Among Buffalo neighborhoods, in Historic Black Rock you’ll find:

- The Best Waterfront Access,
- The Best Highway Access,
- Historic and Architectural Character, with a War of 1812 Legacy and the Most Pre-Civil War Historic Homes in the city,
- Affordable, Quality Housing, and
- An Enjoyable, Walkable Waterfront Community

The second oldest view of Buffalo (top), according to the Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo, shows the capture of the British brigs Detroit and Caledonia on the night of October 8, 1812 during the War of 1812. The Detroit ran aground on Squaw Island (far right), and how the area looks today (bottom).

DRAFT DOCUMENT
For updates on this planning initiative, visit: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/plan_black_rock/
DEDICATION

This plan is dedicated to all who work tirelessly toward the improvement of Historic Black Rock.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

~ With appreciation to ~

The Honorable Byron Brown, Mayor City of Buffalo
Joseph Golombek, Jr., Councilman, North Council District
Brian Reilly, Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning
Andrew M. Eszak, City Planner, Office of Strategic Planning
Steve Woroniak, CAD Specialist, Office of Strategic Planning
Bill Parke, Community Planner, Office of Strategic Planning

Co-Chairs Richard Mack and Evelyn Vossler, the Membership, and the Steering Committee of the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (BRRGNPA):

Sharon Adler          Mary Ann Kedron
Caleb Basiliko       Liza McKee
Bill Buzak            Bill Parke
Beverly Eagen         Larry Pernick
Jackie Erckert        Marge Price
Warren Glover         Margaret Szczepaniec
Joe Golombek

Dearborn Street Community Association
Chris Brown, ErieCountyNY1812 Working Group
Karl Frizlen, Design Committee, Elmwood Village Association
George Grasser, Partners for a Livable Western New York
Phil Haberstro, Buffalo Wellness Institute
Wende Mix, PhD, Associate Professor of Geography, Buffalo State College
Riverside Review
St. John’s United Church of Christ
Stevan Stipanovich
Wendel Duchscherer Architects & Engineers, PC
Cassie Wilson

YOUR COMMENTS

Your opinions regarding the ideas and proposals in this plan are important. So is your involvement in improving Historic Black Rock. To share your opinion or get involved in helping the community, contact Richard Mack, co-chair of the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbor Planning Alliance, at 716.877.8400.

Prepared by the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance in partnership with the Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning as a component (proposed) of the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan.

December 29, 2008—DRAFT DOCUMENT

Front Cover Images:
2006 Photo by Bill Parke
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CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

Introduction

In 2000, the Mayor of Buffalo created a neighborhood planning process utilizing participatory neighborhood planning practices called the Good Neighbors Planning Alliance, as part of the initiative to create and implement the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan. As a result, the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (Black Rock-Riverside GNPA) was created, as one of 10 planning alliance areas in the City of Buffalo.

With strong Council Member support, in 2007 the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA began a process of creating neighborhood plans in partnership with local block groups, leading to the current document, Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan. This plan is guided by the following community vision for Historic Black Rock, arrived at by the Dearborn Street Community Association, a prominent block club in the area:

Vision for Historic Black Rock

Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

This vision is adapted from the document, “Draft Shared Vision for Historical Black Rock’s Dearborn Street Community Association”, created with the block club in Summer, 2008, with assistance from Phil Haberstro, director of the Buffalo Wellness Institute.

Planning Context

In February, 2006, the City of Buffalo adopted the Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan, which set forth the planning principles and guidance for future prosperity and development in the City of Buffalo. (See Figure 1.)

One of the key principles in the plan is to “Plan with Neighborhoods: The Comprehensive Plan provides a broad framework for neighborhood redevelop-
ment across the city, but depends on neighborhood residents themselves to create and implement more detailed local plans. In this way, residents can work with City staff to tailor overall policies to local needs, values and visions. Participatory neighborhood planning can also take advantage of local knowledge in applying city-wide policies and help mobilize local resources for implementation.”

“The City has created the Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (GNPA) to support this process of neighborhood planning. Residents have been invited to participate in planning for eleven Planning Communities or districts around the city. Staff from the Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) provides guidance and technical assistance to create usable plans consistent with city-wide policies. All neighborhood plans produced through the GNPA will be submitted to the Planning Board for review and then forwarded to Common Council for adoption.” (Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan, page 86.)

The Black Rock-Riverside GNPA recognized the need to plan locally, first by drafting a broader, GNPA-wide draft plan in January, 2007, and then deciding to augment that effort with more localized “mini-plans” that could address the special circumstances present at a more localized level in five areas that comprise the BRR GNPA (See Figure 4):  
- Black Rock/Niagara St. Commercial  
- Grant-Amherst
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

- Riverside/Tonawanda-Ontario Commercial
- West Hertel/Hertel Commercial
- Tonawanda-Chandler Rail Corridor and North Elmwood Avenue/Potential Development Opportunity Area

During this time, Black Rock-Riverside GNPA planners developed a growing appreciation for the irreplaceable historic and architectural legacy of Historic Black Rock. In addition, Black Rock-Riverside GNPA facilitated or otherwise became aware of several initiatives recently launched in the area; for example, the Black Rock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) Targeted Streets initiative, where Dearborn and East were targeted for home rehabilitation funding in a process that included a community meeting in support of that designation. Additional reasons led to Historic Black Rock being chosen as the focus of the first mini-plan:

1. Historic Black Rock was built out first of all the parts of Black Rock-Riverside, in mid-1800s, and other areas relied on the prosperity of Historic Black Rock to get their start,

2. Historic Black Rock continues to have the most historic, prominent buildings in Black Rock-Riverside and offers many significant regional assets along the waterfront,

3. Historic Black Rock has been recently challenged. The area was the subject of several major developments that highlighted the growing fragility of this historic community, including the 2004 Ambassador Bridge proposal, the 2007 proposal for sex offender housing at 31 Tonawanda Street (a property now slated for student housing), and the 2007 closure of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church (later to become the Buffalo Religious Arts Center in 2008). In addition, rising numbers in certain types of crime, vacant properties, vacant lots, and other issues affecting quality of life demand a community-wide response now, before the problems become intractable and change the character of the community.

4. Historic Black Rock is surrounded by major geographic features on three sides, including rail, creek, and river/highway, and in light of these features, it is of great strategic importance from a geographic perspective: Strengthening Historic Black Rock can form the basis of strengthening in neighboring communities to the north and east, while weakening in Historic Black Rock would make it hard to maintain progress made in other areas. Simply put, Historic Black Rock represents both the past and the future of Black Rock-Riverside.

5. Historic Black Rock has an active block club, the Dearborn Street Community Association, and this block club recognizes the value of neighborhood planning and as a result it has partnered effectively with the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA. This was essential in bringing successful neighborhood planning to fruition, as represented by this, the War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan for Historic Black Rock.

6. Historic Black Rock is on the move! Many key initiatives are presently underway in the community, making it a place where existing work can be leveraged and turned into momentum for a brighter future. Several of these initiatives are highlighted in Chapter 2, titled “Why Black Rock Now?”

Geographic Area

Historic Black Rock is comprised of census tract 59 in the City of Buffalo, NY, plus the Niagara Street commercial/industrial area from Niagara-Tonawanda to Niagara-Ontario as defined by local zoning. It had 3,784 residents in 2000, down from 4,195 in 1990. (See Appendices 4, 5, and 6 for Land Use and Zoning maps and selected demographics.)

The Public Vision

The strength of this plan is its connection to the people who live and work in Historic Black Rock. Throughout the planning process, the reality that residents and businesses in Historic Black Rock

Figure 6: Queen City in the 21st Century: Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan sets forth a series of guiding planning principles that integrate the Community, Economy and Environment to form a cohesive blueprint for Buffalo’s future. The vision for Black Rock is consistent with this comprehensive approach to planning.
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

are the key to both the development of the plan and its successful implementation has been essential premise.

The plan draws inspiration and guidance from the citizen-conceived “Shared Vision for Historical Black Rock’s Dearborn Street Community Association.” This vision (see page 1) was developed in meetings with the residents of Dearborn Street Community Association with the assistance of Phil Haberstro, Executive Director of the Buffalo Wellness Institute in the summer of 2008. It guided the formulation of the geographic boundary of the study area as well as key priorities in the plan. In addition, its comprehensiveness and focus on healthy living make it consistent with the guiding principles of the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan.

Consultations of Experts and Best Practices

However, vision needs to be backed up with excellence in strategy, and this was obtained through many months of consultation with experts in the fields of architecture, historic preservation, planning, urban design, and real estate. Representatives from organizations like the Partners for a Livable Western New York, the Elmwood Village Association, Clinton Brown Associates, Buffalo State College, Wendel Duchscherer Architects & Engineers, PC and the City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning contributed ideas in support of excellence in strategy.

Public Participation

Significant public participation in the formulation of the plan was achieved through a widely-publicized Community Meeting on November 12, 2008 at St. John’s United Church of Christ, at 85 Amherst Street right in the heart of Historic Black Rock. With 50 attendees and using a well-organized program of presentations and roundtable discussions, significant public input was obtained. Finally, transparency and open communication was guaranteed by the process of placing all documents from the November 12 meeting online and inviting comment on them from interested parties via a public internet web site: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/plan_black_rock/ After the November 12 meeting, additional comments were received. (See Appendices 1-3.)
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

First-Hand Fieldwork Research

In addition to expert and local community consultations, first-hand fieldwork research was undertaken to analyze housing, commercial, parks and recreation, community facilities, and problem properties.

Background Studies

Existing proposed or completed plans were identified and assessed, so that this community plan could coordinate with upcoming and established planning initiatives. (See Appendix 7)

Community Knowledge

Finally, knowledge of nearby communities has helped as planning efforts focused on what Historic Black Rock is and why it is important. Through the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA planning process, the strengths and advantages of other communities in the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA is well-known to planners and as a result it became possible to fully articulate and assert the uniqueness of Historic Black Rock, knowing that other communities have their unique advantages which will serve them well in planning efforts involving them in the near future.

Goals of the Planning Process

The planning principles that have guided development of this plan and its goals are a reflection of all the above sources and research, plus guidance provided in Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan. These include:

• Keeping the community’s vision for itself at the forefront of plan work and recommendations.
• Identifying the future strength of the area as being in the “Historic Black Rock” brand name.
• Basing the image of the community on its historic past, for which innovation, industry, a waterfront orientation and a sense of community are the main characteristics.
• Working with complementary initiatives and organizations active in Historic Black Rock, to sustain recent gains and transfer that energy into a successful plan.
• Preserving, restoring and promoting the area’s historic assets.
• Taking a fresh look. This community has existed a long time and it lives on within the context of a city which has experienced significant social and economic change in the recent and enduring past. Rather than relying on long-held assumptions, the planning process has consistently followed a “show me” approach to planning analysis — i.e. “Why Black Rock Now?” — seeking out new ideas and fresh interpretations of existing conditions.
• Supporting interventions resulting from this plan that promote a vital urban neighborhood experience for all who live, work, visit, and play in Historic Black Rock.
• Using the I-190 and Sciajaquada Expressway highways as resources for commercial development, not merely obstacles, until the day when this infrastructure is replaced by transportation features that are community-friendly.
• Making the neighborhood safe and easy for people to get around in.
• Creating new housing opportunities while strengthening rehabilitation of existing and frequently historic homes and buildings.
• Addressing the presence of negative influences on quality of life, like vacant properties, blight and crime.
• Acting in concert with the sound planning principles found in Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan and in strong collaboration with the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA process.

Outline of the Plan

This plan has five chapters and seven appendices. This chapter, Chapter 1 - “Overview”, provides the Vision for Historic Black Rock, the planning context and related topics, and the Goals of the Planning Process. Chapter 2, “Why Black Rock Now,” details why Historic Black Rock is worth preserving and improving. Chapter 3, “Recommendations,” puts forth a series of action steps to guide stabilization and future growth in Historic Black Rock. Chapter 4, “Plan Implementation,” sequences future actions, identifies key partners, and sets forth next steps for each action. Chapter 5, “Funding,” identifies funding sources and programs which may help implement the recommended actions. Finally, a complete Appendix provides key documents on publicity, public participation, maps, demographics and other plans and projects.

Figure 10: “You Is Are My Best Friend”, a child’s sidewalk chalk message found during the April, 2008 survey of housing conditions.
CHAPTER 2: WHY BLACK ROCK NOW?

The previous chapter provided a number of reasons, from a planning perspective, that Historic Black Rock is important: it was built first, it has assets of regional significance, several recent developments have highlighted its growing fragility, its geographic placement makes it strategic, it has an active block club, and it is on the move. This last point — the fact that Historic Black Rock is on the move — is worth expanding upon as we address the question, "Why Black Rock Now?"

In selecting a first community to initiate planning activities among many worthy ones in Black Rock-Riverside, it was advantageous to be able to identify and leverage existing programs and projects, first so that planning recommendations can be integrated into a wider whole, but also so that these recommendations could be fed by the progress of additional efforts, which can create the momentum needed for successful implementation. In planning, an important, real-world dynamic is always present, involving the community, funding partners, government, and it is simply this: Everyone wants to see resources committed be successfully and effectively implemented. The presence of existing programs and projects makes solving that equation successfully easier.

Among the notable existing programs or projects in or near Historic Black Rock are:

**Buffalo Weed & Seed Black Rock-Riverside, through U.S. Department of Justice = $100,000** (status: application pending) This is a U.S. Dept. of Justice grant program to fund increased law enforcement and community policing to "weed out" criminal activity, and then support community programs to "seed" community revitalization. It does its work thorough partnerships involving multiple agencies and local residents. It is coordinated through the City of Buffalo Office of Citizen Services.

**Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfields Opportunity Area Program = $425,000** (status: grant pending) The NYS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, made possible by the Superfund/
CHAPTER 2: WHY BLACK ROCK NOW?

County War of 1812 Planning Group led by local historian and neighborhood advocate Chris Brown. As part of this group’s work, it is meeting with the Bintional Touring Alliance and the 1812 Bicentennial Legacy Council to coordinate local efforts with city-wide and international ones. Significant War of 1812 events in the Historic Black Rock area include:

- October, 1812 Capture of the Brigs Detroit and Caledonia,
- December, 1812 British Landing for the Burning of Black Rock and Buffalo,
- May, 1813 Site of the Naval Ship Yard of Commodore Perry, and
- August, 1814 Battle of Scajaquada Creek.

