

2007 Regional Agenda

FEDERAL PRIORITIES

- ◇ Federal funding is sought to support major economic development projects of regional significance, including the Buffalo Federal Courthouse, Niagara Falls International Airport, Spaulding Fibre, Niagara Experience Center, Bethlehem Steel, “Cars on Main Street” and Olcott Harbor Breakwater Project.....**page 1**
- ◇ Federal funding is also needed to reinforce the region’s commitment to revitalizing formerly industrial sites to make them ready for new projects, focus on improving access to project sites, and invest in local research that has the potential to yield commercial outcomes, and in programs designed to strengthen the skills of the region’s workforce..... **page 2**
- ◇ The most critical federal policy issues facing the region are those related to our border with Canada for the promotion of bi-national trade and tourism **page 4**

STATE PRIORITIES

- ◇ State funding for the Niagara Experience Center, downtown Buffalo redevelopment, particularly the creation of shovel-ready land near the inner harbor, the ECC downtown campus Metro Center transportation center and the Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences will support key regional revitalization efforts **page 5**
- ◇ State funding is also needed to support regional institutions, invest in programs and initiatives that complement on-going regional economic development efforts and to create urban sites for future investment..... **page 6**
- ◇ The priority state policy initiatives are those that reduce the cost of doing business in New York State..... **page 7**



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FEDERAL PRIORITIES FUNDING

The following projects support major economic development efforts in Buffalo Niagara that, in aggregate, can have a significant region-wide impact.

Buffalo Federal Courthouse

- Funding in the fiscal year 2008 executive budget for federal courthouse construction to ensure development of Buffalo Federal Courthouse at Niagara Square - \$137.3 million

Niagara Falls International Airport

- Cargo Apron - \$3.8 million
- Landside and airside terminal improvements - \$4.1 million

Spaulding Fibre

- Completion of demolition - \$4 million

Niagara Experience Center

- Full site acquisition, full design and beginning of construction in Niagara Falls – \$20 million over two years

Bethlehem Steel

- Infrastructure improvements - \$3 million

Cars on Main Street

- Complete funding for Chippewa Street to Court Street phase in Buffalo - \$17 million

Olcott Harbor Breakwater

- Outer-harbor breakwater off the Lake Ontario shoreline in Olcott - \$4.7 million

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FEDERAL PRIORITIES FUNDING

The following funding requests support regionally-significant economic development projects, business district enhancements, efforts to make more land available for development and improved access to developable property. Further, they represent investment in local research that has the potential to yield commercial outcomes, and programs designed to strengthen the skills of the region's workforce.

Niagara Falls International Rail Station/Intermodal Transportation Center

- Create a rail-centered multi-modal, multi-function international transportation facility at the Whirlpool-Rapids Bridge - \$19.4 million

Buffalo Inner Harbor Pump Station Relocation

- Relocate Buffalo River Crossing Pump Station to open inner harbor foot-of-Main-Street site for development - \$8 million

Buffalo/Lackawanna Sewer System Consolidation and Pump Station Improvements

- Upgrade the Erie County Pump Station to accommodate future growth at Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park - \$1 million
- EIS, design and construction of sewer station relocation to support development at Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park, Bethlehem Steel and Outer Harbor properties - \$8 million

North Tonawanda

- Buffalo Bolt Access Road - \$1 million

Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park

- Phase III road and infrastructure improvements - \$2 million

Robert Moses Parkway South

- Robert Moses Parkway south/Niagara Reservation Road reconfiguration consistent with Olmsted's original design - \$5 million

Outer Harbor access

- Main Street Buffalo River Bridge preliminary engineering and design - \$500,000

City of Lockport

- Parking ramp to complement downtown business district - \$3.5 million

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**FEDERAL PRIORITIES
FUNDING**

Reconstruction of Beebe Road

- Reconstruction of Beebe Road from Hopkins Creek to Wilson-Burt Road in the Town of Wilson - \$6.6 million

Intermodal Hub

- Data collection to justify potential for railroads to utilize the Buffalo Niagara region as an intermodal freight transfer hub - \$200,000

Health and Life Sciences

- Increase funding levels for National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation
- Continue to support the partner organizations of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus

Workforce Investment Act

- Restore Workforce Investment Act funding to \$4.5 billion (2005 level)

West Valley Demonstration Project

- Fund the project to completion; define final end state

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FEDERAL PRIORITIES
POLICY

Buffalo Niagara's regional economy depends on the efficient flow of people and goods across the border with Canada. The following policy changes must be implemented before the Buffalo and Fort Erie bridge plaza construction can be completed. More broadly, action is necessary to avoid serious damage to the local economy.

Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)

- Departments of Homeland Security and State need to implement the WHTI to accept identification that is inexpensive, easily attainable and has more than one use as appropriate identification
- Congress needs to fully fund state implementation of the Real ID Act and reconcile it with WHTI or modify it so that it can be effectively implemented

Shared Border Management

- Obtain final decision on Shared Border Management between the US and Canadian governments that moves Peace Bridge US Homeland Security offices, and customs facilities from both countries, to the Canadian side of the border, thus allowing for a fully operational plaza and road configuration in Buffalo

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STATE PRIORITIES
FUNDING

Investment in the following urban-based economic development projects has the potential to yield region-wide returns.

