towards a more sustainable Buffalo Niagara

Community Congress Open House: Comparing Alternative Scenarios for the Future of Buffalo Niagara
Where are We in the Process?

2012

A Good Place to Start

160+
 plans from across Erie and Niagara Counties are reviewed and analyzed

2013

Community Weighs In

10
 Regional Vision & Values developed from our 160 plans and community feedback

2014

Mapping Our Future

115
 Citizen-created maps that put our Regional Vision & Values into action
Where We’ve Been

Community Congress 2013

Citizen Planning School

Local Gov’t & Private Sector Council

Community Congress Workshops 2014

Festivals, Fairs, and Farmers Markets

On Your Phone via Text It Forward

Speaker Series

What I’d like to save for future generations.

SHARE THE ROAD

What I’d like to save for future generations.
What We’ve Heard

THE TAXES

Optimis = not cutting down old growth forests

Family farms + farmland

Efficient public transit (especially light rail) that connects our region

Diversify transportation options:
- bike lanes
- rail-to-trails
- bus service with technological enhancements for on-board fare payment, improved bus shelters, etc.

Grey is the new green

Build up not out

EXpand public rail to North. No transport fees.

Reduce dependency on cars

Climate change is the #1 issue facing the entire planet - that includes us. We need to do all we can NOW!

Alternative Energy through clean transitions would be a good start!

Bike lanes

Supporting alternative energy

Have recycling in apt. block (reduces by 50%)

Rural communities (housing, jobs, education) in a more compact manner.

Downtown should be denser, more of everything.

More investment in transportation infrastructure - rail, shipping, road, industrial, passenger, manufacturing, etc. You got to spend $1 to make $10.

Engaging more low income minorities in decision making.

Access to frequent freshwater resources

End别墅ization

More recycling

More walkable neighborhoods

New regional government

Housing with walkable neighborhoods.

Make the grain elevators and all abandoned structures functional!

Make Calgary the "Queen City" that it has always been.

More walkable neighborhoods

Public access to waterfront

Climate change is a $1 issue for the entire planet.

We need to do all we can NOW!

Alternative Energy through clean transitions would be a good start!

Build Metro Rail to the burbs

Every BiT to the burbs

Fragile and limited freshwater resources

Engaging more low income minorities in decision making.
What We’ve Heard

What the Data Tells Us

1970 - 2010

What the Community Said

2010 - 2050
Moving One Region Forward Together

What do we want our region to look like in 40 years?

What are the moves we need to make to get us there?
What if the region were to grow, but we kept doing what we’ve been doing…

Projecting out trends from the past 25 years

1 out of 3 new jobs would go in new offices on undeveloped, open land across the region.

ABANDONMENT would intensify in central cities and spread even further outward

2 out of 3 new homes would go on previously undeveloped land

LIMITED ACCESS to transit will make it tougher for people to get around

1,553 lane miles of new roads to build and maintain
What if we keep doing what we’ve been doing...

Projecting out trends from the past 25 years

Business as Usual Scenario

Existing Urbanized Area

New homes built

New jobs

Homes left abandoned
What if our region stopped sprawling?

What if we reinvested more in our existing communities?

What if our region was better connected?

What if we protected more of our farmland?

Scenario Planning
4 Months
27 Workshops
115 Maps
770 Participants

Citizens attended Community Congress Workshops and Workshops On The Road to share their vision.
Turning Maps into Data

Collection

- 115 Citizen-created Maps

Transcription

- 1,000+ Hours spent digitizing + analyzing each map

Analysis

- 4 Common values across the maps
- 3 Alternative Scenarios turn values into action
What Are Our Common Values?
Grow Where We’ve Already Grown

Focus development and reinvestment where infrastructure exists

Participants placed 94% of new jobs & 87% of new homes in the developed areas (brown areas on map)

Revitalize neighborhoods in decline

Participants placed “Traditional Neighborhood” chips in areas to revitalize homes and businesses in these places.

Bring jobs back to large former industrial sites

Many participants placed “Office Industrial” chips on former brownfields in...