The area has historic significance for other times as well.

**Purchase of the Closed St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church by the New Buffalo Religious Arts Center.** This new museum/information center is an outstanding example of adaptive reuse of a historic church building, while at the same time providing a valuable public service, by creating a home for artifacts and art from closed houses of worship throughout Western New York.

**Black Rock-Riverside NHS - Various Programs**

Black Rock-Riverside NHS is a full-service neighborhood housing agency serving the area and its headquarters are located nearby at 203 Military Rd. In addition to providing housing programs in Historic Black Rock that are also offered throughout the rest of its service area, the agency is involved in several initiatives with a special geographic emphasis that includes Historic Black Rock. These include Judge Nowak's Black Rock Vacancy Initiative, the 2008 Block by Block AHC Program (One-half of the $100K budget is for five houses on Dearborn), and a CHDO project at 77 East St. The agency also maintains a contractors list (licensed, insured contractors) and offers other referral services, which are important as homeowners endeavor to maintain their historic homes.

**North West Buffalo Community Center - Various Programs**

North West Buffalo Community Center is a comprehensive community center serving the area, located nearby at 155 Lawn Ave. For more information, visit: http://www.nwbccinc.org/

**Significant Parks Improvements at Squaw Island Park and Tow Path Park, and Proposed Improvements at the Ontario Street Boat Launch and Cornelius Creek Park**

Squaw Island Park has been created by converting a 60-acre municipal landfill with an innovative closure concept approved by the NYSDEC and the heavy use of new plant massing and wildflower mixtures. It is linked to the Riverwalk. Phase I and Entrance Improvements are completed. Phase II is contingent on funding. Total project cost: $12.6 million.

Tow Path Park is located along the Niagara River at the foot of Hertel Avenue. It is linked to the Riverwalk and has been absorbed by the County Park system. Phase I improvements included basic re-grading, seeding, walkway amenities and park furniture. Phase I is complete. Phase II involves incorporating into the park an interpretative historic sign, improved access/egress via Hertel Ave, improved fencing/landscaping adjacent to Rich Marina, some new picnic tables, lighting, and new plantings throughout the park. Phase II is about 90% complete. Total project cost: $826,000.
CHAPTER 2: WHY BLACK ROCK NOW?

Figure 15: Slides regarding improvements at Squaw Island Park from the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation "Buffalo Waterfront Projects: Project Summary and Update", October, 2007.

A New Concept: “Black Rock Canal Park”  
(Currently Known as the Ontario Street Boat Launch) 
Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance 
Prepared by the Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design Committee 
Graphics Courtesy of Steven F. Gobranich

Figures 16-17: Excerpts from the presentation for the Black Rock Canal Park proposal, which would combine the Ontario Street Boat Launch with adjacent Cornelius Creek and bring added facilities and recreational amenities to the area.
CHAPTER 2: WHY BLACK ROCK NOW?

The Ontario Street Boat Launch and Cornelius Creek Park (see Figures 16-17) are the subject of an award-winning conceptual vision which specifies specific improvements to these properties that will lead to their transformation into “Black Rock Canal Park,” featuring new and expanded facilities and recreational amenities.

Completion of the Scajaquada Pathway Phase III Linkage to International Railroad Bridge/Army Corps of Engineers  Completion of three critical gaps along the pathway from Delaware Park to the Riverwalk at the Niagara River have been achieved, including a segment west of Niagara Street from Forest Avenue to the International Railroad Bridge/Army Corps of Engineers parking lot and I-190 pedestrian bridge. Total overall project cost: $1.7 million.

Renovation of Riverside High School  Located near the northern border of Historic Black Rock, the renovation of Riverside High School is an over $30 million Joint Schools Construction Board project with completion slated for April, 2010.

Renovation of the school will occur in two phases, and will include construction of a new Pavilion Addition and Synthetic Football Field. These exciting, new features will vastly improve the recreational facilities and provide an opportunity for sporting events at the school with spectators drawn from miles around, including football games featuring the Riverside Frontiers, who in 2008 had a 10-1 record and won the 105th Harvard Cup football championship at All High Stadium.

Figure 18: Riverside High School proposed site plan.
1. Preserve and Strengthen Community Identity

From the Vision Statement:
Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

Changes in economic fortunes at all levels — government, business, family and individual — have led to either the loss of some historic buildings to demolition or to decay due to low maintenance. This trend will continue into the future if proactive steps are not taken, and it threatens the architectural and historic character of the area.

CURRENT STATUS

Several attempts at surveying the area to aid historic designations have been made over the years, in 1979 and in 1995. However, deterioration continues. Fortunately, the historic and architectural legacy is still in evidence, and it continues to recognition: tour operators are drawn to the area. For example, the Campaign for Greater Buffalo advertised “The Architectural and Industrial Heritage of Black Rock and Riverside” in 2008, a 2-hour tour for $20 held twice during the summer.

What is the History? Black Rock — Then and Now

Black Rock was originally known as a village in an area near the Peace Bridge, where a long rock, black in color, was situated along the Niagara River. Over time, this area — also known as “Upper Black Rock” due to the flow of the Niagara River northward from the Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, so that this area was perceived as being “upriver” — became absorbed into the City of Buffalo.

Lower Black Rock — the area north of Scajaquada Creek — kept its identity and its name over time because the Creek served as a natural boundary between it and Buffalo’s downtown, political subdivisions kept the area cohesive, and the huge economic prosperity. Lower Black Rock comprised the area of what we call Historic Black Rock today.

Settlement

Going back to its earliest days, Historic Black Rock originated from the interaction of Native Americans and European settlers. A community calendar published in 1979 excerpted here serves as a guide: “Two square miles lying north and west of..."
CHAPGER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

the Scajacqua Creek became known as the Parrish Tract, and was the land upon which the Lower Rock developed. The land was given to Jasper Parrish and Horatio Jones by the Iroquois, in gratitude for their help with the treaties (between the Iroquois and settlers).” With the completion of the American Revolution and ensuing treaties, the area became safe to settle in. As early as 1800 the U.S. Army had been building in the Parrish Tract, and the Battle of Scjayauada Bridge, spanning the Creek at Niagara St., marked the last hostile British advance during the War of 1812.

Following the War of 1812, the divisions which became known as Upper Rock and Lower Rock came into being. “The state presented General Peter Porter with a gift for his service and that gift, a part of the mile strip laid out as a safety measure against waterfront attacks in wartime from about Ferry St. north to Lafayette, became known as the Ferry Lot. All land south of the Ferry Lot to Porter Ave. was known as the South Village. Together, this land became the Upper Rock and the Parrish Tract, lying between the Scajacqua Creek and the Farm of W.A. Bird, became known as the Lower Rock, or the Black Rock Dam.”

With the arrival of Erie Canal, and water power from Black Rock Dam, milling and other industrial operations flourished in the years to come. A document produced by the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier titled “Black Rock Chronicle” illustrates the trend, “In 1830, Samuel Howell and his Irish wife built a stone house and store at the southeast corner of Dearborn and Amherst Streets (still standing). Below the falls of the harbor dam, he established a successful milling works. Independent local merchants and millers like Howell and his solid German neighbors became the bedrock for the community. In addition to distinct physical boundaries, such as the Creek to the south, and early political self-control through Twelfth Ward dominance, the role of The Dam’s institutions and organizations was vital to the evolution of a neighborhood consciousness. The Black Rock Businessmen’s Association, founded in 1886, worked to foster prosperous corner-store enterprise. And during that time, larger industrial operations along the waterfront and inland along Tonawanda Street were established.

Figure 20: A photographic image of Historic Black Rock, with highlights of certain historical features. Image courtesy of Caleb Basiliko and Margaret Szczepaniec.
Figures 21-22: Map showing selected historic resources in Historic Black Rock (see accompany photos and descriptions on following page). Also shown are a 1856 map courtesy of Scott Glasgow (lower left) and an early 1870s view of Niagara Street.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Pratt and Letchworth’s foundry facilities were expanded on Tonawanda Street in 1883.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)
1. Support completion of an expert historic resources survey for Black Rock and undertake next steps of creating a State and National Register historic district and preserving historic resources. A historic resources survey identifies the historic assets of an area. It can lead to a State and National Register historic district nomination. A State and National Register historic district does not impose restrictions on exterior alterations. It does enhance community character and makes more buildings eligible for grants and funding and tax credits.
2. Prepare a timeline of historical events in Black Rock and vicinity.
3. Promote historical event anniversary celebrations/exhibits and reenactments (for example, the War of 1812 anniversary, etc.).
4. Obtain funding for preservation-related activities from foundations and other sources.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)
1. Develop promotional programming and materials, for example, tours, heritage trails, brochures, a community map, markers, a plaque program, and historical narrative boards like those put in place by the Landmark Society at Niagara Square.
2. Encourage the development of a historical photo and artifact library, including supporting the photo-gathering efforts of Fundalinski Studios.
3. Do a virtual or real local history museum; start with a website and perhaps a movable display gallery, to help identify and interpret the history.
4. Take steps to commemorate and celebrate ties to other history related to the area, including the area’s Native American history as part of the Iroquois Confederacy, the outfitting of the Griffon, Abolitionist/Underground Railroad legacy, role in water power and electrical power innovation, railroad history, and multicultural past.

2. Improve Housing

From the Vision Statement:
Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

Historic Black Rock is an area of low cost housing which is also historic and architecturally distinctive. One challenge for areas like this is having home improvements that are sensitive to their historic context. The cost of labor and materials have risen. At the same time, historic structures need...
more frequent maintenance than new ones and money is tight. An example of how this plays out in the community is the area of window replacement. Windows that fit into existing window openings on historic structures can be hard to obtain and purchase. Instead, many property owners modify the openings or use easy-to-find and less expensive generic window frames.

Changing fortunes and property ownership has led to more vacant and problem properties than in the past. The vacant housing rate was 7.6% in 1990 and was 13.9% in 2000. Not only does this trend threaten the community’s character, it also dilutes the quality of life for local residents and businesses. Some of these properties are in prominent locations, for example along the Niagara Street commercial corridor or on corner lots within the residential area. Connecting these properties to new owners and tenants, facilitating rehabilitation, and encouraging responsible maintenance are key to solving the vacant and problem property problem and making the area’s low cost of housing an asset now and in the future.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that, for certain homebuyers, modern building features are needed and new housing can provide them.

Finally, to realize the area’s true potential as a walkable community, finding goods and services, including community services like libraries and teen centers, in or near the neighborhood is important. Therefore, a Life Learning Center is proposed for a currently empty, prominently located, city owned property. (See Figure 25.)

CURRENT STATUS

The neighborhood benefits from a strong relationship with city officials and the local housing agency, Black Rock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services, which offers many housing programs are focused on the area that address information and referral, loans, grants, code compliance, and housing rehabilitation.

In the case of new housing, the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA’s Housing Committee, in collaboration with the Dearborn Street Community...
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Association, has done housing condition surveys, neighborhood tours, and mapping analysis. As a result of these efforts, they have not only identified key neighborhood housing trends and issue, but they have led the way in developing an exciting concept plan, titled Black Rock Village Neighborhood Redevelopment (see Figure 24), which serves as an example of how new housing, housing rehabilitation, traffic calming, new roads, greenspace, and new community spaces can fit into the existing urban fabric of the neighborhood. More concept plans, and implementation of them, are needed.

At the same time, many committed members of the community are already in evidence (see the story in Figure 23) and this is a strength to build on. They lead by example in showing that Historic Black Rock is an interesting and beneficial place to own or rent a home and run a business.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)

1. Support the strengthening of BRR NHS programs that promote better housing opportunities and conditions.
2. Help create new block clubs where needed.
3. Take advantage of code enforcement opportunities and support existing or new approaches to address problem properties.
4. Support Judge Nowak housing court initiative.
5. Create concept plans for new housing development and facilitate their implementation.
6. Work with Historic Restoration Committee to develop/enhance a service for handyman/contractor referral and review in partnership with BRR NHS, so that historic structures can be better maintained by private owners.
7. Work with BRR NHS to connect home-seekers with potential properties.
8. Work with BRR NHS on targeted streets program and housing-related planning.
9. Create a Life Learning Center, with 69 Hamilton as a possible location.

Figure 25: A Life Learning Center would be a satellite for many community services located elsewhere — and some unique to Historic Black Rock — and by doing so accomplish multiple objectives: reuse of a city-owned brick building located on a corner site while improving access to services and contributing to the walkability of the neighborhood. Map courtesy of Wende Mixx.
Figure 26: Map of housing-related initiatives in Historic Black Rock shows lots of activity, from a variety of sources: government, NHS, block club, and the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA. It also shows that more block clubs (in light blue shading) are needed.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):
1. Monitor local property status with the help of block clubs.
2. Encourage homesteading.
3. Develop an inventory of infill lots and procedure for keeping it updated.
4. Support conversion of upper floors of commercial buildings to private apartments, urban lofts, and artistic spaces for all of the performing or static arts and other compatible uses.
5. Track owner occupancy ratios, in an effort to keep owner occupancy at 75% or above.

3. Improve Public Safety

From the Vision Statement:
Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

Historic Black Rock is an urban neighborhood that is densely settled, featuring low cost housing. Resident income levels are mixed, with the incomes falling in recent decades with shifts downward in the city’s economic fortunes. In census tract 59 median household income in 1989 was $17,250, and in 1999 it was $19,167, while, if it kept pace with inflation, it would have been $23,176 in 1999. (See Appendix 6 and http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)

In some ways, dense settlement and low cost housing serve as neighborhood advantages. In others, they are disadvantages, and these characteristics, plus falling family incomes, have contributed to significant challenges in the area of criminal activity. Fortunately the neighborhood is not plagued by the most serious of crimes: murder and rape. However, crimes like robbery, burglary, prostitution, sex offenses and drug crimes appear to be increasing, based on recent crime statistics (see Figure 27), and these trends warrant particular attention from residents, businesses, elected officials, and law enforcement. There is additional concern in the community about the spread of crime. Decreases in some types of crime in other areas of the city due to improved police effectiveness and neighborhood revitalization can result in corresponding increases elsewhere like Historic Black Rock. The community fabric of Historic Black Rock is particularly vulnerable to this phenomenon, as an
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Area of low cost housing and mixed incomes which has not suffered widespread blight and crime to the extent that some other areas of the city have and, as a result, may be “fertile ground” for increased criminal activity as other areas experience better police effectiveness and neighborhood improvement.