Memorial Auditorium Demolition

- Creation of shovel-ready site to complement inner harbor development in Buffalo - \$20 million

Niagara Experience Center

- Full site acquisition, full design and beginning of construction in Niagara Falls – \$20 million over two years

Erie Community College

- ECC downtown campus Metro Center transportation center and related facilities in Buffalo - \$4 million

Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences

- Support the on-going, annual appropriation of operational funds for the Center of Excellence - \$1.4 million

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STATE PRIORITIES FUNDING

The following funding requests support economic development efforts throughout Buffalo Niagara by preparing existing sites for future investment, supporting regional institutions and investing in programs and initiatives that complement on-going economic development efforts.

Buffalo Business Pioneer Centers

- Four incubator sites – two 25,000 sq. ft.; two 50,000 sq. ft. in Buffalo - \$15 million

Outer Harbor access

- Main Street Buffalo River Bridge construction in Buffalo - \$45 million

Shovel-ready Land

- Creation of Brownfield Redevelopment Fund to be administered by the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation to create shovel-ready space for new projects - \$5 million
- Land acquisition in Buffalo - \$5 million

Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century

- Support dedicated funds to ensure there is adequate money directly tied to successfully implementing the recommendations of commission

University at Buffalo Downtown Campus

- Urban Incubator – Facilities and services to support 50 start-ups currently associated with the University at Buffalo to be located on or near the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus - \$18 million
- Center for Translational and Clinical Research - Anchor of UB's downtown campus, providing collaborations among numerous medical campus partners, the community and UB - \$25 million in 2007 (total project - \$105 million)

Life Sciences

- Fully fund the Pioneers of Science proposal to support researcher recruitment and capital investments by entities within our region's health and life sciences industry
- Continue to support the partner organizations of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus

Buffalo State College

- Rehabilitation of Science Building - \$50 million (total project - \$100 million)

Buffalo Niagara Convention and Visitors Bureau

- "Buffalo Cultural and Heritage Tourism Experience 2007-2011" destination marketing - \$1 million (\$5 million over five years)

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STATE PRIORITIES
POLICY

The priority policy initiatives are those that reduce the cost of doing business in New York State and ensure a stronger, localized focus on economic development in Buffalo Niagara.

Unshackle Upstate

- Key reform targets for 2007: workers' compensation, 240/241, Medicaid, Wicks Law and the Taylor Law
- Economic development policy:
 - Establishment of a new land development program to foster public/private partnerships aimed at creating large-scale shovel-ready sites for strategic target industry clusters
 - Expansion and implementation of the "Regional Partnership" program concept initially proposed under NYSTAR
 - Realignment of the State's workforce development programs to be more directly tied to and supportive of the current and projected needs of employers
 - Funding criteria for state economic development programs should focus not only on jobs created, but also on job retention, total payroll and capital investment

Empire State Development Corporation

- The state should evaluate the way economic development programs are delivered, combining them where applicable under one entity – New York Empire State Development Corporation – and by streamlining applications and reducing approval timelines (consistent with Unshackle Upstate 2007 agenda)
- Ensure the Upstate ESD office sited in Buffalo works closely with Upstate regional leaders – particularly those in Buffalo Niagara – to develop effective and realistic economic development initiatives that are grounded in recognition and understanding of the particular nature and strengths of each region

Brownfield Reform

- Existing brownfield laws and programs in New York State need to be reformed to have the impact they can (and should) in regions like Buffalo Niagara; laws and programs must be changed to reflect upstate/downstate differences in land values, the sheer number of brownfields Upstate (and Buffalo Niagara in particular) and the amount of readily available green space Upstate (and the incentives needed to steer development to brownfields, where there are challenges, but also existing infrastructure)
- Within the context of the above, change DEC policy such that once DEC accepts a site into the program it cannot exclude portions of the site from tax credit eligibility or require a voluntary clean up; assess how the current brownfield law "deadlines" (which DEC uses "best efforts" to follow) are affecting development projects, and whether efficiencies are in place or can be created

2007 *Regional Agenda*

STATE PRIORITIES *POLICY*

Empire Zones

- Clearly define – with input from local municipalities – the criteria a project must meet to be designated “regionally significant,” and the process through which that designation is made

Restrictions on IDA Benefits

- Oppose any attempt to restrict IDA benefits by imposing social or subjective stipulations on companies that are otherwise eligible for incentives

Hydropower

- Maximize the flexible use of the 445 MW of RP and 250 MW of EP generated at the Niagara Power Project for use within the Buffalo Niagara region
- Amend the Public Authorities Law and Economic Development Law to require proceeds that may be derived from unallocated or unused RP and EP be utilized within the Buffalo Niagara region
- Amend the same laws to strengthen the project recommendation role of the Western New York Advisory Group
- Amend the same laws to permit the use of Rural and Domestic Power for industrial and economic development purposes using the same criteria as permitted under RP and EP

State Transportation Funding System

- Aggressive actions to implement the Buffalo Niagara projects funded in SAFETEA-LU legislation, such as the I-290/90 reconfiguration project
- Reform and increase state and local funding for transportation infrastructure projects to include:
 - Introducing innovative finance methodology - short term methods, not all of which are borrowing, that allow projects to begin in a scheduled time frame not dependent upon budget cycles
 - Provide for a reliable source of dedicated funding for state and local infrastructure
 - Move toward a “pay as you go” system - supplying the basic state dollars for construction through either a dedicated fund, budgeted tax dollars or both
 - Promote and support development of an effective north/south NAFTA transportation corridor with Buffalo Niagara as a logistics hub