Scenario Planning Workshops

How would you create a more sustainable future for Buffalo Niagara?

Community Congress Fall 2013  Meeting #2
November 13, 2013, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
City Honors School, Buffalo, NY

This Meeting

This summary provides an overview of Meeting #2 of the second set of One Region Forward Community Congress sessions, where citizens worked in groups to map their future vision for Buffalo Niagara.

The Community Congress

Because no plan for sustainable development can succeed without the creative contribution and informed support of our region’s citizens, the Community Congress has been created as a regular forum for all citizens in our region to guide and shape the One Region Forward process.

One Region Forward

One Region Forward is supported by a broad-based collaborative effort of local elected officials, businesses, community groups, and citizens at-large – all working together to move our region towards a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Who Participated?

128 in attendance

Representatives from 32 different ZIP Codes and 68 different community or civic organizations

Attendees were asked to identify themselves with a local community organization if they choose. The following organizations were represented:

- Alden Economic Development Committee
- Allentown Associate Member
- Anspach Law
- Baird Foundation
- Black Rock Riverside Alliance
- Buffalo Citybration
- Buffalo Employment & Training Center
- Buffalo First
- Buffalo Institute of Urban Ecology
- Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
- Buffalo Sewer Authority
- Buffalo Urban Development Corporation

NIAGARA COUNTY

ERIE COUNTY
What Did They Say?

Mapping a Future Approach to Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Food Access, and Climate Change Action for Our Region.

Participants at this meeting had a hands-on opportunity to show precisely where and how they think Buffalo Niagara should grow between now and the mid-21st century in order to fulfill the region’s shared vision and values. Residents first viewed a brief introductory video about the challenges and opportunities that our region faces, and a presentation about how to engage in scenario planning. They were then asked to indicate on a map of the Erie and Niagara counties what they wanted to keep and change in their neighborhoods, towns, cities, villages, and region.

Working in small groups with large scale maps of Buffalo Niagara, citizens showed graphically where and how they think housing, jobs, transportation infrastructure, food resources, and climate change measures should be established.
Participants were asked to give their map a **title** and write down the **principles** and ideas that guided their mapping decisions. Below are the pictures, titles, principles, and comments of the **21 maps** that residents created at this Community Congress.

**Buffalo #1**

**TITLE:** Inclusive Connected Urban-Centered Region

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES:**
1. Preserve and build our old neighborhood bus corridor
2. Preserve old village food hubs like Alden
3. Preserve Farmland
4. Transportation and rail connectivity that is well planned and does not disturb neighborhoods
5. Increase equity and reduce poverty to improve livability
6. Mixed use development and jobs in places outside urban center.

**NOTES:**
- Transportation in Niagara County
- Engage people of color in the future progress of the city
- Transportation for all that gets rid of main street diversity line
- Diversity and age friendly neighborhoods
- If another blizzard or terrorist attack happens traffic would be stalled in the urban center, we need widespread diversity
- Utilize trails, railroad network as a transportation system for people and goods.
- Establish infrastructure maintenance and backup systems for emergency situations
- Multi-generational housing based upon new ruralism
Buffalo #2

TITLE: Back to Basics

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Preservation of historic buildings, neighborhoods and parks. Buffalo, Lewiston, NT, East Aurora, Black Rock, Niagara Falls
2. Protection of open land – farms, do not build ECC North Expansion
3. Increase and connect bike paths, rail, other transit – belt line, connect SUNY campuses, airport, to village centers and Niagara Falls, river to lake.
4. Build up Buffalo’s East Side – promise neighborhood, central terminal, single family homes, to add value
5. Support and incentivize neighborhood retail

NOTES:
- Preserve downtown Lockport, Orchard Park, East Aurora, Clarence center, South Buffalo.
- Bike paths – NCCC to Lewiston
- Preserve Erie Canal, North Tonawanda
- Strip suburban centers on Transit, Galleria and West Seneca
- Office industrial in South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area, Tifft, Niagara Falls Airport and Tonawanda 290 area.
- Beltline with bike path to central terminal
- Connecting train with north and south campus to airport
- Bike path between north and south campuses of UB
- Single family homes on the East Side.
- Transit from OP and EA
- Connect Hamburg bike path south along lake
- Bike paths on seaway trails and along wine trails
Buffalo #3

TITLE: Preserving and Greening Our Future

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Preserve park system and waterways, forests, conservation areas, farmland, historic communities, traditional neighborhoods
2. Preserve and improve traditional neighborhoods
   – Hamlin Park, East and West side suburbs close to city, neighborhoods in Niagara Falls
3. Stop suburban types, suburban strip
4. Promote green infrastructure
5. Preserve and incentivize urban farms
6. Waterfront for public space
7. Reuse old buildings in city center
8. Preserve stream corridors with 100 foot buffers and wildlife corridors.