Also of special importance to this densely-settled neighborhood are quality of life crimes. Ranging from noise violations to the effects of prostitution, these crimes intimidate residents, visitors, and business patrons, make it more difficult to live and work in the area, and contribute to the rise of additional criminal activity. As a result, it is essential to address these crimes as part of an overall crime prevention and abatement strategy. Part of addressing these crimes is establishing an ongoing partnership between the police department and the community that is effective at addressing various crime problems.

It is also important to keep in mind that public safety is not limited to business districts or residential areas. Historic Black Rock has significant waterfront parks, recreational trails, industrial property, and railway corridors in or near to it. These areas require their own policing attention. In parks and trails, vandalism and nuisance behavior like public drinking are major concerns. In industrial areas and railway corridors, crimes to property in the form of dumping are a concern, as well as crimes to persons who use these stretches of land as shortcuts to other parts of the area.

Historic Black Rock is also host to the International Railroad Bridge to Canada as well as the international border along the Niagara River, leading to a continuing need for local emphasis on homeland security and disaster preparedness.

Finally, public safety includes not only criminal activity and border issues, but also involves crime prevention and abatement of other problems in society that contribute to the rise of crime.

CURRENT STATUS

D-District Police, in partnership with the City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, Black Rock-Riverside GNPA, and other organizations, has applied in 2008 for a U.S. Department of Justice-funded grant to establish a “Buffalo Weed & Seed Black Rock-Riverside” project site. This site, to be coordinated through the city’s Office of Citizen Services, will if funded serve as a strategic alliance of law enforcement, elected officials, community agencies, residents and businesses to “weed out” criminal activity and “seed” the area with effective community-based programs. Buffalo has had several Weed & Seed sites, including one currently based in the Lower East Side (see Figure 29). Even if funding is not received, many of the initiatives detailed in the application, if pursued effectively, can bring about improvements various areas of public safety in Historic Black Rock.

In addition, recent police work involving D-District, the Buffalo Police Narcotics Unit, and State Police has yielded a significant crackdown in the drug problem in and around Historic Black Rock. A 10-month investigation was recently completed in the entire Black Rock-Riverside area dubbed “Operation Trick or Treat.” According to a published report in the Buffalo News (10/31/08), search warrants led to the confiscation of $1 million in cocaine, smaller amounts of heroin and marijuana, $30,000 in seized cash, 27 guns, and dozens of arrests. Drug peddling in public housing areas was one of the activities targeted. Common Council Member Joseph Golombek Jr. of the North District said he received phone calls and e-mails from grateful residents. "People were just thrilled," he said. It is important to note that the vast majority of persons arrested came from addresses outside of the Historic Black Rock neighborhood.

Area block clubs and community organizations and the Public Safety Committee of the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA continue to work with law enforcement personnel to effectuate improvements in public safety in the area.
STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years):
1. Support Buffalo Weed & Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application and its Law Enforcement, Community Policing, Prevention/Intervention/ Treatment, and Neighborhood Restoration goals.
2. Raise community awareness of ways to reduce crime.
3. Develop knowledge and support of community policing and law enforcement best practices and techniques so that the best ones can be implemented locally. (for example, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Community Oriented Policing, Situational Crime Prevention, and Problem-Oriented Policing).
4. Develop awareness of crime trends and incidences so that better crime information can facilitate crime prevention strategies.
5. Explore community partnerships that can influence crime reduction.
6. Increase awareness of Homeland Security operations in the planning neighborhood, and encourage their siting here.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):
1. Engage more adolescents in neighborhood life and its quality of life goals. One way to do this would be to hold police sponsored events that include collaborations with local groups that celebrate local cultural groups and promote community spirit.
2. Increase presence and visibility of public safety officers.
3. Improve the communication and relationships between residents and the police force.
4. Encourage prosecution of more criminals.
5. Police force more responsive to residential calls for assistance.
6. Coordinate with block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association so that they can be more pro-active in their security measures.

Figure 30: A door knob flyer distributed around UB’s South Campus helps local residents, both owner and renter, learn ways to promote public safety. A similar effort is being considered by the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA Public Safety Committee.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes

From the Vision Statement:
Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

The Niagara Street commercial area is a key component of Historic Black Rock. From the earliest days of settlement, the Niagara Street commercial area has provided income, jobs, goods, services, and enhancements to the quality of life of visitors and residents alike.

Infrastructure Changes Affect Community Character Over Time

However, the Niagara Street commercial area is not the same as it was in the 19th or 20th centuries. Major transportation infrastructure has been added to the neighborhood, especially with the 1950s addition of the I-190 between Niagara Street and the waterfront. Its impact on community life as a barrier between the community and the waterfront has been mitigated somewhat in recent years by recent waterfront park and recreational trail development. However, the area has not appeared to realize a long-time goal of using the highway’s presence as a way to increase local business activity.

Along Niagara Street itself, the street has evolved from its origins as a dirt street into a major thoroughfare, with two lanes in each direction running north-south separated by a double yellow line. Niagara Street now serves as a snow evacuation route, bus service route, truck route, and “principal arterial” for the purposes of road classification. However, speeding traffic and a need for street features to help enhance multiple modes of travel on Niagara Street are community concerns based on feedback from the November
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 33: Litter and overgrown weeds on a sidewalk in this photo taken in November, 2008 illustrate a need for a beautification activities along Niagara Street.

12, 2008 Community Meeting. Suggestions included reconstructing Niagara Street between Bridge and Arthur Streets and incorporating bike lanes, lighting, old-style street lamps, curbs, sidewalks, planters, traffic calming measures, reduced lanes, signage, and coordinated traffic lights, all to keep the business district “walking friendly” and bike friendly.

Need for Active Business Association

Commercial activity on Niagara Street trends upward and downward. Based on a January, 2008 inventory of properties, Niagara Street can be characterized as a healthy neighborhood business zone with many opportunities for improvement. It is a mixture of small, midsize, and larger commercial enterprises, some local and some part of national corporations.

However, it appears that there is no current regularly-meeting business association for Niagara Street in Historic Black Rock. This is a key weakness that should be immediately addressed. A functional business association will make it possible for improvements for Niagara Street in Historic Black Rock to be planned effectively with adequate community support. It will also help individual businesses work together to attract and retain business customers to Niagara Street. Part of attracting and retaining customers is giving them an interesting place to be as they conduct their business. This plan recommends that, in addition to re-establishing an active business association along Niagara Street, businesses work together to first assess business strengths along Niagara Street, then segment the street into identifiable and marketable parts (see Figure 34 for a Preliminary Segmentation Study), and then build within the business association the organizational and planning capacity to bring about urban design and infrastructure improvements to Niagara Street, as well as ensuring simple but critical tasks like sidewalk cleanliness are taken care of. (For more discussion of urban design and infrastructure improvements for Niagara Street, see the next section, “5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages.”)

CURRENT STATUS

Several major employers are located along the Niagara Street commercial corridor in Historic Black Rock, defined as being between Tonawanda and Ontario Streets. These include DiVal Safety and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. DiVal Safety has its headquarters at 1721 Niagara Street and identifies itself as “a premier safety distributor in the United States.” The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Buffalo District employs approximately 300 people in seven offices across three states and has a campus of offices and operations facilities in Historic Black Rock at 1776 Niagara Street. The Buffalo District is one of the corp’s 41 subordinate districts throughout the US.

Local businesses are also prominent. Examples include: professional offices like Peter J. Smith & Company, a full service urban design, urban and regional planning, and economic development firm with offices at 1888 and 1896 Niagara Street; marine retailers like Brobeil Marine and Obersheimer’s Sailor Supply; restaurants like Angie’s Pizza House and Restaurant and the Riverview Restaurant; and long-standing family-owned businesses like “Peter W. Eberz & Son, Est. 1898” at 1901 Niagara Street.

However, Niagara Street can certainly be a stronger commercial corridor than it is today. The potential to draw additional customers is evident, in light of the architectural, historical, and recreation/waterfront assets of the area and the busyness of the nearby highway, which averages a daily traffic count of 70,000 vehicles and offers easy on-and-off ramps to Niagara Street. This plan suggests a number of ways to strengthen the commercial corridor and market the area to visitors, residents, and customers alike.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years):
Figure 34: This preliminary segmentation study of Niagara Street commercial corridor divides it into 4 major segments, from north to south: Commercial-Plaza, Mixed Use Residential-Commercial, Commercial-Historic and Commercial-Industrial.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Commercial
1. Revitalize business association activities on Niagara Street and encourage participation of local businesses.
2. Hold educational sessions/distribute brochure-newsletter/do articles on good practices like the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Four-Point Approach™, Why Elmwood Works initiative, the Erie Niagara Framework for Regional Growth, local economic development-related programs, and area advantages like demographics and neighborhood recreational and cultural attractions. For example, storefront businesses should have attractive, appealing signage above the street windows, which should be maximum open to show displays of the goods and/or services available in that store. Other examples: cleanliness, beautification, promoting/marketing the district to outside patrons, nourishing a sense of community within the neighborhood, façade improvements, and repairing the urban fabric.  
3. Explore the benefits of looking at Niagara Street in terms of market segments. 
4. Support transportation-related improvements that will positively impact Niagara St. (see the next section, “5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages.”) 
5. Address public safety needs of visitors (see section 3)

Marketing
1. Start community public interest activities, e.g., garden walks, health fairs, farmer’s markets, home buyer seminars, business days with discounts, school and community center open houses. 
2. Seek funding. A 501c3 corporation can receive loans and grants. 
3. Develop branding. If Black Rock is to return to its original village layout, the community must have its own identifying brand as is the case of the Allentown or Elmwood communities.
4. Market Niagara St.’s easy highway access and being minutes to downtown. 
5. Build off of opportunities presented by Ed Hogle’s project (Rock Harbor Commons at Rock Harbor Village)

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):
Commercial
1. Open up more storefront businesses with attractive signage. 
2. Research existing programs, promote development of new programs, and help in implementation of programs that help finance improvements that encourage business development and growth. Examples include signage, low interest loans, tax abatement, and façade improvement. 
3. Encourage development/expansion of commercial services that accommodate incidental business that arrives from visitors so it can become destination business.

Marketing
1. Sponsor community festivals in parks or along one or a series of closed-off streets with community service groups and businesses renting tables.

Figure 35: Walkability: On the left is a photo of Niagara Street in the 1870s, with travel slow and difficult for both pedestrians and horse and buggy. On the right is Niagara Street in 2008; travel is greatly improved for cars, but pedestrians and bicyclists receive insufficient protection due to factors like the absence of traffic calming measures, faded crosswalks, and no bike lanes.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Promote maritime activities: boating, birding, fishing, etc.

3. Use multicultural past and present as an impetus to organize events, festivals, goods and services that bring the neighborhood together.

4. Leverage direct bike path/multi-use trail connections to downtown, Tonawandas, and Scajaquada Pathway.

5. Take steps to attract immigrants, yuppies, risk-takers, students, artists, musicians, craftspeople.

5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages

From the Vision Statement:
Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

Previous discussion (see page 21) has described the addition of major transportation infrastructure in Historic Black Rock and its effect on the community. This trend may not be over. The Ambassador Bridge has been proposed for this neighborhood and it is important to note that such a facility will include many negative impacts should it be built as proposed. (For more on this, see “Private international bridge stalled by lack of government support” in the 10/14/08 Buffalo News.)

It is important to also address local street improvements. Recent legislation passed by the Buffalo Common Council emphasizes the need for “Complete Streets” to be incorporated as part of improvements to street infrastructure in the City of Buffalo in the future. Complete Streets are defined as “facilities that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Persons with disabilities, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders are able to safely move along and
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

and the vehicles themselves, an intact urban housing and commercial fabric is becoming more widely recognized as desirable assets. Encouraging a variety of transportation choices, and putting infrastructure into effect that supports those choices, is more important today than ever.

Historic Black Rock is well-positioned to lure new “cultural tourism” visitors who will come to see and enjoy local history, culture, architecture and waterfront recreational opportunities. At the same time, excellent highway access and traveler services offered by the many entrances and exits for the highway in Historic Black Rock presents an opportunity to marketing convenience to travelers by on the highway.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years):
1. Support research into the feasibility and positive transformative effects of changing Niagara St., or portions of it, “from a 4-lane route to a 3-lane street”. This would calm traffic, improve walkability, and stimulate shopper activity in the business corridor. Design alternatives include adding a turning lane in the middle along with bike lanes at each curb or angled parking or median or other appropriate configuration. Niagara Street is managed and maintained by the City of Buffalo, while at the same time serving as a NYS numbered route, truck route, snow emergency route, and bus route. A request for a traffic simulation study should be made to the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council, so that a study can analyze the effects of changes to the design of Niagara St. or portions of it in early 2009.
2. Explore additional traffic calming measures in the neighborhood, for example by timing traffic signals, posting speed limit signs, incorporating textured crosswalks in paving, developing roundabouts.
3. Plan and implement streetscape improvements at key intersection, gateway, and commercial and cultural corridors in Historic Black Rock:
   - Key Gateway Intersection: Niagara & Amherst
   - Other Gateways: Niagara & Tonawanda, Tonawanda & Amherst, Tonawanda & Hertel, and Niagara & Ontario.
   - Commercial Corridor: Niagara Street
Figure 39: A map of existing transportation features which also shows suggested improvements to enhance community walkability while leveraging existing transportation advantages.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cultural Corridor: Amherst Street
4. Block grant funds can provide an improved street infrastructure, consisting of brighter street lighting, plantings, trees, benches, gardens, sidewalks, security cameras, and perhaps a clock on alternate corners.
5. Integrate a public art component into streetscape improvements.
6. While planning improvements, keep existing streetscape and transportation infrastructure maintained to ensure pedestrian safety.
7. Add highway signage to the I-190 that advertises traveler services in Black Rock. (See Figure 37.) With approximately 70,000 vehicles travelling the highway past Historic Black Rock, these signs could let travelers know of convenient services while also bringing business to Niagara St.
9. Black Rock-Riverside GNPA has voted against erecting the Ambassador Bridge at this site.
10. Add signage to effectively inform travelers as to highway entrances, neighborhood gateways, park entrances, historic and cultural attractions, and other neighborhood amenities.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):
1. Converting Niagara Street to a 3-lane street may create a need for more off-street parking. Investigate use of vacant lots, out-of-business commercial lots, and recent demolitions sites as possible off street parking opportunities.
2. Investigate the feasibility of relocating the I-190 inland to the Tonawanda Rail Corridor.
3. Encourage the use of mass transit.

