

Buffalo & North Tonawanda receiving \$10 million as winners of fifth-round Downtown Revitalization Initiative

State to work with residents, community leaders & public officials to revitalize Buffalo's Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood, North Tonawanda's downtown

Gov. Kathy Hochul announced Buffalo's Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood and the City of North Tonawanda will receive \$10 million each in funding as the Western New York region winners of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. As part of DRI round 5, each of the state's 10 regional economic development regions are being awarded \$20 million, to make for a total state commitment of \$200 million in funding and investments to help communities boost their post COVID-19 economies by transforming downtowns into vibrant neighborhoods.

"As a Buffalo native, I know the impact this funding will have in improving the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood and North Tonawanda," Hochul said. "The COVID-19 pandemic showed us just how important our small businesses and local communities are to the state's economy and, for New York to succeed, we must protect them. These investments will serve to show all that these communities have to offer, so that they will not just survive, but thrive as we build back toward a brighter future."

A press release said, "Led by the Department of State, the DRI serves as a cornerstone of the state's economic development policy by transforming downtown neighborhoods into vibrant centers of activity that offer a high quality of life and attract redevelopment, businesses, jobs, and economic and housing diversity."

In this round, Hochul doubled funding from \$100 million to \$200 million and allowed each Regional Economic Development Council to decide whether to nominate two \$10 million awardees or one \$20 million awardee for transformative and catalytic downtown redevelopment projects.

Like past DRI rounds, each selected community will develop a strategic plan through a bottom-up, community-based planning process that articulates a vision for the revitalization of its downtown and identifies a list of signature projects that have the potential to transform the downtown and leverage further private and public investments.

DRI funds will then be awarded for selected projects that have the greatest potential to jumpstart re-

vitalization and realize the community's vision for the downtown.

Through the DRI, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority will provide technical support to the awardees to assist them with, including carbon neutral principles in support of the state's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 85% by 2050.

Buffalo's Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood

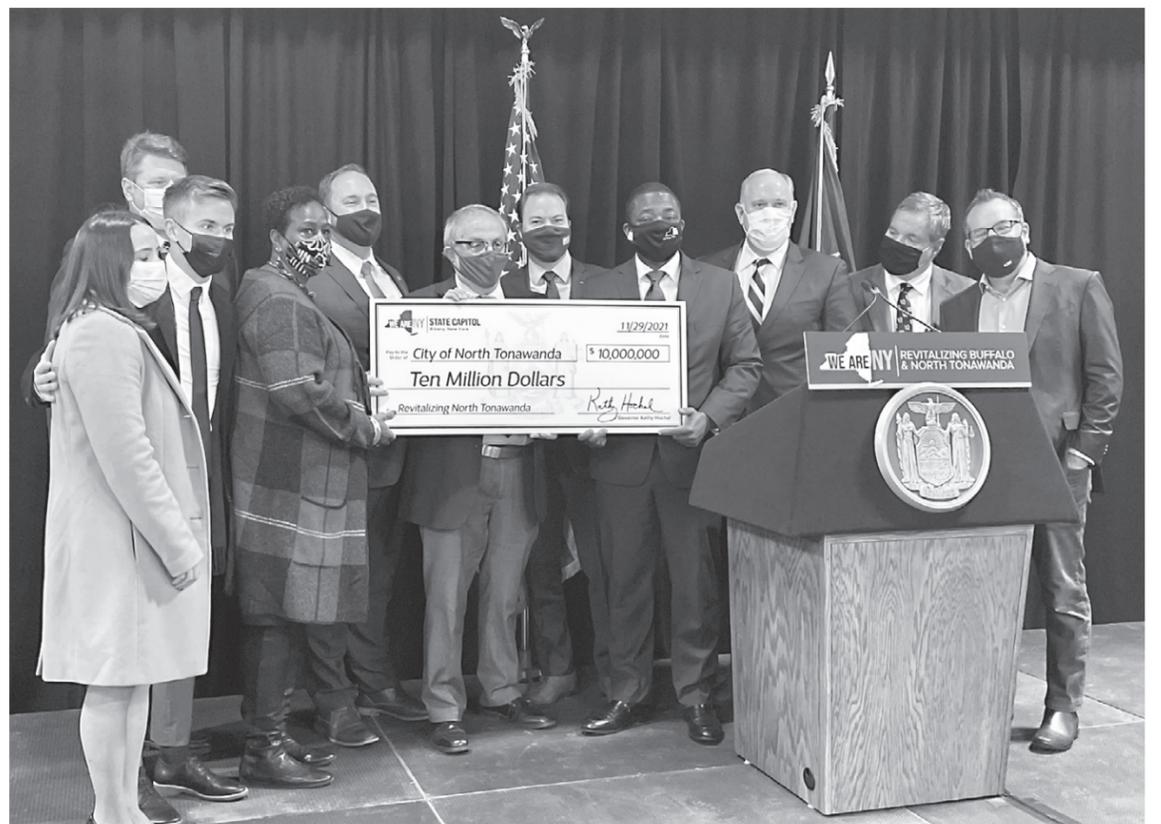
Located in the City of Buffalo's East Side, the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood is one of the oldest in Buffalo, and the focus of Buffalo's plan for a downtown investment. The area, with a relatively dense stock of largely historic commercial buildings, set forth a vision of creating special urban places, key park spaces, retail-oriented streets, improved neighborhood connections, bike and pedestrian connections, streetscape improvements and public realm improvements.

