipate, Accommodate and Embrace Demographic Shifts
-- focus on retaining and attracting residents

Target Neighborhoods Based on Their Strategic Assets
-- one size does not fit all

Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
-- enhance capacity and program effectiveness
Continue to develop strategies in order to address all goals

What does implementation look like??

Given the goals we set, how are these strategic initiatives crafted to achieve all goals?

Who is involved? Currently? Going forward?
What do they do?
What are the benchmarks to success?
What are the resource needs to get there? Where do they come from?
Continue to develop strategies in order to address all goals

What is haven’t we discussed??

Are there specific considerations that need to be woven through these strategies or proposed programs to achieve the vision?

Rehab vs. New Build?
Mixed Use?
Infill housing/ Municipal Centers?
Demolition?
Energy Production?
Accessing resources?
Role of local, state, federal policy and programs?

Focusing on subsidized housing?
Guiding the private market?
Homeless and supportive housing?
Transit connections?
Employment centers?
Housing (and Transportation) burden?
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

Theme C: Target Neighborhoods Based on Their Strategic Assets
-- one size does not fit all

Emphasize community based planning with residents and stakeholders to maximize participation, leverage diffuse resources, and focus on quality of life improvements

Connect public policy and investment priorities to community goals to create "complete communities" with a range of accessible services and amenities

Focus public investments in neighborhoods with existing infrastructure, community anchors, viable fabric, and active capacity to spur private investment

Design ameliorative interim “better, not bigger” strategies for neighborhoods where strategic assets are missing and normal property markets have ceased to function

Preliminary strategies developed by Working Team Members and Contributors
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
--- enhance capacity and program effectiveness

Reconsider the scope and scale of the housing support and delivery system, to increase region wide capacity while remaining responsive to community context

Develop better opportunities/ supports/ protection for renters and home buyers - particularly from traditionally vulnerable groups

Create flexible and accessible assistance to remove stigma and reluctance to participate in housing programs

Enhance the code enforcement system and connect it to existing education and support programs
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
-- enhance capacity and program effectiveness

**Working Strategy:**
Create a suite of flexible and accessible housing programs designed to remove stigma of means-tested assistance to promote participation and improve neighborhood impact.

**Suggested Strategy Amendment:**
Create greater understanding of housing assistance programs and their community-wide benefits to remove the stigma of affordable housing initiatives while increasing individual participation and community support.
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

Theme C: Target Neighborhoods Based on Their Strategic Assets
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1. Emphasize community based planning with residents and stakeholders to maximize participation, leverage diffuse resources, and focus on quality of life improvements

Best Practice: PUSH Green Development Zone

Result: Increase in public and private sector investment within neighborhood

Key Attributes: Targeted Area

- Resident driven
- Multiple stakeholder organizations
- Multi-dimensional (housing, jobs, safety)
- Developed relationships with foundations, government
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

**Theme C: Target Neighborhoods Based on Their Strategic Assets**

--- one size does not fit all

1. Emphasize community based planning with residents and stakeholders to maximize participation, leverage diffuse resources, and focus on quality of life improvements planning for:
   - physical reinvestment
   - services provision
   - job creation
   - civic engagement

The Green Development Zone won an international competition hosted by HUD, Changemakers, the AIA and Ford Fndn.
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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1. Emphasize community based planning with residents and stakeholders to maximize participation, leverage diffuse resources, and focus on quality of life improvements

Draft Action Steps:

Potential Actors:

Vision of Success:

Resource Needs and Sources:
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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2. Connect public policy and investment priorities to community goals to create "complete communities" with a range of accessible services and amenities

Best Practice: Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (Rochester, NY)
   Result: 78% of nearly 900 community priorities were implemented
   Key Attributes: Small planning units (10 sectors, 36 neighborhoods)
      Citizen Designed, supported by planning staff
      Initiatives need to be owned by someone to make it into the plan
      Tied to city operating and capital budgets - tangible projects
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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2. Connect public policy and investment priorities to community goals to create "complete communities" with a range of accessible services and amenities

Best Practice: Participatory Budgeting, NYC Council Districts

Result: 6,000 residents have decided how to spend over $15 million in city funds on neighborhood projects

Key Attributes: Thorough process of public meetings & decision making
- Needs aired, proposals brainstormed, delegates selected
- Delegates form committees and further develop proposals
- Projects aired to public and revised based on feedback
- Public vote determined which projects get funded
- Community members evaluate process and oversee projects
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3. Focus public investments in neighborhoods with existing infrastructure, community anchors, viable fabric, and active capacity to spur private investment

Best Practice: Neighborhoods in Bloom (Richmond, VA)

Result: Housing values raise 9.9% faster than city average, exceed city average, dramatic crime reduction, effects spill over into adjacent areas

Key Attributes: Targeted neighborhoods receive dedicated resources

- Block-by-block approach
- Small investment areas to show impact (7-12 block)
- Investment in owner-occupied and rental, rehabs and infill
- Mixed-income
- Capital investment matched by service and enforcement
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3. Focus public investments in neighborhoods with existing infrastructure, community anchors, viable fabric, and active capacity to spur private investment

- Richmond lacked the resources to solve all of its problems
- Data driven community engagement process selected seven distressed neighborhoods
- Dedicated 80% of resources to these target areas

Seven communities in the City of Richmond were involved in the Neighborhoods in Bloom initiative.
3. Focus public investments in neighborhoods with existing infrastructure, community anchors, viable fabric, and active capacity to spur private investment.
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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4. Design ameliorative interim “better, not bigger” strategies for neighborhoods where strategic assets are missing and normal property markets have ceased to function.