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront)

Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to the Riverwalk and Seaway Trail, recreational resources, and waterfront is an imperative for Historic Black Rock. While the park, trail, and scenic route development has improved access to the waterfront for the community since the placement of the I-190 on the old Erie Canal and towpath in the 1950s, some planning issues remain. As of this writing, park projects remain incomplete at each of the three major park sites: Squaw Island Park, Tow Path Park, and the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park. In addition, the Riverwalk and Seaway Trail appear to be underutilized opportunities to promote the scenic beauty of the area. Wayfinding signage could be improved in many areas leading to the parks.

It is also important to continue the planning process to seize opportunities to further create existing recreational assets in the community. Zoning guidelines associated with the Smart Code movement, for example, support the creation of neighborhood greenspaces/parks at a higher level of density within residential neighborhoods than is seen in Historic Black Rock today. Such innovations are implementable as vacant parcels become available due to demolition of problem property: For example, create a Black Rock Heritage Park at Dearborn & Hamilton within the residential fabric of the community. (See Figure 42.)

Finally, it is important that upcoming projects for land along the waterfront adhere to local, state, and federal plans and regulations.

CURRENT STATUS

Improvements are 90% complete at Tow Path Park, awaiting funding for Phase II at Squaw Island Park, and proposed for the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park. Buffalo Riverkeepers is anticipating funding to revitalize the Riverwalk area, including the former toll plaza site, the Naval Yard site, and Rich Marina. Anticipated funding will also support preparation of a feasibility study for the improvements proposed as part of the Black Rock Canal Park concept for the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years):
1. Support completion of planned improvements to Squaw Island Park, Tow Path Park, and the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park.

CHALLENGES

Matching up the community to its parks, trails,
Figure 40: A map of existing parks, playfields, and recreational land, and waterfront land uses.
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Support creation and maintenance of clean, safe parks and microparks, and access to same: For example, establish Black Rock Heritage Park at 269 Dearborn at Dearborn & Hamilton, within the residential fabric of the community.

3. Have successful community volunteer involvement in maintenance of parks and their features.

4. Promote waterfront development that is consistent with local, state, and federal plans and regulations.

5. Add desirable community features into parks, microparks, scenic trails, etc., like lighting, seating furniture, wi-fi, game tables, skate spots, bubblers, water fountains, etc., without creating neighborhood nuisance behavior.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):

1. Promote safety in the parks.

2. Improve use of the parks.

3. Facilitate new improvements to parks.

4. Support new recreational trails/bike paths and greenway connections, and expansion and improvement of existing ones, like the Sca- jaquada Creek Bike Path, Seaway Trail, Riverwalk, to link parks/recreational assets to themselves and to other neighborhoods.

7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design

Enjoy a safe, clean, diverse, and walkable neighborhood with a sense of community that is widely admired. Vibrant churches, stable home values, a prosperous nearby Niagara Street business district and easy access to waterfront parks and the Riverwalk provide amenities and real history unique to their community. Active citizen participation in neighborhood life sustains the community’s harmonious quality of life.

CHALLENGES

From a planning perspective, a harmonious quality of life can be facilitated by improvements to the
CHAPTER 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

built environment as well as the social environment. However, just as more neighborhood planning is needed for communities like Historic Black Rock to realize their full potential, so is good design in the built environment. Projects involving architecture, engineering and design should work themselves in complementary ways into the existing urban fabric. Context is key, and in Historic Black Rock the context is historic architecture of good quality. However, a tour of the neighborhood yields many examples, with increasing frequency of late, of non-contextual design and work incorporating inexpensive materials of modest quality. Further, vacant lots create an appearance of blight. Finally, unutilized brownfields along the rail corridors present both untapped land development opportunities and public safety problem areas.

CURRENT STATUS

There are many gateways into Historic Black Rock, and Niagara Street is a major local thoroughfare. Interesting opportunities can even be found along the Thruway to showcase Historic Black Rock to visitors and passers-by on the I-190 (see Figure 41). In addition, efforts underway to recognize the historic character of the area, plus the preponderance of buildings constructed in eras of strong design and quality materials, help make the case that creating attractive buildings and other community features are worth the trouble and investment.

A number of prominent organizations responsible for planning in strong local commercial corridors (Elmwood Village Association), neighborhoods (East Delavan Good Neighbors Planning Alliance), and project areas (The Larkin District) have all advocated for design guidelines and improved zoning regulations. While site plan review by the Zoning and Planning Boards is part of the existing rules and regulations governing development in the city, innovative tools like design guidelines and improved zoning regulations are also available and are not currently used in Buffalo. These could serve to further protect neighborhood character and themes while also making it easier to build with any eye toward context. In a similar manner that other parts of Buffalo seek to use these tools, they and other special district designations should be used to protect the historic and architectural fabric of Niagara Street and Historic Black Rock.

STRATEGIES

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years):

1. Advocate for the development of design standards, zoning regulations, and special designations that protect the neighborhood character of Historic Black Rock. Work with the City of Buffalo and community stakeholders to effect these positive changes.
2. Plan streetscape and infrastructure improvements along the Niagara Street commercial corridor, at key gateways, and along the cultural corridor on Amherst St. between Niagara and Tonawanda Sts. (See section 5: “Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages”.)
3. Add and customize, to the extent practicable, wayfinding signage, transit shelters, street furniture, bike racks, to leverage visual cues emanating from the neighborhood and its history.
4. Support Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project, so that developable land along the Tonawanda and Chandler Street rail corridors can be created and employment growth and demand for local goods and services follows.
5. Expand park, garden and greenspace opportunities, taking advantage of emerging vacant lots.
6. Develop a vacant lot beautification program in residential areas that incorporates topsoil, trees, grass and attractive fencing.
7. Monitor major planning initiatives and promote public participation opportunities involving them.
8. Ensure plan provisions are consistent with the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan and City initiatives and policies.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):

1. Develop partnerships with Department of Economic Development, Permits and Inspection Services and Office of Strategic Planning on problem properties, demolitions, foreclosed properties, and maintenance and reuse of vacant properties.
2. Monitor land development so that complementary projects can be built into them at an early stage. For example, as roads are rebuilt, add bike lanes and other features where appropriate to facilitate multimodal transportation choices.
3. Promote sustainable improvements that are practicable when existing resources are improved and new assets are developed. (See page 46 for examples.)
4. Suggest universal accessibility be considered in all planning and design activities.
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1: GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

There are many actions recommended in the preceding pages. The question may be asked, “How will they fit into the neighborhood?” The graphic below offers a “glimpse into the future,” by overlaying several of the actions recommended in this, the Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan, onto an image of one section of Historic Black Rock — the area around Niagara and Amherst Streets — as a way to illustrate how many of the strategies in this plan will lead to realizing the vision of area residents for a higher quality of life and bright future. Illustrated in the graphic are:

- A strong business association and district for Niagara Street (starting at upper left of the graphic),
- Improved streetscape and traffic calming on Niagara Street,
- Niagara and Amherst Sts. as a key gateway intersection to the neighborhood,
- Market Square park’s northeast corner as a space which could be utilized as a play area for neighborhood children,
- New and renovated homes throughout the area,
- Amherst Street as a Cultural Route, connecting Niagara Street’s waterfront and business corridor to a new mural at Amherst and Tonawanda Sts., with attractions located in-between,
- A new Black Rock Heritage Park at Dearborn and Hamilton,
- A new Life Learning Center at East and Hamilton,
- Recognition of the new Buffalo Religious Arts Center in the former St. Francis Xavier church,
- The opportunity for a new Public Market, Arts and Culture Center at Amherst and East Sts.,
- The entire area as a National Register Historic District,
- A new “Life at the Time of War of 1812” mural at Amherst and Tonawanda Sts., and
- Historic 1830 and 1835 houses (amongst others).

Figure 42: This is a graphic illustration of how, in one small area of Historic Black Rock, several actions recommended in this, the Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan, will work together to realize the vision of area residents for a higher quality of life and bright future.
## Goal: 1. Preserve and Strengthen Community Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support completion of an expert historic resources survey and undertake next steps of creating a State and National Register historic district and preserving historic resources.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Assist the City of Buffalo’s Senior Planner - Historic Preservation in raising funds for a consultant to undertake the survey project and hiring a consultant. Establishing a National Register historic district will help people appreciate the historic character of Historic Black Rock while avoiding the burden on property owners of a review of exterior changes by local authorities that would be in effect if a local historic district were to be established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prepare a timeline of historical events in Black Rock and vicinity.</td>
<td>BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Work with BRR GNPA Historic Restoration Committee and local historians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote historical event anniversary celebrations/exhibits and reenactments (for example, the War of 1812 anniversary, etc.).</td>
<td>BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Work with BRR GNPA Historic Restoration Committee to tie into War of 1812 commemorative efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Obtain funding for preservation-related activities from foundations and other sources.</td>
<td>Local Foundations, Businesses</td>
<td>Continue to apply for foundation funding and follow through on reporting for funds received. Four grants were applied for in 2008. Reach out to businesses in area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop promotional programming and materials.</td>
<td>Local artist, Businesses</td>
<td>One suggestion might be to hold a fundraiser by developing and selling a community map that conveys the community character identified in this plan, and using the funds for this purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourage the development of a historical photo and artifact library.</td>
<td>Fundalinski Studios</td>
<td>Work with Fundalinski Studios to support these efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do a virtual or real local history museum; start with a website and perhaps a movable display gallery.</td>
<td>Local web talent</td>
<td>Connect with residents who maintain a community blogs/website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Take steps to commemorate and celebrate ties to other history related to the area,</td>
<td>BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Use timeline project to identify different aspects of area history.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Goal: 2. Improve Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support the strengthening of BRR NHS programs that promote better housing opportunities and conditions.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Work with BRR NHS on program development. Continue to provide strategic planning assistance to BRR NHS by serving as directors of the organization. Continue neighborhood support to tours and outreach to funding agencies. Finally, continue to facilitate community relationship between the Dearborn Street Community Association and BRR NHS in support of BRR NHS initiatives like the targeted streets program and Block-by-Block program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help create new block clubs where needed.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, Board of Block Clubs, Riverside Review, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Work with the Office of Citizen Services and Board of Block Clubs to make residents aware of the benefits of having a block club, perhaps through publicizing them in the Riverside Review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Take advantage of code enforcement opportunities and support existing or new approaches to address problem properties.</td>
<td>North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is a Comprehensive Code Enforcement area. Work with Council Member and BRR GNPA Housing Committee to assess this program and its benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Support Judge Nowak housing court initiative.</td>
<td>North District Council Member, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Finalize and distribute this plan for the benefit of Judge Nowak and his staff to use with funding partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Create concept plans for new housing development and facilitate their implementation.</td>
<td>City, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, UB, local architects, local developers, real estate professionals</td>
<td>Key parcels are available for redevelopment. Work with the City to identify ownership, site conditions and funding programs and with housing and design partners to create concept plans, so that implementable projects can proceed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work with Historic Restoration Committee to develop/enhance a service for handyman/contractor referral and review in partnership with BRR NHS, so that historic structures can be better maintained by private owners.</td>
<td>BRR GNPA, BRR NHS, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Some elements of this program are in place at BRR NHS and review of it with neighborhood input could make it an effective housing improvement service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Work with BRR NHS to connect home-seekers with potential properties.</td>
<td>BRR GNPA, BRR NHS, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Marketing materials are being revised and improved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: 2. Improve Housing (continued)

8. Work with BRR NHS on targeted streets program and housing-related planning.
   BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association
   Continue collaborative efforts as Phase I expands to Phase II.

9. Create a Life Learning Center, with 69 Hamilton as a possible location.
   North District Council Member, BRR NHS, NWBCC, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association
   Work with the North District Council Member and City of Buffalo’s Senior Planner - Historic Preservation to preserve 69 Hamilton from demolition so that a feasibility study can be conducted. Other cities and neighborhoods have effectively reused storefronts (example: Seneca Babcock) for community services (teen center, free tax advice.)

<table>
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<th>Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Monitor local property status with the help of block clubs.</td>
<td>City, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>Surveying conditions has been a key initiative of the BRR GNPA/Dearborn Street Community Association in 2008. New survey techniques like taking digital camera movies from the dashboard of autos can make surveying easier and lead to more frequent surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourage homesteading.</td>
<td>North District Council Member, BRR NHS, NWBCC, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association, Homesteaders</td>
<td>Successful examples of homesteading in Black Rock-Riverside are in evidence. These homestead leaders could do presentations on their experience to community groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop an inventory of infill lots and procedure for keeping it updated.</td>
<td>City, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association</td>
<td>City Office of Strategic Planning personnel have computer mapping software and parcel information including vacancy. When updates to parcel information arrive (about twice a year), create new maps. Expand with field research to detail infill opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Support conversion of upper floors of commercial buildings to private apartments, urban lofts, and artistic spaces for all of the performing or static arts.</td>
<td>BRR NHS, Community Preservation Corp., Funding Agencies</td>
<td>Research successful examples of this being done, and match up programs and developers to available properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Track owner occupancy ratios, in an effort to keep owner occupancy at 75% or above.</td>
<td>City, BRR GNPA, BRR NHS</td>
<td>Use computer mapping to assess owner occupancy ratios, and share results with BRR NHS for planning purposes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Goal: 3. Improve Public Safety

#### Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years) | Key Partner(s) | Next Steps
--- | --- | ---
1. Support Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application and its Law Enforcement, Community Policing, Prevention/Intervention/ Treatment, and Neighborhood Restoration goals. | City, D District, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA | Application has been filed and a decision on funding is expected shortly (early 2009). Should it be funded, significant community involvement will ensue. If the application is not funded, many Public Safety strategies detailed within it can still be implemented.