Niagara Falls
Tonawandas
Buffalo
Lackawanna
Build Walkable, Livable Communities

Preserve the character of villages with strong Main Streets

Communities participants chose include:
- Youngstown
- Lewiston
- Williamsville
- East Aurora
- Orchard Park
- Hamburg
- and others...

Invest to make strong village centers throughout the region

Most Popular Place Type!
44% more VC chips

Participants placed
- 23% of new homes
- 13% of new jobs in this place type

Promote a transportation system sensitive to pedestrians and bicyclists

At least 8 maps used bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure as a guiding principle for future development
Connect Our Region by Expanding Transportation Options

Make and improve transit connections across the region

106 out of 115 maps noted that making and improving transit connections so that people are able to get around without a car was important to them.

Highway investment should only focus on alleviating major bottlenecks

71% of all maps added no highways and roads at all. But some added road lanes to alleviate major bottlenecks like Transit Road and the I-90 by the "Blue Water Tower" and at international bridge crossings.

Leverage trails to connect parks, waterfront areas, rural communities and natural assets

Citizens added an average of 55 miles of multi-use, recreational trails per map to connect waterfronts, parks and other natural assets to rural communities.
Protect Farmland, Parks, and Natural Areas

Conserve open space and land
- 94% of maps drew areas where they do not want to see future development.

Preserve and protect farmland
- 59 maps wrote about the need to protect farmland. Others emphasized a priority to promote agriculture including urban agriculture and improve access to locally-sourced food.

Make waterfront access and development a priority
- 19 maps had waterfronts as a guiding principle for future development.
- 46 of 115 maps put recreational trails along the Erie and Ontario lakefronts.
Alternative Scenarios for the Future

Sprawling Smarter

A Region of Villages

Back to the City

40 maps

44 maps

31 maps
The four scenarios aren’t either-or choices

What do these alternative scenarios mean for...

...our economy?
...our communities?
...our environment?
...our citizens?
The three citizen-created scenarios are very different from “Business as Usual”

They each:
- Focus housing in the already urbanized area
- Concentrate jobs in the already urbanized area
- Envision downtowns as denser and more lively
- Protect more farmland from development
- Propose greater investment in transit
What if we slowed down sprawl and concentrated new development in compact, walkable communities...

79% of new jobs would go in areas that are already built up.

1 out of 3 new homes would go on previously undeveloped land.

7 out of 10 new homes would be built in mixed-use, walkable communities.

ABANDONMENT would slow, but still affect urban and inner ring suburban neighborhoods.

60% of all jobs would be inaccessible via transit.
What if we slowed down sprawl and concentrated new development in compact, walkable communities...

**Sprawling Smarter**

*Existing Urbanized Area*

*New homes built*

*New jobs*

*Homes left abandoned*
What if we began to invest heavily into our city, town, and village centers...

- **92%** of new jobs would go in areas that are already built up.
- **WALKABILITY** would become the new norm across the region.
- **86%** of new homes would go in areas that are already built up.
- **Over half** of all jobs would be accessible by transit.
- **84%** of open space would be preserved from development.
What if we began to invest heavily into our city, town, and village centers...

A Region of Villages

Existing Urbanized Area

New homes built

New jobs

Homes left abandoned
What if our cities became the primary driver of our region’s growth and development...

- 96% of new jobs would go in areas that are already built up.
- 75% DECREASE IN ABANDONMENT compared to business-as-usual.
- 1 out of 10 new homes would go on previously undeveloped land.
- 8 out of 10 new homes would be built in mixed-use, walkable communities.
- 21,700 jobs would be brought back to former industrial sites.
What if our cities became the primary driver of our region’s growth and development...

Existing Urbanized Area

New homes built

New jobs

Homes left abandoned
What do we want our region to look like in 40 years?