This area has seen many completed and ongoing investments, including multiple mixed-use redevelopments, a community health hub, and improvements to the Broadway Market and Buffalo Central Terminal. Building on this momentum, Buffalo aims to encourage redevelopment of vacant structures, provide better connections between anchors and amenities through green space, increase affordable housing opportunities, and enhance the streetscape.

North Tonawanda

North Tonawanda aims to make downtown a vibrant, mixed-use district centered on the confluence of two waterfronts: the Niagara River and the Erie Canal, to create a unified and interconnected environment as the "Gateway to the Erie Canal."

Downtown North Tonawanda is unique as it includes the 80-acre Tonawanda Island and is itself a local historic preservation district. With a demonstrated ability to pursue and implement large projects, including the \$2.5 million Smart Growth Community Fund, the Remington Lofts project, and the \$20 million River Road Apartments, and multiple ongoing projects, including the River Road Reconstruction project, \$24 million Timber Shore project, and \$3 mil-



lion YWCA of the Niagara Frontier building, North Tonawanda wants to increase public/green space, improve senior housing, and improve infrastructure to support further development.

Hochul's team said, "The Western New York Region Economic Development Council conducted a thorough and competitive review process of proposals submitted from communities throughout the region and considered all seven criteria below before recommending Buffalo's Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood and North Tonawanda as the nominees." Those include:

✓ The downtown should be compact, with well-defined boundaries;

✓ The downtown is able to capitalize on prior or catalyze future private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas;

✓ There should be recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to the downtown that can attract workers to the downtown, support redevelopment and make growth sustainable;

✓ The downtown must be an attractive and livable community for

diverse populations of all ages, income, gender, identity, ability, mobility and cultural background;

✓ The municipality should already embrace or have the ability to create and implement policies that increase livability and quality of life, including the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes and parking standards, complete streets plans, energy-efficient projects, green jobs, and transit-oriented development;

✓ The municipality should have conducted an open and robust community engagement process resulting in a vision for downtown revitalization and a preliminary list of projects and initiatives that may be included in a DRI strategic investment plan;

✓ The municipality has the local capacity to manage the DRI process; and

✓ The municipality has identified transformative projects that will be ready for near-term implementation with an infusion of DRI funds.

Buffalo's Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood and North Tonawanda now join the cities of Jamestown, Olean, Lockport and Niaga-

ra Falls, which were the Western New York Region's winners in the first four DRI rounds, respectively.

Buffalo and North Tonawanda will now begin the process of developing a strategic investment plan to revitalize their downtowns with up to \$300,000 in planning funds from the \$10 million DRI grant. Local planning committees made up of municipal representatives, community leaders and other stakeholders will lead the effort, supported by a team of private sector experts and state planners. The strategic investment plans will examine local assets and opportunities and identify economic development, transportation, housing and community projects that align with each community's vision for downtown revitalization and that are poised for implementation. The strategic investment plans will guide the investment of DRI grant funds in revitalization projects that will advance the community's vision for its downtown and that can leverage and expand upon the state's \$10 million investment.

Plans for the DRI's fifth round will be complete in 2022.

Grigg Lewis provides initial funding for Niagara Hospice House expansion

Niagara Hospice announced it has received the first major community gift toward the \$2 million capital campaign to expand Hospice House, where terminally ill patients and families receive specialized care and support.

The Grigg Lewis Foundation, based in Lockport, provided a lead grant toward the ongoing community campaign that will help fund the addition of six residential patient suites to the facility at 4675 Sunset Drive. Construction is underway for the expansion project that will complete the Hospice House with 16 total residential suites, the maximum capacity allowed by New York.

"We are very grateful for this significant support from the Grigg Lewis Foundation, which has been a generous partner of Niagara Hospice for more than 20 years,"

said John Lomeo, president and CEO. "The foundation provided major gifts for the construction of Hospice House from 2006-08. It is wonderful to receive this grant to help complete the Hospice House story and enhance quality of life for more Niagara County families during end-of-life situations."

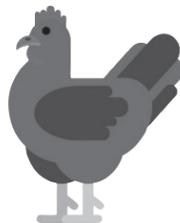
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