2. Raise community awareness of ways to reduce crime. | D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA | Meet with D District police to strategize effective ways to reduce crime, and in a collaborative effort undertake a project together to build teamwork.

3 Develop knowledge and support of community policing and law enforcement best practices and techniques so that the best ones can be implemented locally. (for example, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Community Oriented Policing, Situational Crime Prevention, and Problem-Oriented Policing). | D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA | D District police, block clubs, business groups, and BRR GNPA can work together with the City to analyze crime problem areas and develop innovative solutions towards addressing them.

4. Develop awareness of crime trends and incidences so that better crime information can facilitate crime prevention strategies. | D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA | Meet with D District police to strategize effective ways to share crime statistics and work with partners to map/analyze.

5. Explore community partnerships that can influence crime reduction. | D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA | Gather advice from Community Policing officers and facilitate community partnering.

6. Increase awareness of Homeland Security operations in the planning neighborhood, and encourage their siting here. | North District Council Member, BRR GNPA | The BRR GNPA Black Rock Canal Park has taken a lead role in this strategy and is in an active phase that should be supported. Tours of local facilities also creates linkages between the agencies and neighborhood.

#### Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years) | Key Partner(s) | Next Steps
--- | --- | ---
1. Engage more adolescents in neighborhood life and its quality of life goals. One way to do this would be to hold police sponsored events that include collaborations with local groups that celebrate local cultural groups and promote community spirit. | D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA, Riverside HS, City | This is a multi-dimensional issue. Identify local cultural groups or police-related programming that will appeal to youth. Riverside HS’s rebirth also provides new opportunities for youth involvement, as do proposed Life Learning Center and youth-oriented park amenities. Continued support on the part of the community — including businesses — of Mayor Browns Summer Youth Jobs Initiative would also be beneficial.
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: 3. Improve Public Safety (continued)

2. Increase presence and visibility of public safety officers.
   City, D District police
   One suggestion may be to work with community policing officials on creating more community outreach activities.

3. Improve the communication and relationships between residents and the police force.
   City
   Funding of the Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application would certainly promote this strategy.

4. Encourage prosecution of more criminals.
   D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA
   More block clubs, a stronger business association, and activities boosting community pride will lead to less acceptance of criminal activity and more criminals being turned in for prosecution.

5. Police force more responsive to residential calls for assistance.
   D District
   Recently, local police have participated very enthusiastically in the preparation of the Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application, and local and state police also have been very active in responding to residential concerns by mounting “Operation Trick or Treat” in 2008. (see page 19) Continued work together can yield more progress.

6. Coordinate with block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association so that they can be more pro-active in their security measures.
   Block clubs, property owners, business association, BRR GNPA
   As the number of block clubs and business association activities expand, consultations with police about security measures can be added to meeting programs.

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes

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<td>Commercial:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Revitalize business association activities on Niagara Street and encourage participation of local businesses.</td>
<td>Businesses, Black Rock Businessmen’s Association Members, North District Council Member, Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation</td>
<td>Several local examples of successful business associations exist. Hold an organizational meeting with a guest speaker from one to develop a preliminary list of initiatives that can garner wide support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes (continued)

2. Hold educational sessions/distribute brochure-newsletter/do articles on good practices.
   Businesses, business association, North District Council Member

3. Explore the benefits of looking at Niagara Street in terms of market segments.
   Businesses, business association, North District Council Member

4. Support transportation-related improvements that will positively impact Niagara St.

5. Address public safety needs of visitors.

Marketing:

1. Start community public interest activities.
   Block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association

2. Seek funding. A 501c3 corporation can receive loans and grants.
   Business association

3. Develop branding.
   Block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association

4. Market Niagara St.’s easy highway access and being minutes to downtown.
   Business association

Just as neighborhood planning has evolved into an effective civic activity, so has business corridor management, and this information can be shared effectively in the context of a business association planning meeting.

Banner programs based on street themes can reflect the identify of segments of Niagara Street in exciting, visual ways. Perhaps the city and businesses could partner to raise funds for such an effort in the context of the War of 1812 commemorations.

See the next section, “5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages.”

See the previous section, “3. Improve Public Safety.”

Examples: BRR Tour of Gardens, health fairs, farmer’s markets, home buyer seminars, business days with discounts, school and community center open houses. An excellent opportunity might be to get the Income TAXi to come for a visit. This is a new mobile tax-preparation and financial education service designed to bring free help to low-income people and neighborhoods around Western New York. Contact Diane R. Bessel, director of the Creating Assets, Savings & Hope (CASH) coalition, sponsored by the United Way.

Continue grant –seeking with assistance from BRR NHS and NW Buffalo Community Center.

“Historic Black Rock” relates back to the community vision statement and the neighborhood’s strengths. That name might be used, along with a new logo.

This could be part of promotional material developed by a revitalized business association.
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes (continued)

5. Build off of opportunities presented by Ed Hogle’s project (Rock Harbor Commons at Rock Harbor Village).

Block clubs/property owners/businesses and business association

Slated to open in 2009, this is a major project which could bring customers to several area businesses. The project’s effects on housing should also be anticipated and guided to positive outcomes.

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<td>Commercial:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Open up more storefront businesses with attractive signage.</td>
<td>Business association</td>
<td>Business district development will lead to more storefront businesses; the first step is organizational. Revitalize business association so the area is ready to seek public funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research existing programs, promote development of new programs, and help in implementation of programs that help finance improvements that encourage business development and growth. Examples include signage, low interest loans, tax abatement, and façade improvement.</td>
<td>Business association, Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation, elected officials</td>
<td>Again, revitalize business association so the area is ready to seek public funds. For an idea of what programs are available, visit: <a href="http://www.berc.org">www.berc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encourage development/expansion of commercial services that accommodate incidental business that arrives from visitors so it can become destination business.</td>
<td>Businesses and business association</td>
<td>As business district development makes progress, new customers will enter the area; local stores should be ready for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Sponsor community festivals in parks or along one or a series of closed-off streets with community service groups and businesses renting tables.</td>
<td>Block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association</td>
<td>The community has open space available at Market Square Park and at Amherst and East Sts. Outdoor festivals are more noticeable to travelers-by and easy to clean up after.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Promote maritime activities: boating, birding, fishing, etc.</td>
<td>Businesses and business association</td>
<td>This could be part of promotional materials developed by a revitalized business association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use multicultural past and present as an impetus to organize events, festivals, goods and services that bring the neighborhood together.</td>
<td>BRR GNPA Historic Restoration Committee</td>
<td>The area has a multicultural past worth researching, starting perhaps with the native american history that led to the naming of Scajaquada Creek.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leverage direct bike path/multi-use trail connections to downtown, Tonawandas, and Scajaquada Pathway.</td>
<td>Business association</td>
<td>This could be part of promotional materials developed by a revitalized business association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Take steps to attract immigrants, yuppies, risk-takers, students, artists, musicians, craftspeople.</td>
<td>Business association</td>
<td>Conduct a market analysis, to match up area assets with different constituencies, including the “Creative Class.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support research into the feasibility and positive transformative effects of changing Niagara St., or portions of it, “from a 4-lane route to a 3-lane street” to calm traffic, improve walkability, and stimulate shopper activity in the business corridor.</td>
<td>Local businesses, business association, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC</td>
<td>A request for a traffic simulation study should be made to the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council, so that a study can analyze the effects of changes to the design of Niagara St. or portions of it in early 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explore additional traffic calming measures in the neighborhood, for example by timing traffic signals, posting speed limit signs, incorporating textured crosswalks in paving, developing roundabouts.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, GBNRTC</td>
<td>Work with City of Buffalo and GBNRTC to develop effective strategies for traffic calming measures concurrent with a traffic simulation study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Plan and implement streetscape improvements, recommended at: Niagara &amp; Amherst as the key gateway intersection, other gateways at Niagara &amp; Tonawanda, Tonawanda &amp; Amherst, Tonawanda &amp; Hertel, and Niagara &amp; Ontario; Niagara Street commercial corridor; and Amherst Street cultural corridor.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, GBNRTC</td>
<td>Block grant funds can provide an improved street infrastructure, consisting of brighter street lighting, old-style street lamps, plantings, trees, benches, gardens, sidewalks, security cameras, and perhaps a clock on alternate corners. Seek block grant funding to be used in coordination with traffic calming measures described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Integrate a public art component into streetscape improvements.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, Other Business District associations</td>
<td>Elmwood Village Association has recently added artistically-stylized components to its streetscape, including recycling containers, brackets for hanging planters, and the like. Work with the City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, and organizations like these to determine how to develop opportunities, obtain funding, and engage artists in these public art improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. While planning improvements, keep existing streetscape and transportation infrastructure maintained to ensure pedestrian safety.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, GBNRTC</td>
<td>A recent report in the Buffalo News highlighted the need for keeping key aspects of the streetscape and transportation infrastructure in good condition (See Buffalo News 10/06/08.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Add highway signage to the I-190 that advertises traveler services in Black Rock. (See Figure 37.)</td>
<td>North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT, business association</td>
<td>Contact the state Transportation Department Region 5 Director to determine if signs could be added for food/restaurants, gas/diesel, boat launch, and any other applicable services on Niagara Street that meet the criteria for highway notices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages (continued)

7. BRR GNPA has voted against erecting the Ambassador Bridge at this site.

For more information on the anticipated negative effects of the Ambassador Bridge proposal for areas in and nearby Historic Black Rock, see “Private international bridge stalled by lack of government support” in the 10/14/08 Buffalo News.

8. Add signage to effectively inform travelers as to highway entrances, neighborhood gateways, park entrances, historic and cultural attractions, and other neighborhood amenities.

In an area with as many highway ramps, waterfront access opportunities, and neighborhood amenities as Historic Black Rock, it is important for signage be in place to make getting around and enjoying the area’s attractions and amenities easy to do. Signage can accomplish this task, as it does in other municipalities and parts of the City of Buffalo. Transportation planners/designers should be consulted to make sure signage meets area needs.

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<tr>
<td>1. Converting Niagara Street to a 3-lane street may create a need for more off-street parking. Investigate use of vacant lots, out-of-business commercial lots, and recent demolitions sites as possible off street parking opportunities.</td>
<td>North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT, business association</td>
<td>Work with GBNRTC and Department of Public Works, Parks &amp; Streets staff so that, if a need for more off street parking may result from a switch to a 3-lane Niagara Street, reuse of available sites for this purpose can be effectively considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Investigate the feasibility of relocating the I-190 inland to the Tonawanda Rail Corridor.</td>
<td>North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT</td>
<td>Feasibility of this has been the subject of prior transportation studies and further investigation is required. (See “Buffalo Waterfront Corridor Initiative: A Strategic Plan for Transportation Improvements”, page 35.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encourage the use of mass transit.</td>
<td>BRR GNPA, NFTA</td>
<td>The area is well-served by bus routes; however, bus bike racks, more numerous and attractive bus shelters, availability of bus schedules through electronic communication, and implementation of ridership programs can further encourage the use of mass transit.</td>
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</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront)

<table>
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<th>Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support completion of planned improvements to:</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, Erie County, BRR GNPA, Elected Officials</td>
<td>Squaw Island: Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks &amp; Streets and elected officials to fund and implement final improvements. Tow Path Park: Final improvements are underway. Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park: Work with elected officials to fund the feasibility study based on community-supported vision for “Black Rock Canal Park.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Squaw Island Park,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tow Path Park, and the</td>
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<td>• Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park</td>
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2. Support creation and maintenance of clean, safe parks, microparks, and greenway connections, and access to same. | North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, Buffalo Riverkeepers | 1. Establish Black Rock Heritage Park at 269 Dearborn at Dearborn & Hamilton, within the residential fabric of the community. |
| | | 2. Buffalo Riverkeepers is anticipating funding to revitalize the Riverwalk area, including the former toll plaza site, the Naval Yard site, and Rich Marina. Anticipated funding will also support preparation of a feasibility study for proposed improvements associated with the Black Rock Canal Park concept for the Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park. |

3. Promote waterfront development that is consistent with local, state, and federal plans and regulations. | City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA | Significant planning efforts are either underway or recently completed that will help determine the future look of our shared Buffalo waterfront. These include the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2006) and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (currently in draft form). The next steps in ensuring beneficial waterfront development are to develop a familiarity with these plans, take advantage of future opportunities for public participation in shaping their provisions, and then see to compliance with them. |
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront)

(continued)

4. Have successful community volunteer involvement in maintenance of parks and their features.

   City of Buffalo, Erie County, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups like block clubs, gardening groups, local funding sources, business association, schools

   Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to develop an adopt-a-park program and other volunteer opportunities.

5. Add desirable community features into parks, microparks, scenic trails, etc., like lighting, seating furniture, wi-fi, game tables, skate spots, bubblers, water fountains, etc., without creating neighborhood nuisance behavior.

   City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups like block clubs, gardening groups, local funding sources, business association, schools

   Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to review existing and help create new plans for parks, microparks, scenic trails, etc., and work cooperatively to identify desirable community features which can be added.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promote safety in the parks.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups</td>
<td>Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks &amp; Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to assess safety in parks and strategize how to improve it.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront) (continued)

2. Improve use of the parks.

City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups

Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to strategize ways to improve use of the parks.

3. Facilitate new improvements to parks.

City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups

Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to continually improve the parks with new improvements.

4. Support new recreational trails/bike paths and greenway connections, and expansion and improvement of existing ones, like the Scajaquada Creek Bike Path, Sea- way Trail, Riverwalk, to link parks/recreational assets to themselves and to other neighborhoods.

City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups

Park connectivity is one of the keys to a healthy park system. Proposals for trails/bike paths and greenway connections should be developed, studied and, if they warrant, publicly supported. Recent proposals include extending the Scajaquada Pathway northward along the I-190 and revitalizing the Riverwalk area, including the Naval Yard site and Rich Marina.

7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design

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<tr>
<td>1. Advocate for the development of design standards, zoning regulations, and special designations that protect the neighborhood character of Historic Black Rock.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Work with the City of Buffalo and community stakeholders to effect these positive changes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design (continued)

2. Add, and customize, to the extent practicable, wayfinding signage, transit shelters, street furniture, and bike racks to leverage visual cues emanating from the neighborhood and its history.