Best Practice: The Genesee County Land Bank (Flint, MI)

Result: 16,000 vacant properties foreclosed on, 3,700 negotiated sales, 3,000 sold at auction, 2,000 demolished. Multiple programs to manage and revitalize vacant properties initiated. $60 million in private investment spurred.

Key Attributes: Geographically broad based (County Level or larger)

“Vacuum Cleaner Approach” to acquisition

Funded through recaptured property tax.
4. Design ameliorative interim “better, not bigger” strategies for neighborhoods where strategic assets are missing and normal property markets have ceased to function.

Suite of “better, not bigger” approaches:
- Community Gardens
- Localized Agriculture
- Clean and Green
- Natural Regeneration Areas
- Stormwater management
- Design Lab and Temporary Uses

[Kent State Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative]
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
-- enhance capacity and program effectiveness

1. Reconsider the scope and scale of the housing support and delivery system, to increase region wide capacity while remaining responsive to community context

Best Practice: Greater Rochester Housing Partnership
   Syracuse Home Headquarters
Cleveland Housing Network / Neighborhood Progress, Inc.
Hartford Funders Collaborative Fund

   Result: Increased specialization within the field, greater overall housing production

   Key Attributes: neighborhood driven projects completed collaboratively
   reliable, often centralized funding mechanisms
   technical support and capacity building for organizations
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**Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System**
-- enhance capacity and program effectiveness

2. Develop better opportunities/ supports/ protection for renters and home buyers - particularly from traditionally vulnerable groups

Best Practice: Homebuyer Clubs for New Americans - West Side Housing Partnership (most recently as Jericho Road City Roots program)

Result: language/ cultural barriers diffused and pathways to ownership created

Key Attributes: culturally sensitive translation services
- housing group expertise
- peer to peer support network
- extended time line creates pipeline to traditional housing assistance programs or integrated programming into longer curriculum
- hampered by lack of consistent funding and support for staffing
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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2. Develop better opportunities/ supports/ protection for renters and home buyers - particularly from traditionally vulnerable groups

Best Practice: Washington, D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate

   Result: institutional home of tenant education, assistance and advocacy

   Key Attributes: suite of classes to tenants

   emergency housing assistance for displaced tenants

   dispute resolution, legal advice and technical assistance for tenants

   policy advocacy in support of tenant interests

   annual citywide tenant summit
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
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2. Develop better opportunities/ supports/ protection for renters and home buyers - particularly from traditionally vulnerable groups

Best Practice: Link senior housing programs with additional services
Result: Keeping seniors in their homes and communities longer
Key Attributes: Some programs link service delivery with new senior housing complexes
others bring services into senior’s existing homes
primarily non-medical
government funded: NYS Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)
non-profit/ fee-for-service: Villages model
2. Develop better opportunities/supports/protection for renters and home buyers - particularly from traditionally vulnerable groups

Draft Action Steps:

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3. Create greater understanding of housing assistance programs and their community-wide benefits to remove the stigma of affordable housing initiatives while increasing individual participation and community support

Best Practice: Education, marketing and communications efforts to build support

Result: Decreased opposition, increased support and higher demand for programs

Key Attributes: multiple partner effort

- advertising, public relations, and grassroots
- consistent, inclusive messaging
- strategic and extended effort
Refining Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods

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4. Enhance the code enforcement system and connect it to existing education and support programs

Best Practice: Vacant Property Registration Ordinance - Cincinnati, OH

Result: system for tracking vacancy and keeping owners accountable

Key Attributes: fee based system recoups some governmental costs of vacancy tied to extensive maintenance code to protect health & safety fee escalates for longer periods of vacancy refundable for year property goes back in service fines for not registering
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Theme D: Improve the Housing Support and Delivery System
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4. Enhance the code enforcement system and connect it to existing education and support programs

In the 12 months after implementation, the department was able to drastically shift their focus to move properties through the system.
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4. Enhance the code enforcement system and connect it to existing education and support programs

Best Practice: Regional code enforcement collaboration & network (Blueprint Buffalo)
   Result: Support and information exchange amongst code enforcement officials;
      i.e., common barriers, problem landlords across multiple jurisdictions

Key Attributes: NYS lacks statewide code enforcement network
   local regulations make regional code enforcement (and regional housing court) a difficult goal
   needs to be administered by some convening entity
4. Enhance the code enforcement system and connect it to existing education and support programs

Draft Action Steps:

Potential Actors:

Vision of Success:

Resource Needs and Sources:
Final “Draft Goals”: Housing and Neighborhoods

- **Provide equal opportunity for all** to choose from a full range of housing types, tenures, locations and prices throughout the region.

- **Expand choices** for distinctive, high quality neighborhood environments in the city, the suburbs, village centers, and rural hamlets.

- **Preserve and revitalize our existing housing stock** to preserve history, embedded energy, and neighborhood integrity.

- **Design neighborhoods** to be **safe, healthy, accessible and walkable** appropriate to central city, suburban, or rural contexts.

- **Create mixed-use neighborhoods** where daily needs are accessible on foot, bicycle, or transit as well as by automobile.

- **Design** new and retrofit existing housing for **energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy production**.

- **Employ inclusive design** and supportive housing to accommodate all residents regardless of ability or means.

- Focus housing investments where residents will have **easier access to employment** especially by transit and other modes.
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us

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