New homes built

New jobs

Homes left abandoned
Existing Development Pattern
Business as Usual Development Pattern
Sprawling Smarter
Region of Villages
Back to the City
Measuring the Impacts of Each Scenario

Envision Tomorrow

Open source software

Calculates impacts of development scenarios

Uses local data

It doesn’t tell the future, but it helps us imagine it.
Measuring progress in regards to our values:

Grow where we’ve already grown

Build and preserve walkable, livable communities

Expand and diversify our transportation options

Protect farm land & natural areas
Measuring progress in regards to our values:

Maintain fiscally sound local governments by ensuring revenue meet costs
Indicators to let us know we’re on the right path:

- Development outside urbanized area
- Impervious surfaces
- Jobs on former industrial sites
- Number of abandoned homes
- Jobs accessible via transit
- Type of homes built
- Miles of new roads built
- Local gov’t debt to income ratio
- New connections via transit
- Number of miles driven per day
- Homes built on sensitive areas
- Acres of farmland protected
- Acres of open space protected
Grow Where We’ve Already Grown

How the scenarios compare...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Percent of New Homes in Developed Area</th>
<th>Percent of New Jobs in Developed Area</th>
<th>Homes Left Abandoned</th>
<th>New Jobs Brought Back to Former Industrial Sites</th>
<th>New Paved Surfaces (Acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business as Usual</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60,668</td>
<td>1,551</td>
<td>15,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprawling Smarter</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>40,776</td>
<td>17,087</td>
<td>8,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Region of Villages</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38,783</td>
<td>15,996</td>
<td>6,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the City</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>15,778</td>
<td>21,700</td>
<td>3,356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring Our Values

Growth on Undeveloped vs. Developed Land

I think ALL new growth should be on undeveloped, greenfield land

I think new growth should be on BOTH undeveloped land and land we’ve already developed

I think ALL new growth should be on land we’ve already developed
Build Walkable, Livable Communities

How the scenarios compare...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Percent of New Homes in Walkable Communities</th>
<th>Walkability (0-100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business as Usual</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprawling Smarter</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Region of Villages</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the City</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring Our Values

New Development as Single-Use and Dispersed vs. Mixed-use and Compact

I think ALL new development should be single-use and spread out in form

I think new development should be a mix of BOTH single-use and spread out and mixed use and more compact

I think ALL new development should be walkable and mixed-use in form
Connect Our Region by Expanding Transportation Options

How the scenarios compare...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Transit Proximity to New Homes</th>
<th>Transit Proximity to New Jobs</th>
<th>Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Per Capita</th>
<th>Lane Miles of New Road</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business as Usual</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>1,553 MILES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprawling Smarter</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>729 MILES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Region of Villages</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>496 MILES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the City</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>261 MILES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring Our Values

A land use pattern that is automobile oriented vs. transit oriented

I think transit access should not be considered when citing new development.

I think transit access should be considered in development decisions, but not the only consideration.

I think ALL NEW investments should be transit-oriented.
## Protect Farmland, Parks, and Natural Areas

### How the scenarios compare...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>percent of open space conserved from development</th>
<th>business as usual</th>
<th>sprawling smarter</th>
<th>a region of villages</th>
<th>back to the city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>current and potential prime farmland lost to development (acres)</th>
<th>business as usual</th>
<th>sprawling smarter</th>
<th>a region of villages</th>
<th>back to the city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58,093</td>
<td>12,548</td>
<td>4,591</td>
<td>5,311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>acres of development on environmentally-sensitive areas</th>
<th>business as usual</th>
<th>sprawling smarter</th>
<th>a region of villages</th>
<th>back to the city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71,411</td>
<td>11,755</td>
<td>4,108</td>
<td>3,992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>energy savings per household (compared to existing conditions)</th>
<th>business as usual</th>
<th>sprawling smarter</th>
<th>a region of villages</th>
<th>back to the city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td>+1.2%</td>
<td>+2.7%</td>
<td>+3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring Our Values

Development of farmland/open space vs. preservation and enhancement of farmland/open space

I think we should preserve and enhance ALL the farmland and open space in our region.

I think we should open up all our farmland and open space for future development.

I think we should preserve and enhance SOME of our farmland and open space while opening up SOME for development.

I think we should preserve and enhance ALL the farmland and open space in our region.

WHERE DO YOU FALL?

WHERE DO OUR SCENARIOS FALL?