City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NFTA, Other Business District associations

Elmwood Village Association has recently added artistically-stylized components to its streetscape, including recycling containers, brackets for hanging planters, and the like. Work with the City of Buffalo and organizations like these to determine how to develop opportunities, obtain funding, and implement improvements that add to the character of the area while providing needed conveniences.

3. Support Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project, so that developable land along the Tonawanda and Chandler Street rail corridors can be created and employment growth and demand for local goods and services follows.

City of Buffalo, North District Council Member

Seek assistance from city officials and the North District Council Member to accept Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project funding and initiate project activities.

4. Expand park, garden and greenspace opportunities, taking advantage of emerging vacant lots.

BRR GNPA, Buffalo Riverkeeper, interest groups

Brownfield sites and vacant lots provide opportunities for new parks, gardens, and greenspaces. Work with the BRR GNPA and interest groups to continually survey the neighborhood for these opportunities and participate in planning to realize them.

5. Develop a vacant lot beautification program in residential areas that incorporates topsoil, trees, grass and attractive fencing.

City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA

Review the Buffalo News article, “Green Strategy Works to Increase Property Values”, 11/14/08. Philadelphia’s Green Strategy program works in partnership with City Hall to improve and maintain vacant lots, “‘We want to send a message that this space is psychologically owned by someone, and, believe it or not, that works.’”

6. Monitor major planning initiatives and promote public participation opportunities involving them.

North District Council Member, BRR GNPA

Keep strong partnerships with North District Council Member, BRR GNPA

7. Ensure plan provisions are consistent with Buffalo Comprehensive Plan and City initiatives and policies.

City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, community groups

This plan has been checked against the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan (see page 87 of that document). City initiatives and policies change, so work in partnerships to keep abreast of new developments.
7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design (continued)

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<tr>
<td>1. Develop partnership with Department of Economic Development, Permits and Inspection Services and Office of Strategic Planning on problem properties, demolitions, foreclosed properties, and maintenance and reuse of vacant properties.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Develop a tracking mechanism to identify, report, and assess progress on addressing problems related to these properties, while also developing strategies for their reuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Monitor land development so that complementary projects can be built into them at an early stage. For example, as roads are rebuilt, add bike lanes and other features where appropriate to facilitate multimodal transportation choices.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Develop a list of planning initiatives and projects in Historic Black Rock, and explore how tie-ins to them can maximize their local impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promote sustainable improvements that are practicable when existing resources are improved and new assets are developed.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Identify opportunities for incorporating sustainable practices and publicize successes in the local media. For example, rain gardens on vacant lots, sustainable materials and design in rehabilitated and new buildings, landscape elements to reduce combined sewer overflows, permeable pavements where possible, raised planters, container gardens on roofs and as bollards, vertical green walls, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Suggest universal accessibility be considered in all planning and design activities.</td>
<td>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</td>
<td>Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible. Recommendations for universal design can be part of recommendations made during the public participation phase of planning and design. Universal access is well-illustrated by the Complete Streets legislation recently passed by the Buffalo Common Council. (See page 25.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 3: SUPERPRIORITIES: A LIST FOR CITY OF BUFFALO ACTION

Action Step 1: Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area Project  (see page 31)
Support Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project, so that developable land along the Tonawanda and Chandler Street rail corridors can be created and employment growth and demand for local goods and services follows.

Action Step 2: Historic Resources Survey  (see page 14)
Support funding and completion of expert historic resources survey and undertaking of next steps to create a State and National Register historic district and preserve historic resources.

Action Step 3: Traffic Simulation Study  (see page 26)
Support request for a traffic simulation study to the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC) in early 2009, so that changes to the design of Niagara St. or portions of it “from a 4-lane route to a 3-lane street” to calm traffic, improve walkability, and stimulate shopper activity in the business corridor can be studied in early 2009.

Action Step 4: Business Association  (see page 22)
Assist in revitalizing business association on Niagara Street and encourage participation of local businesses.

Action Step 5: Streetscape Improvements  (see page 26)
Assist planning, funding and implementation of streetscape improvements at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Niagara Street commercial corridor, from Amherst to Arthur</th>
<th>3. Niagara &amp; Tonawanda, Tonawanda &amp; Amherst, Tonawanda &amp; Hertel, and Niagara &amp; Ontario Gateways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Resurface street</td>
<td>- Enhanced crosswalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Demarked lanes: 2 lanes each way plus a center turning lane</td>
<td>- Wayfinding signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Demarked bike lanes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Plantings, trees, benches, banners, wayfinding signage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- On-street parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Traffic calming measures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Niagara &amp; Amherst as the key gateway intersection</th>
<th>4. Amherst Street cultural corridor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Enhanced crosswalk</td>
<td>- Demarked bike path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wayfinding signage</td>
<td>- Enhanced crosswalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improve Market Square Park with a children’s play space</td>
<td>- Plantings, trees, benches, banners, wayfinding signage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action Step 6: Highway Signage for Traveler Services  (see page 28)
Help add highway signage to the I-190 that advertises traveler services in Black Rock.

Action Step 7: Planned Improvements to Major Waterfront Parks  (see page 28)
Support completion of planned improvements to Squaw Island Park, Tow Path Park, and the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park

Action Step 8: Protect Neighborhood Character  (see page 31)
Help establish design standards, zoning regulations, and special designations that protect the neighborhood character of Historic Black Rock. Support creation of a vacant lot beautification program.

Action Step 9: Black Rock Heritage Park  (see page 30)
Support establishing Black Rock Heritage Park at 269 Dearborn at Dearborn & Hamilton, within the residential fabric of the community.

Action Step 10: Life Learning Center  (see page 16)
Help create a Life Learning Center as a satellite for community services in Historic Black Rock, with 69 Hamilton as a possible location.

Action Step 11: New and Renovated Homes  (see page 16)
Support the strengthening of BRR NHS programs that promote better housing opportunities and conditions. Create concept plans for new housing development and facilitate their implementation.
CHAPTER 5: FUNDING

As a comprehensive neighborhood plan, Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan includes many categories of action and strategies; each will either involve funding that may be shared with others, or may have funding particular unto themselves.

However, several areas of funding can be identified in support of “Superpriorities: A List for City of Buffalo Action” (on previous page). This list, and funding opportunities for other recommended actions in this plan, will be confirmed and expanded upon as projects reach planning, design and implementation stages.

Action Step 1: Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area Project
Funding Sources:
- New York State Department of State
- City of Buffalo

Action Step 2: Historic Resources Survey
Funding Sources:
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
- City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning
- Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning planning funds and in-kind contribution
- Preservation League of NYS
- Local Foundations

Action Step 3: Traffic Simulation Study
Funding Sources:
- GBNRTC in-kind contribution

Action Step 4: Business Association
Funding Sources:
- City of Buffalo Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation in-kind contribution

Action Step 5: Streetscape Improvements
Funding Sources:
- Federal Funds through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), administered locally by Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council and the New York State (NYS) Department of Transportation
- Federal Funds through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program, administered locally by the City of Buffalo

Action Step 6: Highway Signage for Traveler Services
Funding Sources:
- NYS Department of Transportation

Action Step 7: Planned Improvements to Major Waterfront Parks
Funding Sources:
- Federal Funds through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program, administered locally by the City of Buffalo

Action Step 8: Protect Neighborhood Character
Funding Sources:
- Federal Funds through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program, administered locally by the City of Buffalo

Action Step 9: Black Rock Heritage Park
Funding Sources:
- Federal Funds through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program, administered locally by the City of Buffalo
- New York State New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
- New York State Local Initiatives (member item) grants through local legislators
- North District Council member item
- National, State and Local Foundations

Action Step 10: Life Learning Center
Funding Sources:
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
- New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal
- North District Council member item
- National, State and Local Foundations

Action Step 11: New and Renovated Homes
Funding Sources:
- Federal Funds through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program, administered locally by the City of Buffalo
- New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal
- Black Rock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services programs

Note: Additional suggestions for funding sources are welcome. To share your ideas, contact Richard Mack, co-chair of the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbor Planning Alliance, at 716.877.8400.
APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1   Publicity Leading Up To and Following the November, 12, 2008 Community Meeting
Appendix 2   November 12, 2008 Community Meeting and Comments
Appendix 3   Comments Received from November 12 to December 1, 2008
Appendix 4   Land Use Map
Appendix 5   Zoning Map
Appendix 6   Selected Demographics
Appendix 7   Relevant Plans and Projects
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1  PUBLICITY LEADING UP TO AND FOLLOWING THE NOVEMBER, 12, 2008 COMMUNITY MEETING
Publicity leading up to and following the November 12, 2008 Community Meeting

Publicity leading up to the November 12, 2008 Community Meeting

Mailings:

All property owners with a parcel land use code other than residential and vacant (i.e. Commercial, Recreation and Entertainment, Community Services, Industrial, Public Services, Public Parks) received an invitation letter.

All members of the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA received a postcard (~120 persons).

All block clubs within the Black Rock-Riverside GNPA received an invitation letter (18 Block Clubs with a total of 27 persons as contacts).

All members of record of the Black Rock Businessmen’s Association received an invitation letter.

Community stakeholders received an invitation letter: Brian Reilly, Catherine Palko, Drew Eszak, Carla Kosmerl, State Senator Antoine Thompson, Michael Mogavero, Principal—Riverside HS, Wende Mix—Buffalo State College, Mayor Byron Brown, Hon. Henry Nowak, Michelle Barron—BERC, Phil Habestro—Buffalo Wellness Institute, Captain Gregg Blosat and Chief Anthony Barba—D-District Police, Antwan Diggs—Office of Citizen Services, Paula—Hair Oasis, Northwest Buffalo Community Health Care Center Director, Postmaster of Northside Buffalo Post Office, Tony Williams and Larry Pernick—Northwest Buffalo Community Center, Bill Buzak and Linda Chiarenza—Black Rock-Riverside NHS, John Fell, Allita Steward, Erie County Legislator Maria R. Whyte, Assemblymember Sam Hoyt, Julie O'Neill—Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers

Postcards were distributed as a flyer in the neighborhood by the Dearborn Street Community Association

Newspaper Articles:

An article titled, “Residents Urged to ‘Envision’ Neighborhood Miniplan,” appeared on November 12, 2008, in the Riverside Review, a Northwest Buffalo weekly newspaper with a circulation of over 14,000.

An article titled, “Residents Urged to ‘Envision’ Neighborhood Miniplan,” appeared on November 5, 2008, in the Riverside Review, a Northwest Buffalo weekly newspaper with a circulation of over 14,000.
Publicity leading up to the November 12, 2008 Community Meeting (continued)

An announcement titled, “Black Rock Bicentennial Plan to be Unveiled,” appeared on November 12, 2008, in the Riverside Review.

Publicity following the November 12, 2008 Community Meeting

Online:

A webpage is maintained at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/plan_black_rock/ to keep interested parties up-to-date on key planning documents and key milestone dates. 45 preapproved invitations to join this Yahoo! Group were sent to community stakeholders between 11/17/08 and 12/16/08. This address was also publicized at the November 12, 2008 Community Meeting.

Newspaper Articles:

An article titled, “Residents 'Envision' Black Rock Bicentennial Plan,” appeared on November 19, 2008, in the Riverside Review, a Northwest Buffalo weekly newspaper with a circulation of over 14,000.


Invitation Letter
Dear Neighbor:

Please mark your calendar for an important event November 12, 2008 in Historic Black Rock, at St. John’s United Church of Christ, 85 Amherst Street, between 6:30PM and 8:30PM. You are invited to help us, in a neighborhood planning effort, to assess what’s happening, share your ideas for Historic Black Rock, build community partnerships, and join in a discussion about how to improve the community with your neighbors and representatives of the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (BRR GNPA). This effort will serve as the basis for a neighborhood plan to be submitted for incorporation into the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan. The Dearborn Street Community Association is our host for the evening.

Historic Black Rock can be viewed as the area between the intersection of Niagara & Tonawanda Streets and the intersection of Niagara & Ontario Streets, from the waterfront to the rail corridor. This area has many of the building blocks experts say can lead to a strong community. The area’s “cool factor” is growing, with concerts being held at 31 Tonawanda Street and a new bike path connection from the International Railroad Bridge to Scajaquada Creek in place. St. Francis Xavier has found an exciting new future as the Buffalo Religious Arts Center. Park improvements are underway at Squaw Island Park and Towpath Park. Many strong businesses and dedicated homeowners are in evidence.

At the same time, the area faces serious challenges. Awkward development proposals seem to spring up with regularity. Some of the area’s historic buildings are experiencing ongoing deterioration in their physical condition, and some have been demolished over the years. Problem properties, vacant properties, and demolitions are increasingly sources of concern.

The award-winning Black Rock-Riverside GNPA has been working to build bridges between city government, agents of neighborhood change, and Northwest Buffalo residents to improve the community. During this time, it also became clear that to ensure a bright future for our neighborhoods – Black Rock, Grant-Amherst, West Hertel, and Riverside – citizen involvement in the creation of neighborhood-level plans is needed.

Come see the quality planning work that has been done so far. Join us on November 12th as we partner with Community Planner Bill Parke from the Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning to seek your feedback and ideas for this, our first neighborhood planning effort, with Historic Black Rock as the focus. This effort will serve as a model for neighborhood planning efforts in Grant-Amherst, West Hertel, and Riverside to get underway in the coming year. Feel free to share this invitation with others who may find it of interest. Look for updates in the Riverside Review, or attend a regular monthly General Meeting of the BRR GNPA at the Northwest Buffalo Community Center. Also, feel free to call Mr. Parke before or after the event with questions, at 851-5123; otherwise we will see you on the 12th!

Signed,

Evelyn Vossler, BRR GNPA Co-Chair
Richard Mack, BRR GNPA Co-Chair

Organized Under the Auspices of:
Mayor Byron Brown’s Office of Strategic Planning - GNPA, 920 City Hall, Buffalo, NY 14202:
call 851-5035; fax 854-0172; or e-mail: planning@cb.bc.buffalo.ny.us
Neighborhood Planning Meeting
for Historic Black Rock
(Vicinity of Niagara St./Waterfront from Rte. 198 to Ontario St., then to Tonawanda & Arthur Sts., to Railroad and back to Niagara St. & Rte. 198)

WHEN: 6:30PM to 8:30PM on November 12, 2008

WHO: Interested Residents, Businesses, Property Owners, ERR GNPA Members, Block Clubs, Etc.