NOTES:

- Preserve farmland in Niagara County, Ontario, Lower lands
- Establish a bike path in Amherst that connects to Buffalo
- More urban farms
- Preserve prime farmland near Alden
**Buffalo #4**

**TITLE:** Sustain Without Pain

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES:**
1. Preserve existing farmland and water
2. Concentrate growth in urban core
3. Connect urban centers with transit
4. Add bike paths and trails along waterways and abandoned railways
5. Dense Development

**NOTES:**
- Preserve Lewiston and Youngstown
- Complete shoreline trail in Niagara County
- Bus rapid transit or LRT to Niagara Falls
- BRT or LRT to airport
- Make Williamsville more walkable
Buffalo #5

TITLE: **New York’s West Coast – The Best Coast**

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Enhance and protect water resources as part of the blue economy – Great Lakes and waterways
2. Development should happen in a democratic and transparent way so everyone can benefit
3. Connect new development to existing centers with multi-modal transit
4. Regional planning
5. Diverse housing stock for a diverse population – seniors, empty nesters, non-traditional families

NOTES:

- Cleaner beaches
- Discourage 198
- Clean up bike path along McKinley
- Preserve town centers
- Connect Buffalo and Niagara Falls with transit
- Improve education system
- Affordable townhouses and condos in downtown
- Office park on the East Side
- Encourage families in downtowns
- Get food from farmland in Alden
- Preserve shoreline
- Clean up Black Rock Canal
- SUNY campus transit connection
- Transit to airport
- Buffers and ordinances on waterways
Buffalo #6

TITLE: Trading in XRs and SFs for VCs, TNs and UCs

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Discourage single family
2. Put brownfields to work as new office industrial
3. Revitalize existing downtown neighborhoods
4. Public transit for dense population and regional attractions
5. New development around existing infrastructure

NOTES:
- Conversion of brownfield sites into new office industrial sites and public green spaces
- Infill East Side with traditional neighborhoods
- Create transit links to places of public interest – airport, stadium, Niagara Falls
- Preservation of village green space, rural areas, and natural landscape
- Encourage Rails to Trails
Buffalo #7  
**TITLE:** World’s Greatest Waterfront Community  
**DESIGN PRINCIPLES:**  
1. Preserve farmland, preserve parkland, encourage urban farms  
2. TOD development – extend light rail to Amherst, airport, OP, Hamburg, stadium  
3. Restore Olmsted parks  
4. Mixed income housing – more housing options for elderly  
5. Complete streets, walkable communities, rebuild and maintain infrastructure  

**NOTES:**  
- Transit link: Niagara Falls to Buffalo  
- Supporting Niagara Falls is important to the region  
- Establish better Amtrak station in Buffalo
Buffalo #8

TITLE: Everything Old Is New Again

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Density to make downtown the epicenter of development with walkable neighborhoods
2. Access – expand public transportation options between various walkable communities, access to food and retail for all
3. Restoration and preservation – clean water ways and BOAs, preserve parks, forest and farmland, preserve historical buildings
4. Diversify neighborhoods by connecting communities, more economic opportunities for all.
5. Food and health – urban farms, rural organic farms, community gardens, bike and running paths

NOTES:

- Preserve all forest and parkland
- Bike lanes in city
- Grow food everywhere
- Clean up waterways
- Use existing rail ROWs for rapid transportation to populated areas
- Make the 198 a parkway again
- Get rid of route 33
- Move stadium downtown
- Move law school downtown
Buffalo #9

TITLE: Grow Buffa-love

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Transit connections – university as the midpoint, connect Niagara Falls.
2. Preserve Wilson, Cambria, and Lockport
3. Utilize spaces on Sheridan, Broadway and urban centers
4. Connect urban center to bailey, Lackawanna – mixed use areas for families
5. Move stadium to jobs
6. Make UC more family friendly – culture, museums, jobs, music, art, that connect to village centers