BUSINESS AS USUAL

SPRAWLING SMARTER

A REGION OF VILLAGES

BACK TO THE CITY
Maintain fiscally sound local governments

How the scenarios compare...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Total Tax Revenue of New Development</th>
<th>Total Cost to Build and Maintain Infrastructure of New Development</th>
<th>Cost to Revenue Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business as Usual</td>
<td>$11.9 Billion</td>
<td>$18.8 Billion</td>
<td>-36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprawling Smarter</td>
<td>$11.0 Billion</td>
<td>$11.9 Billion</td>
<td>-7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Region of Villages</td>
<td>$12.2 Billion</td>
<td>$10.0 Billion</td>
<td>+22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the City</td>
<td>$10.3 Billion</td>
<td>$7.0 Billion</td>
<td>+48.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the moves we need to make to get us there?

More compact, walkable traditional neighborhoods

A region that’s better connected via transit
Moves to Make it Happen: *Rehab Development*

**Large Scale Adaptive Reuse**
- Remington Lofts, North Tonawanda

**Residential Rehab**
- Arts Café, Springville
- Winter Street, Buffalo NY

**“Main Street” Commercial Rehab**
What Moves Do We Value?

I think we should renovate NONE of our...

large underutilized and vacant buildings

I think we should renovate SOME of our...

underutilized and vacant neighborhood homes

I think we should renovate ALL of our...

downtown buildings
Moves to Make it Happen: *Infill Development*

**Downtown Infill**
- HarborCenter, Downtown Buffalo

**Neighborhood Infill**
- Hudson Street, Buffalo
- Delaware Avenue, Kenmore

**“Main Street” Infill**
What Moves Do We Value?

I think we should build on NONE of our...

Downtown vacant parcels and surface parking lots

I think we should build on SOME of our...

vacant neighborhood parcels

I think we should build on ALL of our...

village and town Main St. vacant parcels and surface parking lots
Moves to Make it Happen: *Transit-Oriented Development*

- **UB Medical School, Buffalo**
- **Bus Rapid Transit, Indianapolis**
- **Transit Center, Manteca, CA**

**Large-scale Urban TOD**

**Neighborhood TOD**

**Village Main Street TOD**
What Moves Do We Value?

I think “transit oriented development” should NOT be a priority for how we develop...

around the existing METRO line

0%

neighborhoods

0%

0%

village centers and suburban strips

0%

100%

I think “transit oriented development” should be THE #1 priority for how we develop...

100%

I think “transit oriented development” should be a lower priority...

100%
Moves to Make it Happen: Make suburbs more walkable

Larger Scale Mall Retrofit

Before

Before

Neighborhood retrofit

Before

Smaller Scale Suburban Plaza Retrofit
Moves to Make it Happen: Make suburbs more walkable

Larger Scale Mall Retrofit

Neighborhood retrofit

Smaller Scale Suburban Plaza Retrofit

From Sprawl Repair, Galina Tachieva
What Moves Do We Value?

I think we should retrofit NONE of our...

Big box suburban strip areas

I think we should retrofit SOME of our...

Smaller scale suburban plazas

I think we should retrofit ALL of our...

Suburban homes and neighborhoods
Moves to Make it Happen: Creating New Places

New Suburban residential

Residential Neighborhood, Lancaster

New Mixed Use Town Centers

Town Center, Glendale CA

Quaker Medical Building, Orchard Park

Suburban employment centers and strip areas
What Moves Do We Value?

I think creating new places should NOT be a priority for how we develop...

Mixed use town centers

I think creating new places should be a lower priority for how we develop...

Suburban employment centers

I think creating new places should be THE #1 priority for how we develop...

Suburban homes and neighborhoods
Moving One Region Forward Together

What do we want our region to look like in 40 years?

What are the moves we need to make to get us there?
Let’s Get to Work!

Learn more about the impacts of each scenario on the future of our region.
Tell us what you think...

Using your feedback sheet, weigh in on the indicators and moves that will ultimately guide a new way to move our region forward.
Before you leave...

Pick up a copy of the Executive Summary of the first draft of the 1RF Report outlining recommendations suggested to date...
Tell your family, friends, and colleagues to weigh in online.

Request a “Scenario” Presentation for your community or organization.