WHAT: Meeting to obtain ideas for this neighborhood’s future and build community partnerships. (Other neighborhoods to follow.) This is part of an effort to create a neighborhood plan to be submitted for incorporation into the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan.

WHERE: St. John’s United Church of Christ, 85 Amherst St.

Our Host: Dearborn Street Community Assn. For meeting info. contact Rich Mack, 877-8400. Please share this invitation with those who you think may find it of interest.
Residents Urged to “Envision” Neighborhood Mini-Plan

Black Rock Rock a Sign of Good Things to Come for All Northwest Buffalo Neighborhoods

Residents Urged to “Envision” Neighborhood Mini-Plan
N.W. Community Center Teams With Bills to Visit Local Schools

On Sunday November 2nd, Buffalo Bills Defensive Lineman, for the Buffalo Bills partnered up with the Northwest Buffalo Community Center and Mr. Tony D. Williams to take three lucky students from New York Jets.

This is the second set of team visits by Proctor who joined with Williams, goes to various schools each Tuesday and speaks to students about making good choices and developing good character.

According to Proctor, this is a labor of love for him to be able to give back to the youth of this community. So far, 2008 and Williams, Director of Operations at the Community Center, have visited the Pinnacle Charter School, Falcon's Academy (School), Harvey Akin LLPS and most recently Mr. Proctor and fellow offensive line were invited by to the Community Center for a football team visit to the school to speak to the students about their visit to the Bills.

They talked with them about their favorite player, how they got to where they are and the miracles they are making a difference.

In First Person

Food Pantry Needs Your Help!

by A.J. Cooper

Recently opened in the Black Rock Community Center, a group of concerned citizens has started a local charity called "Food Pantry" to help those in need. The pantry was established to assist families in the area with basic necessities such as food, clothing, and household items.

Black Rock Bicentennial Plan To Be Unveiled

TODAY! November 12th

A special event is scheduled for the opening of the Black Rock Bicentennial Plan. The event will include speeches, music, and a performance by local performers. The plan aims to celebrate the rich history and culture of the community.

Congratulations Black Rock - Riverside Little League Cheerleaders!

Nanier Cheerleaders - 2nd Place

Knight Cheerleaders - 2nd Place

The TYRI Cheer Squad Competition was held on November 9, 2008. The River Rock squad, overall, did an excellent job. The Knights under Coach Evan Ernst and assistants Timmy Schroeder and Alphonse Boudreaux, took second place in the division. The Knights, under Coach Evan Ernst and assistants Timmy Schroeder and Alphonse Boudreaux, took second place in the division. The Knights, under Coach Evan Ernst and assistants Timmy Schroeder and Alphonse Boudreaux, took second place in the division.
Residents “Envision” Black Rock Bicentennial Plan

Over 30 people participated in a meeting held by the Black Rock neighborhood planning group at St. John’s United Church of Christ on Wednesday, November 12th. The meeting’s purpose was to discuss the Black Rock Bicentennial Plan. The goal of the plan is to celebrate the Black Rock neighborhood and promote community pride through various events and initiatives.

Advantages include:
- An increase in neighborhood identity
- Enhanced neighborhood amenities
- Improved neighborhood aesthetics

The plan proposes to create a Black Rock Bicentennial Committee to oversee the implementation of the plan. The committee will consist of representatives from various community groups and organizations.

JCPenney Afterschool Funds Awarded to Boys and Girls Clubs

JCPenney Afterschool Funds have awarded grants to Boys and Girls Clubs across the nation to support their programs. The funds aim to provide additional support for afterschool programs, ensuring that young people have access to educational and social opportunities.

Seasonal Parking Restrictions Effect

Seasonal parking restrictions are in effect in the Black Rock neighborhood due to construction and maintenance activities. Residents and visitors are encouraged to follow the signs and regulations to avoid fines.

Recently Remodeled Wilson Farms Store Hosts Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

Wilson Farms, located in Black Rock, has recently undergone renovations. The store now features updated amenities and a cutting-edge design. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by local dignitaries and members of the community.

For more information, visit www.wilsonfarms.com.
“Rediscover Riverside” Group is Meeting with Enthusiasm

During the month of November, the “Rediscover Riverside” was honored to have two community leaders speak at their meetings on Wednesday night at Post & Prose, 2207 Amherst St. New York.

Their first guest was Nancy Caz, former assistant director of the Buffalo Dream for the DEA. She spoke passionately about the importance of drug prevention and the need to education people about the issue.

Their second guest was Dr. Betty W. Wells, professor of psychology at SUNY Brockport. She discussed the impact of drug addiction and the importance of early intervention to prevent addiction.

The meetings are held every Wednesday night at 6pm sharp.

Riverside Review—November 26, 2008

Comments Sought For Black Rock Plan

On November 13, the Black Rock/Riverside Good Neighborhood Planning Alliance, in collaboration with the Buffalo Department of Neighborhood Services, will hold a public meeting to discuss the draft plan for the Black Rock/Riverside neighborhood. The meeting will take place at 6:30pm on November 13 at the Riverside Community Center, 1200 Main St.

The meeting will be open to the public and will provide an opportunity for residents to provide input on the draft plan. If you have any comments or concerns, please email them to info@blackrockriverside.org before November 10.

Northwest Seniors Elect New Officers

On November 15, the Northwest Senior Center held its annual election of new officers. The new officers will serve for the next year and are as follows:

President: John Smith
Vice President: Mary Johnson
Secretary: Jane Doe
Treasurer: Bob Green

The meeting was attended by over 50 members of the Northwest Senior Center, who were eager to welcome the new officers and look forward to a productive year ahead.

Riverside Review—November 26, 2008
Planning Alliance Welcomes Visitors Tonight

Neighborhood Plans and Riverside High Reconstruction Lead Agenda

by Evelyn Vinsler

The Great-Amherst Business Association (GABA) held its general meeting tonight at the Riverside Review meeting room, where the Great-Amherst Business Association (GABA) held its general meeting tonight at the Riverside Review meeting room.

Richard Block, who had been the president of the GABA, was present. He mentioned that the GABA had been working on several projects, including the development of a new community center in the neighborhood.

The GABA had recently received funding from the state to help with the construction of the new center.

Following the meeting, the attendees enjoyed a networking reception and a dinner, which was sponsored by the GABA.

The GABA also announced that they would be hosting a seminar on the impact of clean energy on the local economy in the near future.

St. John’s Church Hosts Annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Service

St. John’s Church hosted its annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Service on December 7, 2008, to honor those who lost their lives on that day.

The service included a moment of silence followed by a reading of the names of those who lost their lives.

After the service, attendees enjoyed a light lunch and refreshments.

The service was attended by members of the church as well as community members who came to honor those who lost their lives on that fateful day.

December Art Market on Amherst Street

When Friends of Fairview first purchased the old Harvey Building in Amherst Street, the hope was to open an art market and to provide space for local artists to showcase their work.

The building had been vacant for several years and was in need of renovation. The Friends of Fairview seized the opportunity to transform the building into an art market.

The market opened in December 2008 and has since become a popular destination for art lovers and local artists.

During the market, local artists showcase their work, which ranges from paintings and sculptures to jewelry and other handmade crafts.

The market operates on a rotating basis, with different artists featured each month.

St. John’s Church, located at 100 Amherst Street, continues to host the market weekly.

The market is open from 10 am to 4 pm every Saturday and is free to attend.

Visitors can enjoy a variety of art, from paintings to sculpture, jewelry to prints, and more.

The market provides a platform for local artists to showcase their work and reach a wider audience.

The market has become an important part of the community, providing a place for artists to connect and for the community to support local talent.

Riverside Review—December 10, 2008
QUESTION 1: WHAT MAKES FOR A STRONG COMMUNITY? (Be specific)

List from Interactive Table 1:
- Pride in Home Ownership
- Forming block clubs/knowing your neighbors
- kids/neighbors helping community
- Safety, lighting, pride
- Communication between neighbors
- Supporting local businesses
- Police presence (bike/foot patrol)
- Community/cultural centers

List from Interactive Table 2:
- Porches
- Clean community
- Shared vision
- Meeting security concerns (bring the people to the street)
- Communication between groups (porch lights)
- Crime watch
- Community events
- Know your neighborhoods/neighbors
- Incorporate children into neighborhood

List from Interactive Table 3:
- Churches
- Owner-occupants
- Community interaction
- Block clubs
- Quality schools (neighborhood)
- Educated residents
- Vibrant businesses
- Pride of ownership
- Community pride
- Community identity
- Families/children
- Health club
- Historic preservation
- Owner-occupants
- The arts
- Street cameras
- Parent who parent
- Mutual respect
- More problem solving
- Infrastructure: Roads, sidewalks, utilities
- Civic minded residents
- Cleanliness
- Adequate health facilities
**November 12, 2008 Meeting**  
**Summary of Posters and Maps from Interactive Session**

**QUESTION 2: WHAT DO YOU WANT GONE FROM YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD? (Be specific)**

List from Interactive Table 1:
- Streets need repair (Dearborn, Niagara St. – sidewalks)
- Tree maintenance/Removal (Dearborn, Austin)
- (Add) Historic/pedestrian friendly street lamps
- (Add) garbage cans on street/bus stops
- (Add) snow removal at bus stops
- Get kids off street at night (police enforcement)
- Garbage in lots

List from Interactive Table 2:
- *(Named Commercial Establishment)* (drug activity, under investigation)
- Drug dealers
- Boom boxes (loud music, bass)
- Bus school stop on Dearborn (take back to Niagara)
- Graffiti
- Irresponsible landlords
- Identify good landlords

List from Interactive Table 3:
- Drug dealers
- I-190
- Absentee landlords
- Graffiti
- Abandoned houses
- Speeding traffic (Niagara Street)
- Running stop signs
- Garbage dumping
- Apathy (lack of community involvement)
- Overgrown vacant lots
- Prostitution
- *(Unnamed Commercial Establishment)*
- Littering
- Coordinated traffic lights
- Ambassador bridge
- Vacant store fronts
- Vacant houses
- Cats (Strays)
- Dog poop
- Poverty (poor families)
- Uneducated children
- Quality of life issues (loud music, etc.)
QUESTION 3: WHAT DO YOU WANT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD? (Be specific)

List from Interactive Table 1:
- Owner-occupied residences
- Business involved in community
- Community gathering places (BBQ pits, Pool)
- Slow traffic on Niagara Street, Make it Pedestrian friendly
- Neighborhood yearly social event to meet neighbors
- Better use of vacant lots (gardens, playground)
- City should donate vacant lots to homeowners
- Neighborhood kids to stay in local schools

List from Interactive Table 2:
- Small businesses (local owned)
- More police presence
- ACTIVE neighborhood watches
- Married student housing
- More rehabilitation (grants, loans)
- Advertise accomplishments
- Signs (tourism)
- Intense energy efficient rehab (LEED standards, straw bale code acceptance)

List from Interactive Table 3:
- Tennis courts
- More businesses
- Safety after dark
- Retail
- Infrastructure (sidewalks, curbs)
- School
- Lighting
- Crosswalks
- Increased home ownership vs. renting
- Housing inspection enforcement
- Police walking a beat
- Community center police substation
- Dry cleaners
- Infill housing
- Curfew enforcement
- Music festival/art fest
- Youth center
- Movie night outdoors (Market Square)
- Nice parks
- Slow down Niagara Street/Tonawanda Street
- Bikes on Niagara Street
November 12, 2008 Meeting
Summary of Posters and Maps from Interactive Session

MAPS: Each Interactive Table marked up a base map showing streets, highways and highway ramps, and railroads on top of an aerial photograph.

Map from Interactive Table 1:
- Drug dealer in proximity to Tonawanda and Hertel
- Drug dealer on Dearborn between Austin and Hamilton
- Tennis courts for Gordon and Austin
- Heritage garden for Dearborn and Hamilton
- Prostitutes on East near Bridge
- Reconstruct Niagara Street between Bridge and Arthur
  - Bikepath
  - Lighting
  - Curbs
  - Sidewalks
  - Planters
  - Traffic Calming Measures
  - Reduced Lanes
  - Signage
- Signs on I-190 Advertise Neighborhood
- New Neighborhood within the Neighborhood? indicated for waterfront land west of I-190
- Houseboat Community indicated for waterfront land west of I-190
- Tennis courts for Squaw Island Park
- *(Unnamed commercial establishment)*

Map from Interactive Table 2:
- Move 190 to here?! (with arrows indicated for ramps into neighborhood)
- (Markup lines at elevated I-190 and 33 interchange)
- No Thru Truck Traffic for Austin and Niagara
- Walkable Small Business District for between Amherst and Arthur
  - Slowing traffic
  - Sidewalk improvements
  - Lighting
- Recreation indicated for waterfront land west of I-190
- Pocket parks indicated for Hamilton at Dearborn, midblock Gordon between Farmer and Austin, Thompson near Farmer, Niagara and Farmer
- Black Rock Canal Park

Map from Interactive Table 3:
- Need more developed recreation on Squaw Island
- *(Named commercial establishment)* GONE
- 190 Dearborn at Amherst and Dearborn must be developed: Visible well kept invitation to the neighborhood
- 269 Dearborn Heritage Garden
- Hamilton – Learning Center
November 12, 2008 Meeting
Summary of Posters and Maps from Interactive Session

- Bring small business to Niagara Street
- Keep business district walking friendly
- Art festival: Advertise!!
- Market Square Park: Stalls around music in park
- “Black Rock Days”

Transcribed from Originals November 24, 2008
Other questions that need to be asked:

- What is this community’s demography?
- What is this community’s economic income distribution?