NOTES:
- Bike infrastructure
- Restore waterfront
- Build cultural attraction, mid-city
- No peace-bride plaza
- Restore Humboldt parkway
- Demolish 33, 198, 190
- Storm water flow lines
- Create more public interaction space like Larkin
- Preserve farmland
- Teach gardening
- Restore trolley transit
Buffalo #10

TITLE: Resurge Buffalo and Niagara Falls

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Focus growth along green transit development
2. Compact, walkable, mixed use development
3. Jobs on brownfields
4. Grow and connect major growth centers
5. Well designed, energy efficient neighborhoods

NOTES:
- Revitalize urban education
- Keep Allentown fun and freaky
- Maintain and restore farmland
- Green TOD
- Infill older traditional neighborhoods
- Do not extend metro rail beyond UB
- No new roads in suburbs
- Focus population in existing village centers
- Restore villages and cities
Buffalo #11

TITLE: Niagara Frontier Gateway Initiative

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Waterfront access
2. Preserve farmland
3. Bike and walking paths
4. Preserve green spaces, trees and waterways for biodiversity
5. More public transit
6. Preserve traditional neighborhoods
7. Increase density
8. Build on existing infrastructure

NOTES:
- Preserve habitat, wetlands, forest, creeks and shorelines
- Preserve village centers and historic neighborhoods
- Reforest and restore Grand Island
Buffalo #12
TITLE: Waterfront Backbone
DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Economic development in the creative sector for graduates and disadvantaged people
2. Create a healthier environment across all ages
3. Connection with the natural environment and water improved
4. Reduce sprawl and keep infrastructure fiscally sustainable
5. Revitalize existing assets

NOTES:
- More green infrastructure to improve water quality
- Improve bike and pedestrian connection along water
- Neighborhood access to waterfront with boat landings
- Make UB North an urban center
- Add light rail along 33 to airport
- Reestablish Beltline
- Rails to trails
- Urban farming
- Turn 198 into parkway
- Remove 190 from waterfront
- Make NF Blvd more pedestrian friendly
- Concentrate VC along waterfront to improve access
- Add Office Industrial to East Side to support neighborhoods
- Economic development focused on the poor
- Make infrastructure fiscally sustainable
- Promote and foster creativity – adaptive re-use, new creative jobs, good jobs to reduce brain drain
- Human health for all – improve obesity rates, air and water
Buffalo # 13

TITLE: The Future is Dense and Smart

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Connect the region without cars.
2. Preserve/prioritize viable agricultural districts.
3. Infill development and not sprawl, deconstruct and reuse, don’t demolish.
4. Election of regionally minded public official, capable of thinking of the big picture, cooperation as a norm.

NOTES:

- Public access to all water front development.
- Get TOD going along the LRT airport corridor and beltline, linchpin=central terminal.
- Preserve/enhance strong established urban communities, examples: Kenmore, Hertel, East Aurora, Elmwood, etc.
- Revitalize northland industrial district.
- Strongly enclose converting 198, to a lower speed parkway with parallel bike-ways.
- Connect Niagara Falls to the Outer Harbor by green transit along the Niagara River. Tap into the 12 million tourists.
- Creation of viable public link between Niagara Falls and downtown Buffalo.
- Urban neighborhoods need power + cable buried, better lighting, curbs + sidewalks replaced.
- Hamlin Park needs main artery improvement; Ferry, Delavan, Jefferson.
Buffalo # 14
TITLE: Forty Years of Density
DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Preserve farmland/undeveloped land + green space.
2. Growth should occur in high density areas + villages.
3. Preserve public access to water.
4. Encourage multi-modal forms of transportation.
NOTES:
- Bus-Rapid Transit to airport; some sort of transit to Niagara Falls, BRT to Amherst, transit routes that connect to centers of the city.
- Downgrade 198.
- Preserve green spaces, farmland + rural areas.
Buffalo # 15
TITLE: Strengthen the Core
DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Control sprawl, capitalize maximum available resources.
2. Connect people to hubs, recreation, and opportunities.
3. Develop and reinforce a stronger + more efficient metropolitan Buffalo.
4. Leave a legacy of quality spaces abundant with opportunity and possibility.
NOTES:
- Take out 33 and put back Mom-and-Pop stores, hand ball courts.
- Make parks in downtown.
- Keep urban area contained.
- Light rail system, with a line to the airport.
- Protect Grant Street.
- Preserve green space close to city center.
Buffalo # 16
TITLE: Trains

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Preserve farmland, preserve green space.
2. Promote mixed incomes.
3. Respect existing communities, relocation issues.
4. Affordable housing
5. Preserve industrial landscape.

NOTES:
- Revitalize, do not gentrify.
- Business development to keep students after graduation.
- Education and entrepreneurship at UB.
- Small business incubators.
- What are business incentives for coming to Buffalo?
- Have land and labor.
Buffalo #17

TITLE: Healthy Community

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Bringing urban density (connection) back to Buffalo, Niagara, and Tonawanda
2. Quality of Life preservation in villages
3. Waterfront (Lake to Lake) connectivity/access
4. Collaboration
5. Diversity of places and people are assets

NOTES:
- Working to preserve and better Lakeside attractions
- Keeping Buffalo as the main urban center in WNY
- It looks like we connected all of Lakefront WNY
- “Quality of Life” is best measured by the health of the people.
- Sustainability: the region has a balanced portfolio of healthy social, economic, environmental, and human capital.
- Preserve and improve Niagara Park
- Less highways. More walking routes.
- More village centers
- Bring back UB to downtown
- Fixing the lakeside
- More tourism businesses
- More highways but need to be changed in the future. Find new transportation system.
BUFFALO #18

TITLE: Return to Old Urbanism

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Increase public access to water
2. Infill-growth along transit
3. Preserve open space-forests greater than 250 acres
4. Focus on traditional neighborhoods
5. Preserve existing exurban, don’t add more.

NOTES:

- Preserve public access around Angola on the Lake
- Preserve all Olmsted parks
- Connect bike paths
Buffalo #19

TITLE: If Tomorrow Comes

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Multifamily residential?
2. Think Big
3. Think very big
4. HOV I-90
5. Southtowns need more transit solutions (to Amherst)

NOTES:

- Unofficial urban growth boundary
- Zombie homes in North Collins
- No farms, no food in East Aurora. Reverse course today.
- New Broadway of Broadway Market
- Preserve everything everywhere. Why not?
- HOV: 990 (all), 90 (from I90 to 290), 190 (Buffalo segment), 290 (all)
- Elevated rail. Subway. Tunnel from Genesee Street to the airport.
- Can the throughway add more lanes?
- Is the City of Buffalo demolishing itself into a future housing crisis?
- What if Tomorrow Comes... and thruway must be expanded? Add HOV lane to Amherst.
- Center city Buffalo. Think beyond downtown Buffalo.
- Niagara Falls as a place of business and commerce.
- Skyscrapers along the I-990.
- Amherst is downtown Buffalo. Enjoy this!
- The region is big enough to handle a few CBDs!
- BRT: Subway and Light rail. Amherst and Williamsville should form their own transit agency.
Buffalo #20
TITLE: Bedford Falls
DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
1. Revitalize downtown
2. Radial development
3. Expand light rail
4. Waterfront access and protection
5. Walkable commerce
NOTES:
- Urban farming among restored “villages” of the East Side
- Lots of housing downtown
- Revitalize deteriorating neighborhoods (e.g. the East Side, Niagara Falls)
- Continued restoration of brownfields
- Keep the University at Buffalo connected with the city
- In our fantasy land we have tons of light rail
- Revitalize EVERYTHING in Niagara Falls. Jobs!
Buffalo #21

TITLE: **Perfect Imbalance**

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

1. Strengthen community
2. Bring jobs to existing populations
3. Preserve farms and open space-fewer XRs
4. Use existing infrastructure
5. Improve traditional neighborhoods

NOTES:

- Preserve farms and open space in the Collins, North Collins, Eden, Boston, and Concord areas
- Establish buses to take people to work in North Collins
- Old Bethlehem Steel in Buffalo/Lackawanna reinvest
- Faster and more convenient public transit in Cheektowaga
- Offices near southern Tonawanda and Amherst
- Strengthen urban centers
- Keep urban centers. Better transportation to suburbs.
- More smaller/traditional communities
- People working closer to where they live.