Based on the answers to those two questions:

1. What is needed by the population now?
2. What population can be expected within the next 10, 20, 30 years?
3. What economic, demographic groups are missing and wanted or need to be increased?
4. What is going to draw and keep those groups here?
1. Look to the North Tonawanda Canal heritage area as an example of leveraging canal history in Black Rock

2. We need a Community Map, paid for advertisements of local services

Comments given by attendee at Nov. 12, 2008 meeting, Transcribed 12/3/2008
Oops, forgot to add a couple important items:

1. **Sustainability:** This could be a separate heading that lists sustainable ideas or these ideas could be included in each section: Rain gardens on vacant lots, rehabs, new builds and conversions and in re-habbed parking lots such as at Tops and Riverkeeper; bioswales in medians or in snow storage areas; encourage green roofs, flow through planters and rain barrels, structural soil under pavement restorations; permeable pavements where possible; raised planters with healthy soils that double as seat walls; community garden spaces, including container gardens on roofs and as bollards; vertical green walls, etc.

2. **Universal accessibility:** Should be kept firmly in mind in all planning and design activities.

---

**Bergmann Associates**

**Renata Niedzwiecka Kraft, RLA, ASLA**

SENIOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

architects // engineers // planners

Waterfront Village Center

40 La Riviere Drive, Suite 150

Buffalo, New York 14202

office: 716 852 3211 x852 // mobile: 716 289 2214

rkraft@bergmannpc.com // www.bergmannpc.com

---

our people and our passion in every project

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Comments from my brief review:

1. **Great overall mini-plan!**

2. **Under LandUse, Zoning and Urban Design add:**
   a. “Emphasize walkability with pedestrian scaled improvements and enhancements to the streetscape” and
   b. “Integrate public art participation in planning, design, and implementation of streetscape development”

3. **Under Historic Restoration add:** “Promote and interpret the multi-cultural legacy of the Black Rock Community”

4. **Under Transportation add:**
   a. “Utilize percent for art funding to include artists on design teams and to fund unique artistic interpretation and enhancement of the Corridor” and
   b. “Explore the use of bump-outs and roundabouts for traffic calming and pedestrian improvements”
   c. “Use visual cues including integrated art and wayfinding methodologies to emphasize connections to the waterfront and to inland landmarks”
   d. Add custom transit shelters and bike racks

5. **Under Commercial add:**
   a. “Emphasize or encourage “maritime” businesses and industries”
   b. “Encourage more ethic food markets, bakeries, fish stands, restaurants”
   c. “Provide incentives to attract the arts: lofts, studios, venues, workshops...use a broad net to include all trades in keeping with the historic character that includes metalsmiths, boatbuilders, etc.

6. **Under Parks, Recreation and Waterfront add:**
7. Under Public Safety add:
   a. Encourage police sponsored events that include collaborations with local groups to provide activities such as street dancing or skateboarding demonstrations, streetside latin dance instruction, fashion shows, festivals, etc.

8. Under Marketing add:
   a. Attract list.. add artists, musicians and craftsmen
   b. Promote maritime, including great fishing, commercial and recreational
   c. Emphasize multi-cultural, both historical and continued influence
   d. Promote easy and important connection to Canada
   e. Highlight and develop as walkable proximity to CBD
   f. Promote safety of corridor
   g. “Niagara Street is the City’s urban waterfront Corridor”

Renata Niedzwiecka Kraft, RLA, ASLA
SENIOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Bergmann Associates
architects // engineers // planners
Waterfront Village Center
40 La Riviere Drive, Suite 150
Buffalo, New York 14202
office: 716.852.3211 x862 // mobile: 716.289.2214
rkraft@bergmannpc.com // www.bergmannpc.com

---

From: Kate Scott [mailto:kscott@bnriverkeeper.org]
Sent: Monday, December 01, 2008 10:45 AM
To: harveyagarrett@gmail.com; Catherine schweitzer; Aaron Bartley; Amy Kedron; Bill Banas; Brendan Mehaffy; Tim Tielman; Charles Grieco; Chuck Banas; Chuck LaChiusa; Cynthia Van Ness; Dennis Galucki; Don Erb; Doug Swift; Elissa Banas; Gary Richmond; GEORGE Grassr; Jason Miller; Jeff Belt; Jim Rozanski; Joan Photiadia; Joseph Finnerty; Judy Metzger; Julie O'Neill; Justin Azzarella; Justin Booth; Karl Frizlen; Kathleen Mecca; Lynda Schneekloth; Mark Mitskovski; Michael Kearns; Nathan Neuman; Pat McNichol; Phil Haberstro; Richard Baer; Richard Lipes; Robert Ciesielski; Martin Wachadlo; ptaylor@huntrealestate.com; Mark Mortenson; klinder@city-buffalo.com; jcatalano@business.buffalo.edu; pocron@gmail.com; aarmstrong716@yahoo.com; dcurtis@adelphia.net; barbara.rove@verizon.net; tvocupsoddecaf@adelphia.net; jason.mccarthy@gmail.com; Kraft, Renata
Subject: Historic Black Rock waterfront mini-plan - comments due today!!!

Dear Waterfront Coalition Members,

Please see the email below and respond accordingly. The comments are due today. Let me know if you need any further assistance.

Thank you,
Kate S.

--

Kate Scott
Executive Assistant
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
1250 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14213
Phone: 716-852-7483
Fax: 716-885-0765
www.bnriverkeeper.org

12/01/2008
--- Original Message ---
Subject: Historic Black Rock waterfront mini-plan - send out to the waterfront coalition - comments due today!!!
Date: Mon, 01 Dec 2008 10:00:20 -0500
From: <jboneyill@bnriverkeeper.org>
To: kscott@bnriverkeeper.org

----- Original Message -----
Subject: Historic Black Rock mini-plan
Date: Mon, 17 Nov 2008 15:38:08 -0500
From: "Parke, Bill" <bparke@ch.ci.buffalo.ny.us>
To: <jboneyill@bnriverkeeper.org>

Here is a document listing draft goals for the Historic Black Rock mini-plan (attached). You are welcome to submit your comments.

I hope to add additional information in the coming days at this website, so you might want to join this Yahoo! Group:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/plan_black_rock

Rgds,

Bill

Bill Parke
Community Planner
Office of Strategic Planning
City of Buffalo
920 City Hall
Buffalo, NY 14202
Phone: 716-851-5123
Fax: 716-842-6942
bparke@city-buffalo.com
www.city-buffalo.com

<<Goals_09_24_2008_wo_refs.doc>>
Dear Mr. Parke:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Historic Black Rock Mini-Plan. Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper believes that the Historic Black Rock neighborhood holds enormous promise. Due to its ability to access the Niagara River at grade, historic building stock, existing marinas and maritime service facilities the neighborhood is very ripe for waterfront redevelopment.

We are particularly interested in working with both the City and the neighborhood to ensure that public access to the water’s edge is protected and expanded, that the neighborhood’s maritime services are preserved and that neighborhood improvements contribute to improvements in river health through the use of low impact development and green infrastructure techniques.

We are delighted that the New York State Department of State has awarded funding to the City and Riverkeeper to work with residents and local businesses to develop and begin implementation of a Niagara Street Greenway Plan. We look forward to formally kicking off the project with stakeholders as soon as the City’s contract with Riverkeeper is finalized.

We look forward to working with the entire neighborhood on this exciting planning effort and pledge our resources to the implementation of a community based and river-sensitive waterfront development effort.

Your partner and Niagara Street neighbor,

Julie Barrett O’Neill
Buffalo Niagara RIVERKEEPER
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 4 LAND USE MAP
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 5  ZONING MAP
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 6  SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2000 Census Number</th>
<th>2000 Census Percent</th>
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<td>Asian</td>
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<td><strong>HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE</strong></td>
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<td>White alone</td>
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<td><strong>RELATIONSHIP</strong></td>
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<td>Total population</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In households</td>
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<td>Spouse</td>
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<td>Child</td>
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<td>2000 Census Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own child under 18 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other relatives</td>
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<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 18 years</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
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<td>Nonrelatives</td>
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<td>Unmarried partner</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutionalized population</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noninstitutionalized population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE**

| Total households                           | 1,741              | 100                  |
| Family households (families)               | 884                | 50.8                 |
| With own children under 18 years           | 473                | 27.2                 |
| Married-couple family                      | 459                | 26.4                 |
| With own children under 18 years           | 216                | 12.4                 |
| Female householder, no husband present     | 320                | 18.4                 |
| With own children under 18 years           | 206                | 11.8                 |
| Nonfamily households                       | 857                | 49.2                 |
| Householder living alone                   | 748                | 43                   |
| Householder 65 years and over              | 301                | 17.3                 |
| Households with individuals under 18 years | 517                | 29.7                 |
| Households with individuals 65 years and over | 474              | 27.2                 |

Average household size: 2.17 (X)
Average family size: 3.92 (X)

**HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

| Total housing units                         | 2,023              | 100                  |
| Occupied housing units                      | 1,741              | 86.1                 |
| Vacant housing units                        | 282                | 13.9                 |
| For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use | 7                | 0.3                  |
| Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)            | 5.1                | (X)                  |
| Rental vacancy rate (percent)               | 9.5                | (X)                  |

**HOUSING TENURE**

| Occupied housing units                      | 1,741              | 100                  |
| Owner-occupied housing units                | 667                | 38.3                 |
| Renter-occupied housing units               | 1,074              | 61.7                 |
| Average household size of owner-occupied unit | 2.45              | (X)                  |
| Average household size of renter-occupied unit | 2               | (X)                  |

(X) Not applicable

1. Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.
2. Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.
3. In combination with one or more other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, Matrices P1, P3, P4, P8, P9, P12, P13, P17, P18, P19, P20, P23, P27, P28, P33, PCT5, PCT8, PCT11, PCT15, H1, H3, H4, H5, H11, and H12.
P53. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999 (DOLLARS) [1] - Universe: Households
Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Tract 59, Erie County, New York</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median household income in 1999</td>
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U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000
## Census Tract 59, Erie County, New York

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<td>Less than $10,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $14,999</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to $19,999</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 to $24,999</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $29,999</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>110</td>
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<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $39,999</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>$200,000 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Count</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,736</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

U.S. Census Bureau
### Total population

- **Number**: 4,195

### SEX

- **Male**: 1,981 (47.2%)
- **Female**: 2,214 (52.8%)

### AGE

- **Under 5 years**: 363 (8.7%)
- **5 to 17 years**: 731 (17.4%)
- **18 to 20 years**: 167 (4.0%)
- **21 to 24 years**: 255 (6.1%)
- **25 to 44 years**: 1,267 (30.2%)
- **45 to 54 years**: 392 (9.3%)
- **55 to 59 years**: 184 (4.4%)
- **60 to 64 years**: 180 (4.3%)
- **65 to 74 years**: 368 (8.8%)
- **75 to 84 years**: 241 (5.7%)
- **85 years and over**: 47 (1.1%)

- **Under 18 years**: 1,094 (26.1%)
- **65 years and over**: 656 (15.6%)

### HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE

- **Total households**: 1,860
  - **Family households (families)**: 1,028 (55.3%)
    - **Married-couple families**: 614 (33.0%)
    - **Other family, male householder**: 94 (5.1%)
    - **Other family, female householder**: 320 (17.2%)
  - **Nonfamily households**: 832 (44.7%)
    - **Householder living alone**: 742 (39.9%)
    - **Householder 65 years and over**: 347 (18.7%)

- **Persons living in households**: 4,195 (225.5%)

- **Persons per household**: 2.26

### GROUP QUARTERS

- **Persons living in group quarters**: 0
  - **Institutionalized persons**: 0
  - **Other persons in group quarters**: 0

### RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN

- **White**: 3,996 (95.3%)
- **Black**: 66 (1.6%)
- **American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut**: 62 (1.5%)
- **Asian or Pacific Islander**: 37 (0.9%)
- **Other race**: 34 (0.8%)
- **Hispanic origin (of any race)**: 118 (2.8%)

- **Total housing units**: 2,012

### OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

- **Occupied housing units**: 1,860 (92.4%)
  - **Owner occupied**: 766 (38.1%)
  - **Renter occupied**: 1,094 (54.4%)
  - **Vacant housing units**: 152 (7.6%)
    - **For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use**: 2 (0.1%)
  - **Homeowner vacancy rate**: 0.8
  - **Rental vacancy rate**: 5

- **Persons per owner-occupied unit**: 2.63
- **Persons per renter-occupied unit**: 2.03

- **Units with over 1 person per room**: 22
## 1990 Census Percent Subject 1990 Census Data Set: 1990 Summary Tape File 1 (STF 1) - 100-Percent data Geographic Area: Tract 59, Erie County, New York

### UNITS IN STRUCTURE

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<th>1990 Census Percent</th>
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<td>2 to 4 units</td>
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<td>5 to 9 units</td>
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<td>10 or more units</td>
<td>367</td>
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### VALUE

**Specified owner-occupied housing units**

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<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 to $199,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>$300,000 or more</td>
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Median (dollars) 33,300

### CONTRACT RENT

**Specified renter-occupied housing units paying cash rent**

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<td>$250 to $499</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 to $749</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$750 to $999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median (dollars) 233

### RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN OF HOUSEHOLDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder</th>
<th>1990 Census Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other race</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic origin (of any race)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(X) Not applicable

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1 (100% Data)

| Tract 59, Erie County, New York | Median household income in 1989 | 17250 |

U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $5,000</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 to $9,999</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $12,499</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12,500 to $14,999</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to $17,499</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$17,500 to $19,999</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 to $22,499</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$22,500 to $24,999</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $27,499</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$27,500 to $29,999</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 to $32,499</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$32,500 to $34,999</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $37,499</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$37,500 to $39,999</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 to $42,499</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$42,500 to $44,999</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45,000 to $47,499</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$47,500 to $49,999</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $54,999</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$55,000 to $59,999</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $124,999</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$125,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Count</strong></td>
<td><strong>1881</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 7  RELEVANT PLANS AND PROJECTS

- Black Rock Canal Park Proposal
- Towpath Park Project
- Squaw Island Park Project
- Buffalo’s Comprehensive Plan
- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Queen City Waterfront: Buffalo Waterfront Corridor Initiative
- Niagara River Greenway Plan
- Scajaquada Downgrading Project
- GBNRTC Traffic Volumes
- NFTA Bus Service
- Reuse of St. Francis Xavier Church
- Ambassador Bridge Proposal
- Rock Harbor Village Proposal
- Jessie Kregal Bike Path Proposal
- Black Rock-Riverside GNPA Draft Plan